



**Government of Odisha**

**Office of Special Relief Commissioner**

No. 4524/R&DM(DM), Dt. 09.08.2021

**ORDER**

Whereas, the country continues to pass through COVID-19 and resurgence of infection is observed in some States as well as in many neighbouring countries in Asia and elsewhere in the world;

And whereas, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India vide their DO no. AS(H) Misc/2021 dated 24.03.2021 have strongly advised the States to consider imposing local restrictions in public observance of festivals.

And whereas, the State Government vide Order No.4290 /R&DM(DM) dated 31.07.2021 have issued COVID-19 Guidelines prohibiting all social/ cultural/ religious gatherings.

And whereas, the festivals/ Pujas of **Ganesh Puja, Durga Puja, Laxmi Puja, Kali Puja and other similar Puja/ festivals of other religious communities are falling in August, September, October and November of 2021** and people usually congregate & get in touch with each other to celebrate the Festivals/ Pujas during which it is not possible to adhere to COVID appropriate behaviour and such congregations have a potential to cause spread of the virus;

And whereas, it is felt necessary to issue guidelines/ instructions for observance of Puja/ celebration of festivals well in advance so that the general public as well as the Organisers of such Pujas/ Festivals will be suitably prepared;

Now, therefore, in exercise of powers conferred under Section 24(I) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 read with Rule 8(1) of the Odisha Disaster Management Rules, 2010 the following guidelines are issued in the interest of health of the general public and for containment of spread of COVID-19:

It is hereby directed that congregation for celebration of the above festivals/puja and associated religious and cultural congregations shall not be allowed in public throughout the State.

However, religious rituals in churches/ temples/mosques/places of worship will continue as usual with limited number of persons with strict adherence to Covid protocols.

The citizens are allowed to observe the said Pujas/ festivals in their premises without causing any congregation at any place and maintaining all safety protocols, such as social distancing, wearing masks, proper sanitisation, etc.

**The Puja Committees/ organisers/ in rural and urban areas are allowed to conduct puja in mandaps/ pandals as per the following instructions:**

1. For conducting Puja in Puja Pandals/ Mandaps, the organizers shall apply to and obtain necessary permission from the District Magistrate or any other officer authorised by him/ her. For the area under Commissionerate of Police of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, such permission shall be given by the Commissioner of Police of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar or any other officer authorised by him/ her.
2. Puja(s) shall be conducted in indoor-like condition only for observance of rituals without public participation, pomp and grandeur.
3. Puja Pandals/ Mandaps shall be covered on three sides. The 4<sup>th</sup> side shall also be covered in a way not to allow any public view of the idols. There shall be no darshan by public/ devotees.
4. The size of idol shall be less than 4 feet.
5. There shall be no use of public address system.
6. At any given point of time, there shall not be more than 7 persons including organisers (Kartas) and priests and support staff present in the Puja Pandal/ Mandap.
7. The persons present at Puja Pandal/ Mandap shall follow all Covid protocols of social distancing, mask use, personal hygiene and sanitation issued by Central/ State Government/ Local Administration in letter and spirit.
8. The organizers and other persons involved in conducting the Puja shall abide by any other condition(s) as imposed by Local Administration/ appropriate authority.

9. There shall be no immersion procession. The idols will be immersed in artificial pond(s) created by the local administration for the purpose.
10. There shall be no religious procession of any kind of any religious community
11. There shall be no musical or any other entertainment programme.
12. **Ganesh puja in educational institutions** is allowed with participation of limited number of students observing COVID appropriate behavior.
13. No community feast associated with any puja/ festival during the period shall be allowed.
14. All the District Magistrates/ Municipal Commissioners/ Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack shall strictly enforce the above guidelines.
  
15. **Penal provisions:** Any person violating these measures will be liable to be proceeded against in accordance with the provisions of Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and Regulations issued there under besides legal action under Section 188 of the IPC and other legal provisions as applicable.

Considering local conditions, Collectors and Municipal Commissioners may impose appropriate restrictions on entry of devotees into churches /temples /mosques/ religious places/ places of worship and in the celebrations in churches/ temples/mosques/ religious places/places of worship. Collectors/ Municipal Commissioners may decide the number of persons to attend any such religious ritual/ festival/Puja in their respective jurisdictions with strict adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour and norms.


Any person found violating this order shall be punished under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and other relevant laws.

By order of the Governor

  
Chief Secretary, Odisha

**Memo No. 4535/R&DM(DM)      Date: 09.08.2021**


Copy forwarded to the Private Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister/  
Private Secretary to all Ministers/ Chief Secretary/ Development  
Commissioner/ Agriculture Production Commissioner for kind information.

  
9/8/2021

Special Relief Commissioner &  
Additional Chief Secretary to Govt.  
(Disaster Management)

**Memo No. 4536/R&DM(DM)      Date: 09.08.2021**


Copy forwarded to the Addl. Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary/  
Commissioner-cum-Secretary of all Departments/ Director General of Police/  
Director General of Police Fire Services/Police Commissioner, Bhubaneswar-  
Cuttack/ All RDCs/ All Collectors/ All Superintendents of Police/ All Municipal  
Commissioners for kind information and immediate necessary action.

  
9/8/2021

Special Relief Commissioner &  
Additional Chief Secretary to Govt.  
(Disaster Management)

**Memo No. 4537/R&DM(DM)      Date: 09.08.2021**

Copy forwarded to the Joint Secretary (Disaster Management), Ministry  
of Home Affairs (Disaster Management Division), Government of India for kind  
information.

  
9/8/2021

Special Relief Commissioner &  
Additional Chief Secretary to Govt.  
(Disaster Management)

**OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR & DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, KALAHANDI.**

Memo No. 1040 /Covid-19 Cell/ Res.

Date. 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

Copy forwarded to the Superintendent of Police, Kalahandi/ Addl. District Magistrate, Kalahandi/ Project Director, DRDA, Kalahandi/ Sub-Collector, Bhawanipatna/ Dharamgarh/ CDM & PHO, Kalahandi/ All Block Development Officers/ All Tahasildars/ All Executive Officers of Municipality & NACs/ All Officers of Collectorate/ All Nodal Officers/ All District Level Officers of Kalahandi District for information and necessary action.

Copy to the DIO, NIC, Kalahandi with request to upload the same in Kalahandi District Portal for wide publicity of the Orders.

By the Order of Collector & DM, Kalahandi



**Asst. Collector-cum-Nodal Officer,  
COVID-19 Cell, Kalahandi.**