

**POLICY FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY
SAFE MAKING & IMMERSION OF
IDOLS/TAZIA AND ITS
ENFORCEMENT**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, clay is used to make religious idols during festive seasons. Over the years however, Plaster of Paris (PoP), which is lighter and cheaper, has become the favored material to mould idols. PoP is also often used in making Tazia's and other religious idols. PoP contains chemicals such as Gypsum, Sulphur, Phosphorus, and Magnesium. The chemical dyes used to colour idols/Tazia may also contain Mercury, Cadmium, Arsenic, Lead, and Carbon. Plastic and Thermocol accessories are used to decorate idols/Tazia. Such materials are not biodegradable, hence are toxic when immersed in water bodies and released into terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem.

Impact of Plaster of Paris (PoP)

Plaster of Paris (known as Calcium Sulphate) is not easily soluble in water. Once Plaster of Paris (PoP) made idols are immersed into water bodies, the material turns into gypsum paste. Moreover, the process of PoP idol breakdown is very slow. During breakdown, the hardness of water increases by increased concentration of Calcium and Magnesium. The aquatic and Terrestrial ecosystems are degraded due to the immersion of PoP idols into water. These facts are also indicated by the researchers in various national and international journals.

Impact of Oil Paints and Synthetic Colours

Use of oil paints and synthetic colours for painting and decorating all kinds of

idols/Tazia, whether made in clay or PoP or some other material also poses adverse environmental impact as the oil or synthetic paints cause high degree of damage to the environment. They pose serious threat to aquatic life and environment. Oil paint and synthetic colours contain heavy metals like Mercury, Cadmium and Lead which are neurotoxic and nephrotoxic and have bio-accumulative properties, which once they enter aquatic life like fish, they continue to be in the food chain and end up in the food that we eat.

Several orders have been passed by Hon'ble NGT and Hon'ble High Courts in various matters emphasizing the use of biodegradable materials for the manufacture of idols and to avoid immersion of idols made of PoP in water bodies.

In the matter of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) / W.P.(C) No. 1325/2003 in the matter of Janhit Manch Vs. The State of Maharashtra & Ors., Hon'ble High Court of Bombay vide order dated 22/07/2008 has given the following directions to the Central Government:-

“We expect that the Central Govt. will consider laying down of guidelines for immersion of idols and would also consider related matters with regard to pollution of water bodies. Both the Union Government as well as the State Government shall consider it expeditiously because the time lost involving the pollution might prove dangerous for environment of the country in long run”

In pursuance to the directions of Hon'ble High Court, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Chairman,

Central Pollution Control Board, vide order No. A-22011/1/90-Mon, dated February 10, 2009. The constituted Committee held meetings with the concerned stakeholders and discussed the issues including identification of designated places for idol immersion in the river stretch, use of natural materials in “*Pooja*”, mass awareness programs to be initiated every year before commencement of all activities of worship and idol immersion. Subsequently, based on the recommendations of the Committee, in the year 2010, CPCB finalized “Guidelines for Idol Immersion” and circulated to all the stakeholders for ensuring its implementation. These guidelines have been prepared with a view to ensure environmental friendly idol immersion without affecting the quality of water bodies. These guidelines emphasize the need for restriction on single use plastic materials for making idols, use of naturally occurring colors for coloring idols, imposing restrictions on size of the idol, construction of temporary synthetic lined ponds of adequate capacity, etc.

During the last few years, there has been some developments in terms of substitutes for various materials used for idols making as well as disposal of idol immersions in temporary artificial designated ponds/tanks, earlier guidelines circulated by CPCB in the year 2010 has been revised in May 2020 after taking views of stakeholders specially emphasizing use of naturally occurring clay, natural/ecofriendly colors in place of synthetic paints and chemicals for coloring idols, arrangement for the provision of temporary confined ponds or tanks for immersion of idols, imposing spot fine for violation of guidelines, safe disposal of solid wastes generated during visarjan/immersion activities, development of

market system whereby manufacturers or craftsman or artisans themselves can reuse and other aspects have been considered and incorporated appropriately as felt necessary.

CPCB advised all stakeholders vide letter dated 28th May 2020 and 23rd July 2021 for ensuring implementation of the said revised guidelines with effect from 1st Jan. 2021.

Hon'ble NGT in the matter of OA No. 38 of 2021 referred CPCB guidelines in its order dated 05.07.2021 and observed that while there may be some opinions about PoP being less polluting or less harmful, the same cannot be taken as conclusive. There can be differing opinions on the subject. The Hon'ble Tribunal also noted that PoP idols need use of chemical paints which are certainly harmful for water quality. Under such circumstances, the Hon'ble Tribunal did not find any ground to entertain the application which was dismissed. Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Civil Appeal no. 6296 of 2021, vide order dated 25.10.2021, has dismissed the Civil Appeal and disposed of all pending applications in this regard seeing no reason to interfere.

Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation No. 3 of 2021 has taken up by Hon'ble High Court at Bombay, Nagpur Bench, Nagpur and the Hon'ble High Court vide order dated 13.07.2022 and 12.08.2022 directed State Government of Maharashtra to frame a suitable policy for regulating the use of PoP idols and Oil paints containing the requisite regulations, prohibitions, machinery for implementation of the policy, mechanism for dealing with the policy non-compliances and

consequences which would follow on violation of the policy.

