

**OSDMA Orders Immediate Statewide Fire Safety Audits
Across All Educational Institutions and Coaching Centres**

District Collectors to Enforce Strict Compliance and Submit Action Taken Reports Within 15 Days

Bhubaneswar, June 24, 2026: Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) has mandated an immediate, rigorous review and audit of fire safety preparedness across all educational institutions, coaching centres, and skill development hubs throughout the state. The proactive directive comes in the wake of the tragic fire incident in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, underscoring the critical necessity for zero-compromise safety compliance.

In an official directive issued to all District Collectors and Chairpersons of District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs), Shri Rajesh Prabhakar Patil, Special Relief Commissioner & Managing Director of OSDMA, emphasized that the safety of students, trainees, faculty, and support staff remains paramount. With the new academic session commencing, local authorities have been instructed to execute immediate field inspections to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Odisha Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Rules, 2017, Odisha Fire Prevention and Fire Safety (Amendment) Rules, 2025 and other applicable safety regulations.

Priority Actions Mandated by OSDMA :

1. Comprehensive Fire Safety Audit

As per the directive, to eliminate infrastructure vulnerabilities, district administrations will launch an immediate, widespread inspection campaign across all campuses, paying specific attention to high-risk multi-storied complexes and congested urban spaces. Joint inspection teams will meticulously check the validity of existing Fire Safety Certificates and No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) to guarantee adherence to prescribed safety standards. On the ground, teams are tasked with confirming the functionality of critical equipment—such as fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, automated alarms, and emergency lighting systems. A ban is also enforced on the storage of combustible materials in classrooms, corridors, or escape paths, alongside mandatory periodic maintenance of electrical installations to eliminate short-circuit hazards. Every facility must also introduce sufficient safe exits, display distinct exit signage, and commit to regular hands-on fire extinguisher training and mock drills for students

2. Safe Evacuation Arrangements

The directive emphasizes that physical escape routes are the first line of defense during an emergency. Local authorities must ensure that all primary exits, staircases, corridors, and emergency escape routes remain entirely unobstructed and undisturbed at all times. Institutions are required to clearly install adequate signage pointing toward exits, designated open assembly points, and emergency contact numbers. Additionally, all doors situated along these vital evacuation pathways must open outward and be configured to remain easily accessible during a crisis.

3. Conduct Capacity Building and Mock Drills

Building a culture of active preparedness is central to the state's safety strategy. Academic and training institutions must transition from passive compliance to active readiness by conducting regular fire safety awareness programmes for students, trainees, teachers, instructors, and support staff, preferably every quarter. These efforts will be backed by structured, periodic mock drills organized in direct coordination with Fire Services authorities and local administrations. To maintain accountability on campus, each institution is required to officially designate and train specialized Fire Safety Wardens and Nodal Officers.

4. Institutional Preparedness

Every educational establishment is directed to prepare and prominently display an institution-specific Emergency Response and Evacuation Plan tailored to its unique layout. Campus administrators must maintain constantly updated, readily available contact channels for local Fire Services, the Police, nearby Health Departments, and the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC). Clear, internal procedures for instant emergency reporting and swift incident response must be established across all faculties.

5. Special Focus Areas

District teams have been instructed to give top priority to institutions currently operating within rented buildings, dense commercial complexes, basements, and any facilities exhibiting high student occupancy levels. Equal scrutiny must be extended to student accommodations, ensuring that hostels and residential training centres strictly meet specified fire safety norms.

6. Enforcement and Monitoring

The state government is enforcing these safety updates through a collaborative, multi-agency oversight framework. District-level monitoring will be actively executed via joint inspections involving senior officials from the Revenue, Fire Services, Education, Higher Education, and Skill Development departments, alongside local authorities. Any institution found operating without adequate, functional fire safety arrangements will face immediate regulatory action and will be directed to implement definitive corrective measures within a strictly stipulated timeframe.

The OSDMA has requested all district administrations to monitor the implementation of the above measures closely. District Collectors must submit a consolidated Action Taken Report (ATR) indicating the number of institutions inspected, deficiencies identified, and corrective actions initiated within 15 days.

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