

# Students urged to enjoy a noise-free festival

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**GURGAON:** In the light of rising pollution levels in Gurgaon and the Supreme Court's ban on the sale of fire crackers, city schools have advised the students to celebrate a 'green' Diwali without bursting crackers.

Several activities such as skit competition, lantern making, dance competition, poster making, diya and rangoli decorations were held to drive home the message and reinforce the pledge to celebrate a green Diwali.

On October 13, the Punjab and Haryana high court delivered a judgment allowing residents to burst crackers for just three hours on Diwali — between 6.30pm and 9.30pm.

Students were also apprised of the fact that Diwali is not one-day festival, but, in fact, part of a five-day festivity comprising Dhanteras, Chhoti Diwali, Diwali, Govardhan Pooja and Bhai Dooj. Principals and teachers also made the students aware of customs and tradition surrounding these festivals.

"We dedicated the entire week towards helping children understand the harmful impact of bursting crackers on our environment, loved ones and animals.



Students learn to make and paint earthen diyas at Shiv Nadar School.

We shot a video of children taking a pledge to celebrate a safe and noise-free Diwali and shared it with their parents," Neeti C Kaushik, principal, Mount Olympus School, said.

"In our bid to sensitise children on the need to celebrate a green and cracker-free Diwali, pre-primary students, from Nursery to class 5, painted diyas and made posters on the theme 'Say

no to crackers'. All mid-level and senior students were exhorted to have a cracker-free and green Diwali and involve people from economically weaker sections in celebrating the Festival of Lights," Monica Sagar, principal, Shiv Nadar School, said.

Children of expats enacted various characters from the epic Ramayana in 'Laghu Ramayan', a stage performance by students

of Lancer International School on Tuesday.

Kimaya, a resident of Austria who played the role of Sita, said "I look forward to Diwali each year as it is my favourite festival. I celebrated the festival of lights in Austria last year and this would be my first Diwali in India. Being a girl, it is, indeed, empowering to see people worshipping Goddess Laxmi. I urge people to spread the

message of kindness and celebrate the festival vibrantly."

A poster-making competition was organised at Suncity School for students of Class 3 and 4 through which they urged people to celebrate Green Diwali.

Vega School educated learners about using one's resources responsibly and for the greater good of the society. A special assembly on Diwali will be hosted on Wednesday by the students wherein the grade 5 learners will perform a 'Nukkad Natak (street play)' with the aim of spreading awareness on safe and environment-friendly ways of celebrating Diwali.

Schools also highlighted hazards, including pollution, fire, burns and animal-related injuries, to make learners understand the need to celebrate responsibly. "The eco club of the institution has been working hard to spread awareness on this issue among students. The club members staged nukkad-nataks, short skits and also organised in-school rallies. Intra-school competitions such as slogan writing, poster-making, declamation and debate on a cracker-free Diwali was conducted enthusiastically by the teachers and the students," Vaibhav Kapoor, principal, Ajanta Public School, said.