Ban on liquor - Part III

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Why in news?

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- Supreme Court in March 2017 confirmed its December order on **banning sale of liquor near National and State highways.**
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- It went on to assert that the proscription would cover not just retail outlets but hotels and bars too.
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What are the shortcomings?

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- The order is intended to **prevent drunk driving,** which is without doubt a contributor to road accidents and fatalities.
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- More than a third of the liquor sale and consumption points will be hit.
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- The order **does not exempt outlets in cities and towns,** where most of the consumers are local residents.
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- The court's clarification goes against the opinion Attorney-General gave the Kerala govt that the December order applied only to retail outlets and not to bar-attached hotels and parlours.
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- **Retail outlets can perhaps move another 500 m** with minimal expense and no great loss of clientele but established hotels and clubs does not enjoy such luxury.
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- If drunk driving along the highways is the provocation for the order, there

can be no reason to cover clubs that serve only their members.
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- State governments will face a huge loss in revenue.
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- Smaller administrative units such as **Union Territories will be the worst-hit.**
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- Puducherry, which includes enclaves such as Mahe, will find relocation of many shops impossible, as they are caught between the highway and the sea.
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- Goa, a small State that depends heavily on tourism, is in a similarly difficult situation.
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- The relaxation of the liquor-free zone from 500 m to 220 m from the highways in the case of areas with a population of 20,000 or less might only partly address their concerns.
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- Prohibition as a policy has had a history of failure. Good intentions do not guarantee good outcomes.
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Source: The Hindu

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