In order to safe guard the environment, need has been felt to develop policy and its implementation/enforcement for environmentally safe making & immersion of idols/Tazia in environmentally sound manner in the State. The Gov. of Maharashtra constituted two committees as follows:

A) Administrative committee comprising of:

1. Member Secretary of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai as a Chairman of the committee)
2. Deputy Secretary or above rank, Rural Development Dept, Govt. of Maharashtra.
3. Deputy Secretary or above rank Urban Development Dept, Govt. of Maharashtra.
4. Deputy Secretary or above rank, Environmental and Climate Change Dept, Govt. of Maharashtra.
5. Joint Director WPC, MPC Board as Convener of this committee

The TOR of the committee is preparation of the policy for idol immersion in the ecofriendly manner in pursuant to the order dtd. 13.07.2022 of the Hon'ble High Court (Suo Moto PIL no. 3/2021)

B) Technical Committee comprising of:

1. Member Secretary of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Mumbai as Chairman of the committee.

2. Representative of Central Pollution Control Board,
3. Dr. Rakesh Kumar, OSD, CSIR
4. Representative of Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay and/or
Representative of Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai.
5. Representative of Murtikar Sanghatana
6. Joint Director (WPC), MPC Board as a Member Secretary

Terms of References:

1. To prepare and submit report including recommendations and mitigation measures for abatement of Pollution during Celebration of Festivals with respect to immersion of idols in natural water bodies considering following points-
 - a) To verify the possibility of use of Plaster of Paris for making idols in Eco Friendly manner.
 - b) To suggest alternative material to Plaster of Paris for making idols in Eco Friendly manner.
 - c) To recommend mitigation measures for abating water pollution due to immersion of idols in natural water bodies.
2. The Technical Committee shall submit their report to the Government of Maharashtra within three months.
3. The expenses towards functioning of technical committee shall be borne by the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.
4. The tenure of the technical committee will be till submission of the report.

To evolve a policy for regulating the use of PoP idols/Tazias and oil/synthetic paints, single use plastic, Thermocol, etc. and immersion of idols/Tazias in an environmentally safe manner and regulating the use of PoP idols and Oil paints containing the requisite regulations, prohibitions, Machinery for implementation of the policy, mechanism for dealing with the policy non-compliances and consequences, the above mentioned administrative committee deliberated on the issues.

The committee conducted meetings on 12.08.2022, 17.08.2022, 23.08.2022 and 25.08.2022, discussed about the present practices of idol making and immersion rituals and practices of different religions observed in state throughout the year. Committee also discussed about the prevailing practices as well as best practices being followed including donation of idols, immersion of idols at home, use of smaller idols, one village one idol celebration etc being followed at different parts of the state. The committee also discussed about the efforts being taken by MPCB in promoting ecofriendly celebrations of different festivals and its efforts in promoting use of natural material for idol making and use of ecofriendly colours and other materials (Enclosed as MPCB's Public Awareness activities, **Annexure- I**). The guidelines issued by the Central Pollution Control Board in 2020 was also deliberated which are very exhaustive and comprehensive and cover almost all aspects regarding the environmentally safe idol making and immersion.

After detailed deliberation, the committee is in agreement with the CPCB

guidelines issued in 2020 and accordingly framed policy which is narrated as below.

2.0 POLICY FOR IDOL MAKERS-CRAFTSMANS OR ARTISANS

1. Idols made up of only natural, bio-degradable, eco-friendly raw materials without any toxic, inorganic raw materials [such as traditional virtuous clay and mud as well as free from Plaster of Paris (PoP), plastic and thermocol (polystyrene)] should be encouraged, allowed/promoted and Idols made up of Plaster of Paris (PoP) shall be banned.
2. Only dried flower components, straw etc. for making ornaments of idols and natural resins of trees may be used as a shining material for making idols attractive.
3. Use of Single use plastic and thermocol materials shall not be permitted strictly and only eco-friendly materials as straw structure should be used in making idols or decoration of idols/pandals/tazias in order to prevent pollution in recipient water bodies.
4. Use of toxic and non-biodegradable chemical dyes/oil paints for painting idols should be strictly prohibited. Enamel and synthetic dye based paints on idols should be discouraged instead eco-friendly water-based, bio-degradable and non-toxic natural dyes should be used.
5. For beautification of idols, removable and washable decorative clothes

made only with natural materials and dyes shall be used in place of disposable material containing paints and other toxic chemicals. Only naturally occurring colors from plants (flowers, barks, stamens, leaves, roots, seeds, whole fruits), feathers of different birds, mineral or naturally colored rocks shall be used for coloring.

6. Craftsmen or artisans or manufacturer involved in making idols should be registered with the civic bodies and should involve in making eco-friendly idols in accordance with these guidelines. In case of Large-Scale Idol manufacturers (at least involved in making more than 100 idols in a day) shall obtain registration from the concerned local body (registration fee along with a deposit as decided by the ULB depending on the idol making capacity) and failing to comply with these guidelines or any violation of registration conditions, the deposit shall be forfeited by the local body apart from prohibition of idol making at least for two years.

The manufacturers should advocate customers that they will perform immersion of these idols in ecofriendly manner

7. In the interest of protection of the environment, the craftsman or artisans should prefer to adopt innovative approaches like use of natural clay, ecofriendly colours, bamboo, wood, metal, natural clay mixed with alum for making idols (on disintegration of idol made out of mud mixed with alum in water, then alum act as a coagulant).

