

## **PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ FROM COMMISSIONER OF EXCISE WITH REGARDS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF SC ORDER**

Panaji : February 13, 2017

The Office of the Commissioner of Excise in a press note has stated that the members of public in general and licensees for sale of liquor in particular are hereby informed about the Order dated December 15, 2016 passed the Hon. Supreme Court of India and the action initiated by the Office of Commissioner of Excise and other Departments. The Hon. Supreme Court of India has issued certain directions under Article 142 of the Constitution of India while disposing the Civil Appeal Nos. 12164-12166 of 2016 (Arising out of SLP (C) No. 14911-14913 of 2013). These directions inter alia include viz :-

(i) All States and Union Territories shall forthwith cease and desist from granting licenses for the sale of liquor along national and state highways;

(ii) The prohibition contained in (i) above shall extend to and include stretches of such highways which fall within the limits of a municipal corporation, city, town or local authority;

(iii) The existing licenses which have already been renewed prior to the date of this order shall continue until the term of the license expires but no later than 1 April, 2017;

(iv) All signages and advertisements of the availability of liquor shall be prohibited and existing ones removed forthwith both on national and state highways;

(v) No shop for the sale of liquor shall be (i) visible from a national or state highway, (ii) directly accessible from a national or state highway and (iii) situated within a distance of 500 meters of the outer edge of the national or state highway or of a service lane along the highway.

(vi) All states and Union Territories are mandated to strictly enforce the above directions.

In order to comply to the above said directions of the Hon. Supreme Court it is necessary to :-

(i) Identify all licences for sale of liquor along the National highways, State highways and service lanes along the highways which contravene the above said directions and to ensure that all such licenses shall not continue to operate after April, 2017.

(ii) Identify all signages and advertisements of the availability of liquor both on National and State highways and ensure that the same are removed forthwith and prohibit all such advertisement and signages.

The concerned authorities viz. Directorate of Municipal Administration and Directorate of Panchayats through their respective local bodies issued directions to all the concerned to remove the signages and advertisement forthwith in compliance to the directives of the Hon. Supreme Court of India. Any default in compliance to the directions as stated above shall attract action against the defaulters. Further, in case any of the signages and advertisements are found in violation of the directives of the Hon. Supreme Court the same shall be removed by the enforcement agencies without any further notice to the parties.

Further, to ascertain the distance of the establishments selling liquor it is decided to constitute Taluka Level Teams comprising the officials from the Office of Mamlatdar, Excise Department, Public Works Department, National Highway Authority of India, Directorate of Panchayats/Directorate of Municipal Administration, Directorate of Settlements and Land Records etc. These teams will be functioning at various locations on the ground and carry out site inspections to ascertain the distance and submit report.

All the members of public and licensees for sale of liquor are enjoined upon to extend cooperation and assistance to the members of the Taluka Level Team during their above said works for compliance of the Orders for implementation of the directives of Hon. Supreme Court of India within the time frame as per the Order.