



J P Nadda inaugurates the National Workshop on 'Life and Fire Safety in Healthcare Facilities in India'

We have to aim to ensure "zero tolerance" with regard to risk of fire: J P Nadda

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"We have to aim to ensure "zero tolerance" with regard to risk of fire. With this aim in the focus, we have to align all our efforts and converge to achieve this goal." This was stated by Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare while inaugurating a National Workshop on 'Life and Fire Safety in Healthcare Facilities in India', here today. The workshop was jointly organized by Ministry of Health and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi with active participation of School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, Delhi Fire Services, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), New Delhi and Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee. The main objective of the workshop was to sensitize the hospital administrators and engineering heads about important issues related to life and fire safety in healthcare buildings.

Speaking at the function, Shri Nadda said that sensitization towards fire safety is key to preventing any untoward incident in hospitals. "The dos and don'ts must be understood first and should be strictly followed. We must also make sure that it goes down to every level," Shri Nadda added. The Health Minister further said that doctors and engineering staff should be fully aware of their role towards fire and life safety. "Our nurses and doctors are the first responders in such an eventuality. In fact, doctors and nurses would provide the guidance and support if patients are to be moved and where they have to be moved considering the condition of patients," Shri Nadda stated.

Laying stress on having safe evacuation during emergencies, Shri Nadda said that it has been noticed that corridors, staircases are not properly maintained to provide safe egress, sometimes emergency doors are locked even when patients are in a position to move out. "This is fundamental but often ignored, due to security reasons. Hospital administrations should resolve this problem in consultation with security experts. Please ensure that access and egress is not compromised and proper fire escape routes and measures are in place especially in operation theatres and ICUs so that patients inside these rooms can be evacuated properly during emergencies," Shri Nadda elaborated.

Shri Nadda also emphasized on the need for training and capacity building among the hospital staff especially doctors, nurses and attendants so that they can undertake routine assessments of emerging risks, including those arising due to alterations and also conduct audits through internal technical staff. Shri Nadda also directed the officials of the participating Institutions/Hospitals to develop time bound fire safety action plan of the building/block of their Hospital/Institution. He further instructed them to undertake quarterly fire drills so that the hospital staff is sensitized and is aware of their responsibility. Shri Nadda also asked the participants to conduct fire audits regularly which will be monitored by the Ministry.

The workshop was attended by Heads of 23 Hospitals/ Institutes under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and their concerned officers. A mock drill was also conducted in the premises of AIIMS, New Delhi. In the workshop the participants got a comprehensive understanding of the scope of life and fire safety in healthcare buildings in terms of best practices as well as applicable codes and standards by participants.

Also present at the function were Dr Arun Panda, Additional Secretary (HFW), Shri Sanjeeva Kumar, Addl. Secy (HFW), Dr B D Athani, Special DGHS, Dr. M.C. Misra, Director AIIMS, New Delhi

and other senior officers of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

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