3.0 POLICY FOR POOJA ORGANISING COMMITTEES

- (i) As far as possible, low height and eco-friendly idols (made with natural clay, idols stuffed with eco-friendly food materials such as corn, spinach, wheat and vegetable powder), idols decorated with biodegradable, organic colours such as turmeric, chandan and gerua etc., (list of natural, bio-degradable and non-toxic material annexed as **Annexure-II**) only should be used for offering poojas to adverse impact on environment.
- (ii) Use of cleaned multi-use metallic or glass or plastic utensils (except banned Single Use Plastic items as annexed as **Annexure-III**) is ideal choice, especially when such material is available from utensil banks. Only biodegradable plates such as Patravali or Pattal made with broad dried leaves such as Areca/Banana/Banyan/Sal leaves, metal cups/plates and earthen pots may be used in place of single use plastic and polystyrene (Thermocol) for prasad distribution and other purposes.
- (iii) Worship material like flowers, Patri (leaves), vastras (clothes), decorating materials shall be segregated, stored and disposed as per Solid Waste Management Rules 2016. The material used for pooja and decoration of idol shall be removed before immersion of idol and disposed of as per provision of Solid Waste Management Rules 2016.
- (iv) In the interest of protection of the environment, Pooja Organizing

Committees should procure eco-friendly idols only from the respective local bodies registered or authorized craftsman or artisans.

- (v) Pooja Organising Committees should seek prior permission from concerned ULB as the case may be by providing management plan and the required provisions (as per the format to be issued by the local bodies) for ensuring safe idol immersion during festival season well before one month in advance for making necessary arrangements in consultation with the concerned departments.

4.0 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AND URBAN AUTHORITIES

- (i) Licenses/permits may be granted by the Local and Urban Bodies within the respective jurisdiction to only those Idol manufacturers or makers or craftsman or artisans who uses only eco-friendly natural clay materials (but not PoP or baked clay) in making idols, prior to festive times.

Also, large scale manufacturers (involved in making idols more than 100 in a day) shall obtain registration from the concerned local bodies along with the prescribed fee and a deposit (as decided by the ULB depending on the idol making capacity). Registered idol manufacturer or maker or craftsman or artisan failing to comply with these guidelines or any violation of registration or permission conditions, registration or permission granted shall be cancelled apart from prohibition of idol

making manufacturer at least for two years and in case of idol manufacturer, the deposit shall be forfeited by the respective local bodies. The idols brought from outside of local body should conform to this policy.

- (ii) While granting licenses or permits to the idol makers a list of permitted and non-permitted substances to be used for making/coloring/decorating idols may be provided to the Idol makers or craftsman or artisans.
- (iii) Only registered or licensed idol maker or craftsmen or artisans should be strictly allowed to make idols within the jurisdiction of the respective Urban and Local Bodies as the case may be, in accordance with these guidelines.
- (iv) As far as possible, instead of immersion of idols in water bodies, all the resident welfare associations or individual households in a city or town or village should be encouraged to create temporary ponds/tanks of suitable size and adequate capacity with necessary provision for collection and storage of segregated waste prior to immersion, and public should be involved for immersion of idols in such temporary/artificial ponds/tanks made by the resident welfare association or individual household within their campus itself. The waste generated from designated idol immersion activity sites shall be collected and disposed of safely by the local body within 24/48 hours of completion of

the idol immersion activity.

- (v) Arrangements for temporary artificial idol immersion ponds or tanks in close vicinity of the public or on the banks of water bodies with all necessary safety provisions and waste collection centers prior to idol immersion should be arranged for ensuring safe idol immersion during festive season, by the concerned local body in association with the other departments as well as Pooja Organizing Committees.
- (vi) The temporary 'Idol Immersion Ponds/Tanks with the liner made with well graded/highly impervious clay or eco synthetic liner should be arranged at suitable locations including on the banks of rivers or stagnant water bodies such as ponds or lakes shall be cordoned off and barricaded by local body and with all other necessary provisions keeping in view safety of the public (such as proper access, approach roads, sign boards, fire safety measure, barricades, designated space for keeping idols prior to immersion, suitable platform with crane provision for idol immersion).
- (vii) In the interest of protection of environment, Urban and Local bodies shall suitably regulate the height of the idol depending on the availability of water bodies, provisions made for idol immersions by the local body.
- (viii) Waste collection center in the vicinity of the designated

temporary/artificial idol immersion sites or locations should be arranged for ensuring collection of segregated materials (such as flowers, leaves, decorating materials etc.,) prior to idol immersion. All waste collection centers should have a provision of colour coded bins of adequate size for collection and storage of segregated materials.

- (ix) Also, all the collected and segregated materials should be transported and disposed of periodically or within 24 hours of completion of idol immersion in accordance with the prevailing provisions of Solid Waste Management Rules 2016, as amended notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Bio-degradable materials for composting and non-biodegradable materials for recycling/ultimate disposal in sanitary landfills by the concerned Urban or Local Authorities, as the case may be.
- (x) After completion of the idol immersion ceremony, within 24/48 hours, the liner material shall be removed, and the temporary pits or tanks should be filled with native soil and levelled properly. Other disposable materials shall be managed in accordance with these guidelines (i.e., Clay, Bamboo and wooden logs, if any may be reused). The straw structure materials recovered from designated temporary or artificial immersion areas or spots shall be retrieved and processed for converting into organic manure.
- (xi) Public should be sensitized on aspects relating to procurement of eco-friendly idols only from the licensed or permitted idol makers or

craftsman or artisans, location details of such idol makers, type of materials to be used for ill effects of immersion of idols/Tazias in the designated water bodies and the existing guidelines for idol immersion through mass awareness programme.

- (xii) Immersion of Idols/ Tazia and others important idols of all religious, cultural, social importance should be performed in Eco- friendly manner.

