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By Speed Post

DELHI POLLUTION CONTROL COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
5th FLOOR, ISBT BUILDING, KASHMERE GATE, DELHI-110006
visit us at : <http://dpcc.delhigovt.nic.in>

F.No. DPCC/Plg/IM/2006/2771-2792

Dated: 05/07/19

Subject: Revised directions u/s 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 read along with Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 for the immersion of idols on festive occasions (central act, 29 of 1986).

Whereas, on festive occasions such as Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja, Sarswati Puja etc., it has been a tradition to immerse idols in water bodies like rivers, lakes, ponds, wells etc. Consequent pollution of such water bodies has been a matter of concern and there have been public interest litigations as well. In addition to silting, toxic chemicals used in making idols tend to reach out and pose serious problems of water pollution. Studies carried out to assess deterioration in water quality due to idol immersion reveal deterioration of water quality in respect to Conductivity, Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand and Heavy Metal Concentration.

And whereas, Central Pollution Control Board has issued the Guidelines for immersion of idols and other puja materials reaching in the water bodies during festival.

And whereas, the chemical paints, colours and dyes applied on such PoP idols contain hazardous chemicals / elements like Mercury, Zinc Oxide, Chromium, Lead, Cadmium etc. which causes harmful effects to aquatic life, which when consumed by humans may cause cancer and other diseases including respiratory ailments, skin infections etc. The PoP also contains chemicals / elements like Gypsum, Sulphur, Potassium and Magnesium which causes harmful effects to aquatic life (flora & fauna) and in turn causes harmful health effects, if such aquatic life are consumed by human beings.

And whereas, Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) is monitoring various activities causing pollution in River Yamuna through O.A. No. 6 of 2012 entitled, "Manoj Mishra Vs U.O.I. and Ors." And O.A. No. 300 entitled, "Manoj Mishra and Madhu Bhandhari Vs U.O.I. and Ors" had pronounced various directions w.r.t. any type of visarjan in River Yamuna vide orders dated 13.01.2015 and 16.09.2015. The orders prohibit throwing pooja material or any other material like food-grain, oil, etc into river Yamuna except on the designated site. Any person who is found disobeying this direction shall be liable to pay compensation of Rs. 5,000/- on the "Polluter Pays" Principle.

And whereas, as per the provisions Section 15 of Environmental Protection Act, 1986 "Whoever fails to comply with or contravenes any of the provisions of this Act, or the rules made or orders or directions issued thereunder, shall, in respect of each such failure or contravention, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees, or with both, and in case the failure or contravention continues, with additional fine which may extend to five thousand rupees for every day during which such failure or contravention

continues after the conviction for the first such failure or contravention".

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And Whereas, inspite of directions not to use Plaster of Paris in making idols, several Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols and other non-recommended materials are being used in making Idols/ are being imported from neighboring states for sale in Delhi during the Festivals.

Now therefore, by virtue of the powers conferred under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 vide Notification No. S. O. 881 (E) dated 22 / 09 / 1988, by the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Government of India; Delhi Pollution Control Committee hereby issues following directions:

A. General Directions for Idol Makers/ Sellers of Idols / Puja Samitis making Idols in-situ:

1. Idols be made only from natural materials as described in the holy scripts. Use of traditional clay for idol is permitted. Uses of Baked clay, plaster of paris, etc. in idol making are hereby prohibited.
2. Painting of Idols be discouraged. In case idols are to be painted, water soluble and nontoxic natural dyes only be used. Use of toxic and non-biodegradable chemical dyes for painting idols is strictly prohibited.

B. General Directions for Pooja Samitis/General Public:

1. Worship material like flowers, decorating material (made of paper and plastic) etc. be removed before immersion of idols and be put at designated places so that the same may be recycled, composted or disposed of in an environmental safe manner.
2. Make small size idols not more than 5 feet in height so that those can be immersed in ponds to be prepared at designated sites.
3. Immerse idols only at the designated places identified by Govt. of NCT of Delhi/ Concerned Municipal Corporation of Delhi.
4. Separate bins/receptacles have been provided on the ingress and egress of all the Yamuna Bridges for placing Pooja Samagri and flowers separately and no pooja material be disposed directly in the river.

