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Press Release

The duty of the Excise Commissioner should not be to increase alcohol consumption by persuading companies to lower prices, but to focus on collecting the billions in arrears owed to the government by alcohol companies.

As of June 30, 2024, the Excise Department has lost a total of 1.8 billion rupees in Outstanding Excise Duty and levy due to the absence of a formal and efficient collection system and favorable taxation policies for alcohol companies.

The Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Parliamentary Ways and Means, which investigated this matter, stated that the Commissioner General of Excise's avoidance of the Committee and disregard for its recommendations constitutes a disrespect to the Committee. Additionally, the Excise Department's disregard for the recommendation to fully collect the outstanding excise duty has been met with strong disapproval from the Parliamentary committee on Parliamentary Ways and Means.

In this context, recent media reports have indicated that the Excise Commissioner requested alcohol companies to reduce their prices.

The duty of the Excise Commissioner should be to collect liquor tax arrears from producers who are evading billions in liquor tax across the country.

Additionally, it is crucial to address the illegal introduction of alcoholic beverages into the market and identify those products being sold without proper excise duty payment. This further includes bringing to justice the illicit traders responsible for such activities. Preventing such situations is a key responsibility of the Excise Commissioner and the department.

It should be emphasized that asking alcohol companies to lower prices not only increases alcohol consumption among the public but also creates advantageous conditions for the companies. Such actions should be avoided to protect our citizens from alcohol harm.

Scientifically, it has been proven that alcohol is a cost rather than a source of income for a country. In our country, the revenue from alcohol taxes is outweighed by the substantial expenses incurred due to the health and economic costs associated with alcohol consumption. In a survey conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2023, it was reported that the health and economic costs associated with alcohol consumption in our country amounted to 237 billion rupees. In contrast, the revenue from alcohol taxes was only 165.2 billion rupees. This further confirms that alcohol represents a cost rather than a source of income for the country.

The responsibility of the Excise Commissioner is not to contribute to increased illness, family breakdowns, and dangers in the country due to alcohol consumption, nor to undermine the happiness and freedom of children or promote violence against women. Therefore, the Alcohol and Drug Information Center strongly emphasize that the focus of the Excise Commissioner should be on accurately collecting alcohol taxes and preventing the illegal introduction of alcohol into the market.

Sampath De Seram
Executive Director
Alcohol and Drug Information Center