- (xiii) Local Bodies /Urban Bodies/District Authorities should make efforts to identify and arrange adequate number of designated temporary or artificial immersion ponds or tanks in consultation with River/Pond Authority, Port Authority, Water Supply Board, Irrigation Department and other concerned State Departments, in the close vicinity of the public colonies (such as open grounds) to avoid over crowding at the water bodies and also to reduce pollution load on receiving designated water bodies. In case, the designated temporary artificial ponds or tanks are required to be arranged on the bank of the river, in such a case, it should be arranged at suitable places where flow of river/ stream is safe to the public, does not inundate in case of increase in flow of river during idol immersion period and river is cordoned off and barricaded suitably to avoid any loss of life especially during immersion activities.

- (xiv) A co-ordination Committee comprising local Police Department, Non-Government Organizations, Local Authorities, MPCB, representatives of *pooja organizing* committees and other concerned stakeholders may be

set up for guiding the public in carrying out the immersion in ecofriendly manner

- (xv) To ensure safe immersion of idols during festive season, local body should deploy adequate number of staff at all the designated idol immersion spots under overall supervision of the nodal officer to be designated by the concerned local body. The Nodal Officers should co-ordinate with the co- ordination committee constituted by the local body.
- (xvi) Details regarding arranged designated temporary or artificial immersion spots or areas need to be notified to public as well as pooja organizing committees preferably at least one week in advance of idol immersion through electronic and local media in vernacular language.
- (xvii) Sanitary workers shall also be deployed at all the temporary immersion sites for ensuring removal of bio-degradable items like flowers, leaves, clothes, ornaments etc. prior to idol immersion at the designated areas. local body shall provide separate color-coded bins for collection and segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes at immersion spots.
- (xviii) Littering or burning of solid wastes comprising of used flowers, clothes, decorating materials, recovered material such as Bamboo and wooden logs, straw structures etc. so generated at the immersion sites or on the

banks of water body should be strictly prohibited.

- (xix) In case of immersion of idols in rivers, lakes and ponds is inevitable, arrangement may be made for construction of adequate capacity temporary confined areas at designated places with earthen bunds for the purpose of immersion of idols at least 50 m away from the waterbody. Temporary immersion ponds shall have a free board of at least 50 cm. Temporary ponds should be constructed with impervious liner (made with well graded/highly impervious clay or eco synthetic liner) with a provision of adequate landing platform for keeping the crane for idol immersion. Water in the temporary or artificial immersion ponds or tanks may be drawn from the nearby water body. After completion of immersion, only supernatant water may be allowed to flow into river/pond/lake, as the case may be, after checking for colour and turbidity as per BIS specification for Drinking Water IS 10500:2012. Natural coagulants shall be used for pre- treatment of waste water mainly composed of polymers of natural origin extracted from plants, algae or animals. Among these are polysaccharides and water soluble substances that act as coagulation and / or flocculation agents, including microbial polysaccharides, starches, gelatin galactomannans, cellulose derivatives, chitosan, glues, and alginate.
- (xx) Concerned Local Body Authorities should consider option of construction of permanent cemented large sized artificial tanks for immersion of

idols/Tazias at suitable places for a village or town or city to avoid direct immersion of idols into lakes/rivers/ ponds/sea.

- (xxi) Proper Sign Boards showing location of temporary idol immersion ponds/tanks, route charts to be provided at all strategic points and also create awareness through local newspapers/electronic media in vernacular language, atleast one week in advance at all the strategic points by the local body.

- (xxii) The Pooja Organizing Committees/Local or Urban Bodies/ District Authorities be involved in organizing a public campaign on the ill effects of the toxic components of coloring materials, not only of the idols, but also other decorating materials used during the festive season, for immersing (visarjan) the idol or 'pratima' or tazias only in designated temporary artificial ponds or tanks. Specific leaflets and poster for mass awareness may be prepared in vernacular languages and displayed at strategic points. Further, the Pooja committees/Local or Urban Bodies/ District Authorities also be persuaded to display such posters and distribute leaflets among worshippers involving Eco Clubs, NGOs, Education Institutes/Universities and Schools.

- (xxiii) Idol makers, pooja Committees may also be awarded for promotion of clay idols made with natural colors. Imposing Spot fine for violation of these guidelines also be practiced by the Local and Urban Authorities.

(xxiv) Local body shall make arrangements for movable artificial tanks to reach residential welfare societies where people can do idol immersion without crowding and polluting the water bodies to avoid uncontrolled crowd conditions at Ghats during idol immersion.

(xxv) Management of waste and treatment of polluted water generated from the designated temporary Idol Immersion ponds or tanks should be carried out as detailed below:-

(a) As far as possible, under the principle of 3 R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle), the concern local body shall practice reuse/recycle the immersed idols.

(b) Community festivals with large idols should be given permission by local body only when the organizers submit a detailed management plan prepared in line with the prevailing rules or guidelines issued from time to time on environmental management charge basis to be decided by the Local/Urban Bodies. The bamboo scaffolding/metal sub structure on which large idols are built shall be reused as far as possible and may be collected separately from the degradable remains.

(c) The waste water collected from the designated temporary artificial ponds/tanks after ensuring on-site pre-treatment shall be discharged

into public sewers leading to the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs)/ Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs).

- (d) Disintegrated material/Non-biodegradable materials shall be dealt as per provisions of the Solid Waste Management Rule 2016, as amended from time to time.

5.0 POLICY FOR IDOL IMMERSION IN RIVERS, LAKES, DUGWELLS AND PONDS

- (i) As far as possible idol immersion in Rivers/Ponds/Lakes shall be discouraged except only at specific designated artificial confined tanks/ponds with liner made with well graded/highly impervious clay or eco synthetic liner, on the banks.
- (ii) A temporary artificial tank or pond with liner made with well graded/highly impervious clay or synthetic liner (HDPE), and having earthen bunds on the bank of the river/lake/pond shall be created for Idol Immersion by the concerned local body.

