

# Restricted drugs freely sold online

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Health hazard appears galore as restricted drugs are being sold freely online while the government expresses helplessness in curbing the practise. The death of Sunanda Pushkar, who allegedly took heavy dose of psychotropic medicines, a NRI student, who had allegedly bought cocaine online from a Chinese site have put the government in a fix on how to control "Internet pharmacy".

"It is a major challenge for us to control this menace. We do recognize that this problem is growing and we have to find ways," said Arun Panda, joint secretary in the health ministry. While, there is nothing that the government can do about these websites, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) is considering to write to the state drug controllers to keep a strict vigil on the

pharmacists.

The little yellow pill called Alpax, a tranquiliser to be sold under doctor's prescription was found from the hotel room where 52-year-old Pushkar was found dead. According to sources, two empty strips of Alpaz were found from her hotel room. The pill helps relieve stress and is strong enough to put someone to sleep for hours-so much so that some websites even mention "never take two doses".

In India, the third line and the fourth line psychotropic drugs are restricted and have been put under schedule H-making it mandatory for the pharmacists not to sell them over the counter. These drugs can only be sold on prescription.

Contrary to the this, there are number of websites from where Alprax can be purchased with discount and no prescription is required. There are websites which also offer cheap, generic Alprax.

*Regulatory -*