

News

Lucknow coaching center fire: LDA vice-chairman receives a contempt of court order from the Supreme Court



The Court was informed that although a demolition order was issued in 2016, nothing more was done until the disaster.

The vice-chairman of the Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) received a contempt of court summons from the Supreme Court on August 4 in connection with the recent coaching center fire disaster that resulted in the deaths of fifteen pupils. [State of Tamil Nadu v. Loganathan]

A bench of Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and R Mahadevan made the decision to ask LDA for an explanation after observing that no meaningful action had been taken against those who were in **violation of the approved land use specified in the city's Master Plan**. Since it is acknowledged that no meaningful action has been taken against those who have flagrantly violated the approved land use specified under the Master Plan, this Court is required to serve notice in the contempt proceedings, the Court stated.

This came after Ajit Kumar Sinha, an Amicus Curiae Senior Advocate, told the Court that the tragedy had happened in a building where business was being conducted.

The Court was informed that on May 10, 2016, a demolition order pertaining to the building was issued. On July 5 of that year, however, the same body that issued the order recalled it due to a technical issue.

The amicus told the Court that nothing further was done until the catastrophe occurred.

Justices R Mahadevan and Ahsanuddin Amanullah

In proceedings that began with an unapproved building case in Chennai, the Court learned about the Lucknow fire.

The Supreme Court considered the broader problem of residential areas being used for commercial purposes in defiance of building and land-use regulations while addressing the case.

In order to investigate the matter nationwide, the **Court then expanded the proceedings and requested information from state and union territory capital authorities regarding residential** areas being exploited for commercial purposes.

The LDA was not initially a party to the proceedings, the Court noted during the August 4 hearing. Nevertheless, it had submitted an application to be impleaded (become a party) coupled with an affidavit.

As a result, the Court included the LDA as a respondent through its vice-chairman.

Additionally, the Court was informed that a **Special Investigation Team (SIT)** had been established in the wake of the Lucknow fire tragedy and had turned in its report.

As a result, it mandated that the SIT report be presented to it at the following hearing in a sealed cover.

Additionally, the Bench instructed LDA vice-chairman Prathmesh Kumar, who was present in court, to show up in person on the following hearing date and provide an explanation for why he should not be subject to appropriate orders for disobeying the Court's directives.