In case of immersion of idols in rivers, lakes or ponds is inevitable, a designated location (having proper approach, access, corner portion of a river/pond/lake, having shallow depth of water in river or lakes or ponds) should be identified so as to avoid contamination of water body along with safety provision preferably steel or wooden barricades shall be made by concerned local body.

- (iii) All the flowers, leaves and artificial ornaments of idols should be removed prior to immersion of idols and only such idols may be immersed in a designated place provided with safety provisions.

- (iv) Lime or alum or any other equivalent coagulant should be added in designated temporary lined pond/tank as pre-treatment option for ensuring settling of solids. After completion of immersion, only supernatant water may be allowed to flow into river/pond/lake, as the case may be, after checking for colour and turbidity as per BIS specification for Drinking Water IS 10500:2012.

- (v) Post immersion, leftover material shall be disposed as per Solid Waste Management Rules 2016 as amended thereafter, within 24/48 hours by the concerned local body, as per these guidelines.

- (vi) Immersion of idols irrespective of material used for idol making and size shall be discouraged and over the period it should not be allowed in a land locked water bodies such as dug well, ponds, lake, dam used for drinking and fishing purpose. The 'Idol Immersion Points' shall be cordoned and barricaded at lake and artificial ponds. Synthetic liner, Bambo and wooden logs may be placed in the bottom, well in advance. The said liner shall be removed on completion of immersion ceremony so that remains of idols could be taken to suitable place for safe disposal. Local body should provide artificial ponds with impervious liner of adequate depth

and size/volume to facilitate idol immersion.

- (vii) Idol immersion should be avoided in lakes, streams, wells, rivers or designated natural water bodies which may be used for drinking water purpose.
- (viii) In case of immersion of idols in lakes or ponds, all the flowers, leaves and worship material(Nirmalya) of idols should be removed and idols may be immersed.
- (ix) Post immersion, liners may be taken out along with remains of idols and lime should be added to the pond water for settling the solids. Desludging of the pond should be undertaken afterwards.
- (x) Temporary ponds having earthen bunds along river bank should be created as idol immersion spots. Removable synthetic liner may be placed well in advance inside the cordoned area. The said liner along with remains of idols should be removed within 24 / 48 hours of immersion of idols. Also, other measures as suggested in this policy document be also followed.
- (xi) In order to protect the quality of water, the places such as drinking water source from back waters of the dam or back water from Kolhapur type Bandhara used for drinking purpose shall be avoided for idol immersion.
- (xii) Pre and post immersion water quality monitoring and implementation shall be carried out by Local body with local assistance of experts,

institutions and/or government departments.

- (xiii) Immersion of idol in well which is used for drinking water purpose should be completely prohibited. Idol immersion in well water is common in many villages where no lake river or sea shore exists. In such villages local body should provide artificial pond / tank for immersion.

6.0 POLICY FOR IDOL IMMERSION IN SEA

- (i) In case of Idol immersion in sea, immersion may be done between low tide line (LTL) and high tide line (HTL) (irrespective of its depth) and only at designated areas identified by the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authorities (MCZMA), District Coastal Zone Management Authority (DCZMA). The low-tide line and high tide lines may be identified and marked well in advance by the local body in consultation with the concerned authorities.
- (ii) Immersion of Idols in High Tide Line (HTL) & Low Tide Line (LTL) into the sea may be permitted only in Non-Eco-Sensitive Areas earmarked previously in consultation with all the concerned agencies approved by Govt. of India for demarcation of HTL, LTL, Eco-sensitive area etc.
- (iii) Home Dept. (Marine Police) GoM. dealing with safety & security in coastal areas shall take care of the necessary arrangements such as Motor Boats with security personnel/home guards with adequate safety equipment be deployed to supervise idol immersion activities during

festive season.

- (iv) In case of Idol immersion in sea, immersion plan should be based on size of idol with sufficient depth of water. Motor Boat, tarafa (buoys) with life guards with adequate safety equipments be deployed to supervise the immersion. The monitoring and implementation responsibility lies on Local body.
- (v) In creeks, lagoons and estuaries idol immersion must be planned considering tidal influence/variations on the day of immersion and post immersion days. Immersion shall be beyond certain depth expected on low tide on subsequent days to avoid re suspension of idols along the bank (s). It is also advised to consider tidal currents in the estuaries/creeks to identify suitable temporary locations/ jetty.

7.0 POLICY FOR IDOL IMMERSION BY HOUSEHOLDS

- (i) Individual households should be encouraged to use only eco-friendly idols made of natural clay and bio-degradable materials as decorative and pooja materials.
- (ii) As far as possible, immersion of small idols should be done at homes in eco-friendly manner i.e., in a bucket filled with water and idol be kept in immersed state until it dissolves completely. After settlement of settleable and colloidal solids (if required alum powder or any other equivalent coagulant may be mixed and stirred vigorously using a stick at

least for 30 seconds and thereafter slow mixing at least for 30 seconds and then allowed to settle), the supernatant liquid may be used either in gardening or discharged in a drain. Settled mud can be dried and then reused further for future idol making or may be used in gardening as soil.

- (iii) In case, individual households intend to perform idol immersions, then idols should be immersed only in the designated on-land temporary artificial ponds or tanks located nearby or artificial movable tanks arranged by the local body.
- (iv) Smaller idols should be practiced at household level and reduction of number of idols should be attempted such as one village one idol or one society one idol to reduce the volume of idols immersion.
- (v) Effort should be taken by the local bodies to create awareness amongst peoples to use metal idols and reusable idols.

