

## Say No to Crackers - Let's celebrate a Green Diwali

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With Diwali almost here, while almost everyone is gearing up for the celebrations, there are also apprehensions among the people of the never-ending pollution that we witness during Diwali. Various environmental groups and local organizations have started with their campaigns encouraging everyone to celebrate a Green Diwali in an eco-friendly.

Even various courts have passed judgments trying to restrict noise and smoke pollution. Also, the various NGOs and other environments protection groups have launched video campaigns which try to educate the people about the long-term and short-term environmental and health hazards of using firecrackers, the use of artificial colors for making rangoli, as well as the widespread use of large plastic boxes and thermocol plates which are disposed of after consuming the gifts and sweets within them.

Today metro cities are polluted as they were never before. Increasing vehicles on roads, carbon emission from production factories and the burning of Piral by farmers leads to extensive air pollution. We used to see a clear night sky on Diwali during our childhood but now it's only fog we see during the festival days. This is a clear sign to our generation that we should start thinking about the environment and return to our traditional way to celebrate our festivals. With things as they are, all of us share a responsibility to work towards making it a season of joy and celebration for everyone and not just a few.

We should promote using eco-friendly diyas and candles and discourage the use of Chinese lights. This will also lead to economic benefits for pot makers. Diwali is the festival of lights. Hence it can serve a dual purpose of protecting the environment as well as helping someone in need.

Ms. Anu Bajaj, a social activist on the issue of extensive use of harmful firecracker says, "Dipawali was never a festival of firecrackers but only days. Celebrating the festival with these firecrackers leads to very harmful after effects. We should promote the idea of green Diwali as much as possible and teach the masses that firecrackers are not good for their children."

If we limit Diwali to the festival of lights only by keeping alive our culture of using traditional diyas we can contribute our environment and generation in many ways, She further added.

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