

REPLENISHMENT CONCERNS

Liquor Stores may Face Dry Days Ahead

INDIA LIQUOR BUSINESS

Cases per year
DISTILLED SPIRITS
340 m (at 9 litres per case)

BEER
333 m (at 7.8 litres per case)

COUNTRY LIQUOR
300 m

WINE 2.7 m

Source: CIABC, AIBA



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Bengaluru: Cheers accompanying the reopening of liquor stores could be short-lived as companies said existing stock at distributors will be exhausted after the initial round of stockpiling and replenishment could take a month or so.

“The new guideline is a step in the right direction but we cannot beat the drums yet. Pipelines are dry as distilleries have been shut for over a month. Restoring the supply chain will take three-six weeks,” said Deepak Roy, executive vice chairman of Allied Blenders & Distillers, the maker of Officers Choice whisky and chairman of the Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC).

While the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has permitted sale of liquor in the third phase of the Covid-19 lockdown starting Monday, companies are still awaiting clarity from state governments, especially for red zones. As per the MHA guideline, retail of liquor, paan and tobacco is permitted in green and orange zones and non-containment areas in red zones, while ensuring a minimum six feet of physical distancing.

“Since it is also the peak harvest season, priority will be given to the movement of agricultural crops,” said Roy.