8.0 ROLE OF MAHARASHTRA POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

- (i) Maharashtra Pollution Control Board should conduct water quality assessment of the water bodies, preferably in Class-I cities (having population more than one lac), at three stages i.e. Pre-immersion, during immersion and post-immersion. During festival, samples should be collected preferably after 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th day of the festival. Urban local body and District Administration with the help of public health laboratories, GSDA, MPCB laboratories & NABL accredited laboratories should also monitor the water quality.

- (ii) Considering the size of water body, appropriate number of sampling locations may be determined in order to get a fairly representative assessment of water quality during the afore-said periods. Sampling should be done at least 100 m away (downstream side in case of flowing water bodies-rivers) from the immersion site/location to avoid turbulence effect. For ascertaining water quality, Physico-chemical parameters such as pH, DO, Color, BOD, COD, Conductivity, Turbidity, TDS, Chloride, TSS, Hardness, Total Alkalinity and Metals (such as Chromium, Lead, Zinc, Copper, Cadmium, Mercury, Antimony, Barium, Cobalt, Manganese, Strontium) may be analyzed. Apart from the water samples, sediment samples also be collected during pre-immersion, during immersion and post-immersion and collected sediment samples be analysed for the metals (such as Chromium, Lead, Zinc, Copper, Cadmium, Mercury, Antimony, Barium, Cobalt, Manganese, Strontium)
- (iii) Detailed reports should be posted on the MPCB website in public domain and also shall be shared with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) and CPCB.
- (iv) Maharashtra Pollution Control Board in consultation with Department of Environment and Climate Change, Home, Urban Development, Revenue, Rural Development and Irrigation, Gov. of Maharashtra shall help local body and District Administration in preparing material for creating mass awareness purposes as well as to assess innovative approaches for eco-

friendly idol making by the idol makers or craftsman or artisans and prohibition of oil paint/chemical dyes, single use plastics and Thermocol for decoration purposes.

9.0 MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY:

This policy is based on the guidelines issued on 12th May 2020 by CPCB, Which have been framed as per the directives of Hon'ble High Court and Hon'ble NGT and therefore it carries legal sanctity, and therefore any violation will attract legal proceeding against the defaulter. Therefore any non-compliances may be dealt according to prevailing Legislations, Rules, Laws and Bylaw, Orders and Guidelines by concerned Local Body and District Administration. This policy shall be enforced and monitored by District Magistrates/concern local bodies in their respective jurisdiction.

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The policy is framed by this committee and submitted to the Government of the Maharashtra.



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Deputy Secretary,
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Gov. of Maharashtra



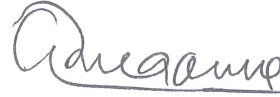
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Annexure I

MPCB Public Awareness activity of Eco Friendly Celebration of festivals

Maharashtra Pollution Control Board has organized various innovative ventures for public awareness considering common man as foremost activist & also emissary of enriched environment. In current era of progressive development changing faces of cities, in attention towards nature are causing numerous environmental issues associated with this development. Though various statutes are in existence for pollution control it is essential to change the mindset of every individual along with implementing statutory measures for environment protection. While government is taking care of environment protection & conservation comprehensive, participation of every constituent of society is equally important in progress of this movement. Hence considering participation of common man in creating public awareness towards environment, Pollution Control Board is organizing innovative initiatives since last ten years. Maharashtra Pollution Control Board is the first Board in the country to organize novel projects for creating public awareness towards environment.

Eco Friendly Holi

To celebrate eco-friendly Holi, public awareness is being created through News Papers, Television Channels, FM radios. Natural colours are being made available for environment friendly people by hoisting special stalls in Mantralaya premises. Eco friendly colours are available on large scale in the market due to pervasive public awareness made by the board in last six years. The eco friendly colour which was previously available in scanty @ Rs. 1200/ per kg is now available at large @ Rs. 400/- to Rs.500/- due to it's increasing demand in the market. Especially schools are extensively aware of this.

Various ventures for Eco friendly Ganeshotsav

To motivate Eco friendly Ganeshotsav Maharashtra Pollution Control Board is organising Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav Competition in cooperation with eminent News Papers & Television Channels. This competition is mainly organised for household ganeshotsav, publically organised sarvajanik ganeshotsav & ganeshotsav at cooperative housing societies. Enhancing response to this competition is sign of extensive public awareness.

1) 92.7 Big FM Big Green Ganesha

Big Green Ganesha event is organised for Mumbai City as joint venture of 92.7 Big FM & Maharashtra Pollution Control Board. In this event Big Green Ganesha visits various places in Mumbai city & appeal citizens to offer their waste paper junk as donation for this event. Eco friendly Ganesha idols are carved out of this collected junk by 92.7 Big FM for enshrining them at various malls & other important places. This event is inaugurated in presence of Hon. Chief Minister, Hon. Minister for Environment, Hon. State Minister for Environment, Chairman & Member Secretary of the Board. During this event news paper waste is donated to school children by hands of chief guests. An exhibition displaying eco friendly Ganesh idols & decorations is a part of this event. A special studio is established during all 10 days of Ganeshotsav at "Lalbaughcha Raja". Public awareness messages of Hon. Chief Minister, Hon. Minister for Environment, Hon. State Minister for Environment & eminent film personalities are disseminated to appeal participation of more & more people in this event.

