

ACAUT is surprised with the Commissioner of Excise Maongwati Aier's statement that "ACAUT Nagaland members did not seek permission from the Excise department for counting the IMFL bottles" (Local dailies 3/6/2014) which is just another one of those bankrupt accusations. ACAUT wonders whether the Commissioner takes permission from illegal wine-shop owners and bootleggers before conducting surprise checking and raids, if at all such takes place. Considering the fact that there're countless establishments openly selling spurious IMFL/beer at prominent places in town right under the nose of the Excise department, ACAUT Nagaland wants to know from the Excise Commissioner what exactly he has done to curb this mockery. If the Commissioner feels that he is a duty bound officer, then he is requested to kindly **shut down within 24 hours** the following major places selling liquor illegally in town:

1. All the wine-shops near Axis Bank, Faith Hospital junction, Khermahal Junction, Super Market area, Signal Angami area, etc., masquerading either as mineral water outlets or restaurants.
2. All the wine-shops at Delux Point/Bata Charali area, Eros line area, etc., masquerading as family restaurants
3. All the so-called bars and pubs, hotels, restaurants in town openly mocking the Excise department in the face all these years, including those located opposite SP office and Popular Bakery area.

Unless the Commissioner takes action within 24 hours under Clauses 35, 36, 37, Chapter-4 of The Nagaland Liquor Total Prohibition Act, 1989 where the department is EMPOWERED to ENTER, SEARCH, make SEIZURE and ARREST, it would be an open admission before the Naga people that selling/serving of IMFL/beer in a prohibited state is possible simply because the department at the highest level has some sort of comfortable understanding- I scratch your back, you scratch my back policy- with mafia elements trading in IMFL/beer. Therefore, failure to implement the above shall be construed as abdicating responsibility and the Commissioner, Excise should resign. The Commissioner of Excise issuing show-cause notice to a subordinate officer should not become a case of the pot calling the kettle black since the whole Excise department is awash with corruption and the Commissioner himself is responsible; not just for the 'bottle-breaking' tamasha of 26/5/14 but for the whole prohibition farce. The Show-Cause notice issued by the Commissioner upon a subordinate officer on 3/6/14 is itself an admission that the department has erred despite the Commissioner previously declaring in media reply to the ACAUT that the department has done no wrong. This itself is vindication of the ACAUT stand. However, suspending a few low-level erring officers will not satisfy the Naga public but the state government should take a tough stand and action initiated against all officers, no matter how mighty and high.

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