C. General Directions for Local Bodies/ Authorities:

1. Bio-degradable materials to be collected separately for recycling or composting.
2. Non-biodegradable materials to be collected separately for disposal in sanitary landfills.
3. Public be educated on ill effects of immersion in the holy water bodies through mass awareness programme.
4. The 'Idol Immersion Points' shall be cordoned off and barricaded. Synthetic liner may be placed in the bottom, well in advance. The said liner shall be removed on the completion of immersion ceremony so that remains of idols would be brought to the bank. Bamboo and wooden logs, if any would be reused. Clay etc. may be taken to sanitary land fill for disposal.
5. Within 48 hours of the immersion of idols, the left over material at idol immersion points on

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the banks of rivers, lakes, ponds, etc. be collected by the local bodies for disposal as per the Guidelines issued by CPCB.

6. In case of immersion of idols in rivers and lakes, arrangement may be made for construction of temporary confined ponds with earthen bunds for the purpose of immersion of idols. After the completion of immersion, supernatant water may be allowed to flow in river, pond and lake, as the case may be, after checking for colour and turbidity. Lime may be added in temporary confined ponds.
7. In case of immersion of idols in lakes or ponds, all the flowers, leaves and artificial ornaments of idols be removed and idols may be immersed into a corner of pond using removable synthetic liners in the bottom. Post immersion, liners may be taken out along with remains of idols and lime be added to the pond water for settling the solids. De-sludging of the pond be undertaken afterwards.
8. Temporary ponds having earthen bunds should be created as idol immersion spots. Removable synthetic liner may be placed well in advance in bottom of pond. The said liner along with remains of idols be removed from the point within 48 hours of immersion of idols.
9. All the Municipal bodies, Delhi Police shall check the entry of vehicles / Goods carriers entering the Delhi carrying such PoP idols as its cargo, prevent the entry of the vehicle and attach the vehicle / goods carrier and hand it over to the Police Authorities at the nearest Police Check Post / Police Station.

All the Municipal bodies shall also issue relevant directions to all Zonal Offices to identify locations of illegal sale of PoP idols and shall take necessary action against such illegal sale and also to take action against illegal idol making being done without registration with Revenue Department or is done on unauthorized land.
10. The Delhi Police shall issue relevant directions to the Police Officers at the Police Check Post / Police Station, to take appropriate action against the offenders violating these directions.
11. All the Municipal bodies, shall ensure that all permanent and temporary licensed establishments in Delhi do not conduct any sale of PoP idols during Festivals.
12. District Magistrate shall enforce the above directions by issuing relevant instructions to the concerned officials for monitoring and enforcement of the directions. If any person is violating the above directions then Rs 5000/- as environment compensation be levied, collected and deposited with DPCC
13. All local Bodies/Revenue department shall give wide publicity for mass awareness.

All the concerned agencies are also directed to submit Action Taken Report every fortnight w.e.f 1st July, 2019 to Delhi Pollution Control Committee.


(Sanjeev Khirwar)
Chairman

To,

1. The Commissioner, North Delhi Municipal Corporation, 4th Floor, Civic Centre, Minto Road, New Delhi-110002.
2. The Commissioner, East Delhi Municipal Corporation, 419, Udyog Sadan, Patparganj Industrial Area, Patparganj, Delhi 110092
3. The Commissioner, South Delhi Municipal Corporation, 9th Floor, Civic Centre, Minto Road, New Delhi-110002.
4. The Chairman, New Delhi Municipal Council, Palika Kendra, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001
5. The Chief Executive Officer, Office of Cantonment Board, Sadar Bazar, Delhi Cantt, Delhi-110010.
6. The Divisional Commissioner, Government of NCT of Delhi, 5, Sham Nath Marg, Delhi-110 054.
7. Commissioner of Transport, Transport Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, 5/9, Under Hill Road, Delhi-110054.
8. The Commissioner of Police, Delhi Police, 2nd Floor, MSO Building, Police Headquarter, ITO, Delhi - 110002
9. The Commissioner of Industry, Department of Industry, Udyog Sadan, 419 FIE, Patparganj, Delhi-110092
10. All Pooja Samitis (as per list)

Copy to:

1. The Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board, Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032
2. PS to Secretary (Environment) Cum Chairman, DPCC- for kind information to Chairman, DPCC please.
3. Director (Env.)- for uploading at website of Dept of Env, NCT of Delhi
4. Incharge (IT), DPCC- for uploading at website of DPCC.

Arun Mishra
 (Arun Mishra)
 Member Secretary