2) Zee 24 Taas Eco Friendly Domestic Ganeshotsav Competition

A State Level Eco Friendly household Ganeshotsav Competition is organised as joint venture of MPCB & Zee 24 Taas. Zee 24 Taas broadcasts promos appealing people to participate in this competition. Innumerable competitors celebrating environment ancillary Ganeshotsav participate in this competition.

3) ABP Maza Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav Competition

A special public awareness drive is organised to promote Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav at Housing Societies in major (main) cities are held at for Housing Societies in Mumbai, Pune, Nasik & Nagpur.

In this venture a special programs are presented on Housing Societies organising Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav through News Bulletins on ABP Maza. Simultaneously well liked actors from Marathi Cinema promote this competition to encourage Domestic Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav through promos. Winning competitors are felicitated with MPCB Certificate & “Bappa Prasad” during their home visits in presence of famous cine actors.

4) Loksatta & MPCB organised Eco Friendly Domestic Ganeshotsav Competition

Eco Friendly Domestic Ganeshotsav Decoration Competition is organised at six divisional levels of Loksatta ; Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Nagpur, Ahmednagar & Aurangabad as joint venture of MPCB & Loksatta. More than 2000 competitors participate in this competition.

5) Times Green Ganesha

MPCB, Department of Environment, Govt. Of Maharashtra & Times of India Group jointly organise Times Green Ganesha Competition. This contest is organised for Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav Mandal & Housing Societies of Mumbai City. In this campaign public awareness programs are organised at various malls, theatres. Eco Friendly Ganesh Idol Making Workshops for students from schools & for college students Eco Friendly Ganesh Ambassador is also part of this event. Cleanliness Drive is taken up at Girgaon, Juhu & Varsova beaches during “Ganesh Visarjan”. This event

is inaugurated by popularised artists from Hindi film industry.

6) Times OOH BEST Bus Stop Shelter Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav Public Awareness Campaign

Public Awareness Messages for Eco Friendly Ganeshotsav are displayed innovatively for fifteen days at Best Bus Stop Shelters in Mumbai & also at other Bus Stop Shelters at Pune & Nagpur.

Eco Friendly Dahi Handi

With increasing zest of Dahi Handi, important adversity of sound pollution is increasing in cities like Mumbai. For creating awareness in this field a rally with Marathi film & theatre artists is organised by Maharashtra Pollution Control Board by joining hands with “Ideal Sanskritik Manch”. This rally is driven in open deck BEST Bus. In this rally public awareness is created by way of street play. Rally visits Govinda Pathak & perform street play by interrupting Dolby system at Dahihandi venue. Board has succeeded in creating public awareness through this rally.

1) Eco Friendly Diwali

Public awareness is created through leading News Papers, Television Channels & FM radio Channels. Due to this extensive public awareness by the Board extent of noise pollution & use of fire crackers is declining every year. This graphical calculation of noise pollution is possible because of gauging noise pollution levels in major cities every year during Diwali fest by MPCB.

Messages of Hon. Chief Minister, Hon. Minister of Environment, Hon. State Minister of Environment & famous actors from Hindi & Marathi Films are broadcasted through various Radio & Television Channels. Public awareness

messages are also broadcasted in Digital Cinema Halls in the state.

1) Diwali Innovative Kit

On auspicious occasion of Diwali fest Innovative Kits have been prepared to celebrate Pollution Free Diwali. These kits are loaded with Diwali Greeting, Four “Panti, Vati”, Aromatic Ubtan, Five Rangoli Colours, White Rangoli, Net for drawing Rangoli, Rangoli Dotted Paper, Fragrant Soap & Small Calendar. A beautiful box printed with name of Maharashtra Pollution Control Board & public awareness message are designed for this kit. These kits are offered to all ministers, officers/ employees from Chief Minister Office, Department of Environment, MPCB Head Quarters, Regional Offices at Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Navi Mumbai & Kalyan & Central Laboratory. These kits are also distributed free of cost to Important Government Offices in Mumbai. This project has got enormous response since very first year .

2) Diwali Bus Stop Messages, Mumbai & Nagpur

“Celebrate Pollution Free Diwali” a public awareness message by Hon. Chief Minister, Hon. Minister of Environment, Hon. State Minister of Environment is displayed on Bus Stops at Mumbai, Pune & Nagpur for fifteen days.

2) Paryavaranachi Pustak Baug

During summer vacations in month of April & May venture called “Paryavaranachi Pustak Baug” is organised for a month by an NGO Rang Sugandh for school children at Mahad in Raigad District. Various activities like informative slide show, lecture on environment, nature trail, quiz, drawing, elocution competition are taken up in this venture

“Paryavaranchi Pustak Baug”. This complete month is dedicated for elaborating relationship of human being with environment & nature & educating school children about enriched environment through tales n stories.

3) Paryavaranchi Vari Pandharichya Dari

Issues related to Environment & Pollution are similar for rural & urban life public messages such as “Quit Plastic - Save Nation, Grow Trees - Save water, Every Individual Should Plant & Nurture At Least A Tree Every Year, Separate Dry & Wet Litter, Opt Organic Agriculture, Generate Fertilizer From Waste, Use Agricultural Pumps For Limited Time, save Electricity & Water “ are given through this `Vari`. During 16 days of “Vari” public awareness is created using medium of folk art such as “Kirtan, Bharud, Povada, Gan-gavalan & Batavani”. “Vari” pave its way from Alandi to Pandharpur along with “Dindi” No. 86 of “Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Palkhi Sohala”. In this “Vari” “Hari Bhakt Parayan Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Vabale” participate performing “Paryavaranche Kirtan Sangeet Natak Academy award winner “Rashriy Bharudkar Chandrabai Tiwadi”, “Rashriy Powada Kalawant” (National Ballad Artist) Shahir Devanand Mali & Two Hundred other participants attend this “Paryavaranchi Vari” till Pandharpur as “Vari” of public awareness. This “Vari is inaugurated at Pune & same is concluded at Pandharpur in presence of Hon. Chief Minister.

