

The focus of Environment Information System (ENVIS) is to disseminate environmental information to decision makers, policy planners, scientists and researchers across the world.

The CERC-ENVIS Resource Partner focuses on 'Environment Literacy - Eco-labelling and Eco-friendly Products' This bi-monthly e-bulletin features latest news, developments and innovations in

Eco product

The **GREENER FESTIVAL AWARD (AGF)** is based on the objectives of promoting greener practices and promoting sustainability. A Greener Festival is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to reducing the environmental impact of festivals and events. A Greener Festival Award was set up in 2007 and since assessed nearly 500 events across 5 continents, from 500 to 200,000 daily capacity. Each AGF award is given annually. It is necessary to repeat the assessment each year to receive the subsequent annual award. The Sustainable Events Alliances (SEA) recognises and endorses A Greener Festival Award. Event organizers are eligible to also use the SEA membership logo in association with their event as a demonstration of commitment to improved sustainability performance.

Source: <https://www.aagreenerfestival.com/>,
<https://sustainable-event-alliance.org/>

Eco-friendly festivals: A new way of traditional celebrations

Festivals bring people together in celebration throughout the year in India. It is a country with rich culture and traditions. This diversity results in a large number of different festivities and their celebrations. We celebrate each festival with vigour, marked by distinct rituals, beautifully crafted idols, lights, music, shopping and gifts. Festivals are nowadays commercialized celebrations. These celebrations along with putting a great strain on the environment, but have also put people's health at stake. They are now one of the major sources of air, sound, land, solid waste and water pollution. Considering environment and human health, "Green festivals" are gaining momentum among the masses gradually.

A green festival include environmental considerations to minimize harmful impact by reducing waste generation, water and energy usage, use of fair trade or organic food, using local suppliers and local produces and must create awareness on environmental impacts.

Water pollution: Idols made up of Plaster of Paris (PoP) contain gypsum, sulphur, phosphorus, magnesium and chemical paints. Chemical paints contain toxic compounds like mercury, cadmium, lead and carbon. Idols made up of non-biodegradable materials and synthetic paints when immersed into the water bodies harm the aquatic life and the environment. Chemical colours used in Holi contain harmful ingredients like lead oxide, mercury sulphite, copper sulphate and aluminum bromide. It creates health problems ranging from skin rashes to cancer. They also mix with the soil and pollute the land or get washed by the rivers and pollute the water.

Air and noise pollution: Bursting of high decibel crackers, unrestricted use of loudspeakers during celebration are the main sources of air and noise pollution. Bursting of crackers affect the ambient air quality adversely due to emission and accumulation of gases and heavy metals. The toxic fumes released by burning crackers make it difficult to breathe and even causes various respiratory ailments. The loud noises flashed from the burning of crackers and loudspeakers give serious anxiety attacks to many people, animals and birds and can even cause loss of hearing.

Solid waste pollution: Generation of solid waste is the most prominent environmental impacts that festivals have. Each festival leaves tones of garbage behind. The roads are filled with garbage of paper and plastic. Improper disposal of waste causes significant health and environment hazard. According to the report published in "Nature", urban India generates 109,589 tonnes of solid waste/garbage per day.

A change need to happen. Eco-friendly means of celebration should be adopted. Instead of the toxic materials currently in use, change the contents of idols to mud, rose petals, leaves, herbal colours, coconut tusks, alums, chocolates etc. Use organic colours, buy green crackers, gift plants like kitchen herbs, fengshui plants, bonsai and indoor plants. Celebrate this festive season in a more meaningful and delightful way without harming environment .

Green Issue



Eco news

Eco Seed Rakhis on the wrists of soldiers

Under 'Rakhis for Soldiers' campaign, more than one lakh rakhis were prepared by Tamilnadu and Uttarakhand school girls. They made a little threads of red blue, golden and saffron for the brave soldiers who are on borders. This year, girls of Tamilnadu, who do not have a Rakhi tradition, took up the task to make one lakh Rakhis for jawans. Many of these were Eco Seed Rakhis, which contained seeds of Tulsi and other herbs ready for plantation. It gives a message to celebrate festivals eco-friendly way. This initiative was started by Mr. Tarun Vijay, a former MP, Uttarakhand, when Doklam occurred. That year, 25 thousand Rakhis were sent to Doklam, around 20 females visited army units closer to Doklam, Sikkim to tie Rakhis to the soldiers.

Source: <https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/one-lakh-rakhis-for-soldiers-handed-over-to-army-chief/>



Music festival showcases its green credentials

One of Europe's biggest music festivals has taken its eco-credentials to the next level, with reusable paper tents, reusable cups and even water saving toilets. Sziget festival on Hajógyári Island, Budapest, Hungary, has shown its environmentally friendly improvements with a focus on the climate. UN Messenger of Peace Dr Jane Goodall also attended this festival to promote the importance of protecting the environment during festival. This year they have arranged reusable paper tents, reusable cups and even water saving toilets. Last year they replaced one and a half million single use glasses with a few hundred thousand of reusable glasses. This year they targeted to consume 3 million plastic glasses less. Tents, sleeping bags, and mats which were left behind were collected by charity organizations.

Source: <https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/09/sziget-music-festival-in-hungary-showcases-its-green-credentials>



Don't Be Mean, Just Go Green!

Being Green and Clean is not just an aspiration but an action.

Eco tip

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Consumer Education and Research Centre

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