

Date : 19.12.2012

OBSERVATION

The letter no. 1663-HS/HRC/Comp-161/2011 dt. 19.10.2012 from Principal Secretary, Home Deptt. regarding recommendation No. 26/2012-13/WBHRC/Com/968/11-12 of this Commission has been considered.

The Commission observes that spurious liquor deaths in Diamond Harbour Subdivision in South 24 Pgs. district figure as the biggest hooch tragedy in the history of West Bengal. As many as 172 lives were lost and more than 200 persons were seriously affected. Excise Commissioner in his evidence before the Commission specifically admitted the connivance of the Excise officials in the matter. He stated that in his evidence before the Commission:-

" I admit that such racket of ~~the~~ selling illicit liquor in such a massive scale cannot continue without the connivance of the police and the Excise officials. I admit that no proper enquiry has been conducted either by me or to find out how sale of illicit liquor on such a massive scale is continuing in the areas of my jurisdiction..... I admit that there was a serious intelligence failure on our part".

He also failed miserably to take remedial steps which have already been discussed at para 10 of the recommendation made by the Commission.

Thus, there are several instances of individual negligence on the part of the Excise Commissioner in tackling this massive hooch tragedy.

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In view of the above, the Commission is constrained to observe that ends of justice can be met by implementing recommendation in such cases. It is expected that government considers the Commission's recommendation in its correct perspective and takes appropriate steps in taking on its officials whose inaction led to such colossal human tragedy so that people's faith in rule of law is not disturbed.



(Justice Asok Kumar Ganguly)  
Chairperson



(Justice N.C. Sil )  
Member



( S.N.Roy )  
Member