4) Environmental Film Festival

Three Days Short Film Festival on environmental issues is organized on 5th June The World Environment Day. Various National & International Films & Success Stories on Environment are exhibited in this Film Festival. Large number of environment & nature lovers secure their presence at this Film Festival.

5) Inter School Drama Competition on Environment

Inter School Drama Competitions on Environment for school children are organized by MPCB & NGO Eco Folks at 6 cities namely Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Aurangabad, Nasik & Kolhapur. More than 400 schools participate in this competition organized since last some years. This competition is organized at concerned centers in two stages Preliminary & Final.

6) Radio Program Jagar Paryavaranacha

40 episode informative Radio Program “Jagar Paryavaranacha” has been broadcasted from “Asmita” channel of “Akashvani”. Success Stories in form of interviews of individuals & organizations giving their valuable contribution in the field of enriched environment are aired through this program. Interviews of Shree Popatrao Pawar of Hirvebajar, Shree A. P. Deshpande of Vidnyan Parishad, Shree Parth Bapat & Shree Vidyadhar Walawalkar running Environment School, Scientist Journalist Shree Abhijit Ghorpade & Shree Atul Deulagaonkar, Director Tortoise Conservation Project Nisarg Mitr Shree Bhau Katadare & other innumerable eminent personalities have been aired in this program. It has been conveyed by “Akashvani” that about 1.25 crore people listen to this program. A Book containing selected edited episodes of this program namely “Jagar Paryavaranacha” has been published.

State Level Short Film Competition on Environment

This competition is organized jointly by Maharashtra Pollution Control Board & “Paryavarn Dakshata Manch. Short Films are developed on environmental issues in urban & rural areas of the state. These Short Films are developed by individuals or

organizations in association with local environmental issues. To encourage people & organizations so involved in environment sector this State Level Short Film Competition on Environment is organized for amateur & professional groups. Prize Distribution of this competition is organized on World Environment Day.

5th June World Environment Day Ceremony

5th June is celebrated as World Environment Day. This ceremony is organized in presence of Hon. Chief Minister, Hon. Minister of Environment, Hon. State Minister of Environment, Hon. Addl. Chief Secretary cum Chairman MPCB, & Hon Member Secretary of Board. Events such as Distribution of Awards for Municipal Corporations & Industries namely “Vasundhara Puraskar” , Announcement of “Vasundhara Short Film Competition, Prize Distribution of “Photathon” Vasundhara laghu Chitrapat Spardha, etc. forms part of this function. As part of this ceremony a joint venture of “Paryavaran Dakshata Manch & MPCB namely Environmental Short Film Festival is also organized.

Photathon

Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Eco Folks & ‘Maharashtra Nisarg Udyan’ jointly organize “Photathon” an innovative competition for amateur & professional photographers. “Photathon is innovative competition for photographers where in any environmental problem is photographed in only 24 hours & five such photographs are submitted. Winning competitors are felicitated with Best Photograph & Best Nano Photograph awards. This competition commences at “Maharashtra Nisarg Udyan”, Mahim & concludes at same venue the next day. Prize Distribution for same is organized during main function of World Environment Day.

Annexure-II

Major Types of Natural Dyes and Their Origin

Chemical class	Coloringmatter	Origin	Color obtained
Vat dyes			
Indole	Indigotin	Woad, indigo	Blues
Quinone	Juglone	Walnut	Browns
Mordant dyes			
Anthraquinones	Alizarin	Madder roots	Reds, oranges, browns
	Pseudopurpurin	Madder roots	Reds, oranges, browns
	Munjistin	Munjeetstems	Reds, browns, maroons
	Laccaic acids	Lac insects	Reds, purples, Maroons
Flavoid tannins	Catachin	Cutch	Browns, grays
Saffron, Flavone	Luteolin	Weld	Yellows, khaki
Flavonol	Quercetin	50% of all plants	Yellows, khaki
Anthocyanins	Cyanidin	Elderberries	Purples
Neoflavanoidones	Haematoxylin	Logwood	Violets, blacks
	Brazilin	Brazilwood	Reds, purples
Isoflavanoid	Pterocarpin	Sanderswood	Oranges

Direct dyes			
Carotinoid	Curcumin	Turmeric	Yellows
	Crocin	Saffron, gardenia	Yellows
Alkaloid	Berberine	Mahonia wood	Yellows
Orinol	Orcein	Orchil	Purples
Benzoquinone	Carthamine	Safflower	Pinks
Reactive dyes			
Depsidis	Atranorin	Lichens	Fawns
Despidones	Salazinic acid	Lichens	Browns

Source:- Eco-friendly dyes and dyeing

(<http://sciedtech.eu/journals/advmtenvsci/current-issue/>)

**PHASING OUT
SINGLE USE PLASTICS**

What not to be used?

As per amendment PWM Rules notified by MoEF & CC on August 2021 following Single use plastic items are restricted.

-  Plastic and polystyrene (Thermocol) for decoration
-  Packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks
-  Plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping, stirrers
- Plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron

In addition, the following items are prohibited under the Maharashtra Plastics and Thermocol Notification 2018.

-  Compostable plastic (excluding waste and nursery bags)
-  All types of plastic bags (carry bags including non-woven bags) with and without handle
-  Dish, Bowl, Container