

# BITS professor working to help standardise feni's unique flavour

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**Panaji:** Feni — Goa's traditional cashew brew — may have its own fan following and a geographical indication (GI) tag, but given its indigenous preparation methods, no two batches of the drink taste the same. The oddity persists irrespective of whether the brew is sourced from the village distilleries or from the few modernised processing units.

Concerned that this may make it difficult to retain feni's original flavour in future, Prof S D Manjare of BITS Pi-

## HIGH SPIRITS

Three aspects of feni-making will be given priority during the research

- Improving the process by making fermentation more productive
- Improving the distillation process
- Enhancing the thermal efficiency of the process



ani KK Birla Goa Campus has taken on the task of studying feni-making processes in Goa. He aims to standardize the methods and work out a procedure to improve the output for small-scale distilleries. "Standardization will im-

prove the quantity, purity and composition of the drink," said Manjare. The project has received support from the state department of science and technology.

► **Village distilleries, P 4**



# Manjare plans to duplicate method used by village distilleries in lab

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Manjare hopes to pass on the benefits of his research to small-time distilleries within the next three years by helping them optimise the use of resources, stemming cashew fruit wastage and in turn, improving profits.

He also plans to standardise the concentration and flavour of feni by evaluating the olfactory standards for big distilleries.

"Feni is being enjoyed for centuries, but there is no data on its composition, the



Rajtilak Naik

Cashew apples are a prized commodity in Goa due to their role in producing feni

temperature at which the liquid needs to be heated, etc. Most village distilleries produce feni in a crude way, just following the process they

have learnt from their ancestors. This means, often there is inefficient use of firewood and wastage of fruit," said Manjare. India produces over 22 lakh cashew apples annually, but the fruit is a prized commodity only in Goa due to its role in producing feni.

Manjare has already begun studying existing feni-making processes and plans to duplicate the method used by village distilleries in the BITS laboratory, where the experiments to improve the drink's quality will eventually be carried out. He said that

the project's suggestion first came from Goa Energy Development Agency's Pramod Pathak.

"It will take us at least three cashew apple seasons to arrive at some concrete findings. The work will begin from the season starting late January 2018. Once done, we will pass on our findings in a training programme to local distilleries. We will suggest small changes that will require little investment like maintaining the ideal temperature for heating the liquid, simple quality checks, etc," Manjare said