

**AWARENESS AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMME  
TO CELEBRATE 'ECO FRIENDLY GANESHA'  
FESTIVAL**



**September, 2021**



**CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
Govt. of India

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## **AWARENESS AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMME TO CELEBRATE 'ECO-FRIENDLY GANESHA' FESTIVAL**

Ganesh Chaturthi Festival is celebrated widely in the country to worship lord Vinayaka during the month of mid-August to September every year. In ancient times, the festival was celebrated by making Ganesha idol using natural materials like Clay. The idol was also decorated using traditional haldi and chandan etc. With time, people shifted towards Plaster of Paris (POP) based Ganesha idols decorated with plastics for celebrating the festival, followed by immersion of idols, decorative items, plastics etc. in water bodies causing huge pollution.

The Ganesha idol made of POP contains chemicals such as gypsum, sulphur, phosphorus, and magnesium. The dyes used to colour these idols may also contain mercury, cadmium, arsenic, lead, and carbon. Plastic and thermocol accessories are used to decorate these idols. Such materials are not biodegradable and toxic when immersed in water bodies affecting the aquatic life. CPCB has revised the 'Guidelines for Idol Immersion' in May 2020 to address the above issues and concerns.

CPCB, Regional Directorate, Bengaluru conducted an awareness and demonstration programme in Gangamma Thimmaiah Government School (middle and high school students) on 08.09.2021 at 10:00 AM to educate the children and staff about impacts of POP based Ganesha idol, Single use plastics on environment and the importance of celebrating Eco-friendly Ganesha festival amidst COVID19 pandemic.

Smt Selvi P K, Sc D, Dr Anupama B S, Sc C, Sh Seenivel Raj, SLA, Sh Nikhil Y Kumar, JLA were deputed to coordinate the programme in elucidating the importance of celebrating Eco-friendly Ganesha Festival. The programme was conducted in four batches following COVID 19 guidelines of Government of

Karnataka. Around 150 students participated in the programme following COVID19 appropriate behaviour.

Smt Usha, High School Teacher welcomed the officials of CPCB and informed the students regarding the demonstration programme. Dr B S Anupama, Sc C briefed about Central Pollution Control Board and its role in pollution mitigation in local language (kannada).

She spoke about CPCB “Guidelines for Idol Immersion” prepared with a view to ensure environmental friendly idol immersion without affecting the quality of water bodies while ensuring religious observance. These guidelines emphasize the need for restriction on single use plastic materials for making idols, use of naturally occurring colors for colouring idols, imposing restrictions on size of the idol, etc.

She mentioned that the students shall use eco-friendly materials, plastic free decorative items, immerse the idol at home while observing the religious practices in an environmentally safe manner. She demonstrated the preparation of Eco-friendly Ganesha idol with step by step procedures as given in **Figure 1**.

Then she explained the students of following advantages in switching over to eco-friendly Ganesha idol such as;

- i. Purely organic in nature.
- ii. Idols could be prepared at individual house.
- iii. After completion of celebration, it could be immersed in bucket of water at home and used for watering the plants.
- iv. With this type of eco-friendly festival celebrations, natural water bodies could be saved from pollution.



**Ingredients:**

- i. Turmeric – one cup
- ii. Maida/Wheat/Ragi flour – one cup
- iii. Sugar – one tea spoon
- iv. Water
- v. Pepper (for eye making)
- vi. Wooden sticks –(for making tusk)

**Figure 1. Step by Step Procedure for making Turmeric Ganesha idol**

Smt Selvi P K, Sc D informed the students regarding various steps taken by Government of Karnataka in controlling the pollution into water bodies during Ganesha Festival. She also mentioned that an awareness campaign is publicized by Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, where Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) announced cash awards for best 'eco-friendly Ganesha idols' as a means to encourage celebration of environmentally safe Ganesha festival and to avoid use of POP based idols, discharge of harmful chemicals into water bodies during idol immersion. She also added that students and staff can upload their pictures with 'eco-friendly Ganesha' prepared by them at [turmericganesha.com](http://turmericganesha.com).

Photographs taken during the programme is given at *Annexure I*. The programme was concluded with prayer to Lord Ganesha;

**Vakratunda Mahakaya Surya Koti Samaprabha |**

**Nirvighnam Kuru Me Dev Sarv-Kaaryeshu Sarvadaa ||**

“O Lord Ganesh, one with a huge body, a curved elephant trunk and whose brilliance is equal to billions of Suns.

May you always remove all obstacles from my endeavors.”

Smt Selvi P K, Scientist D also conducted a similar awareness programme on 09.09.2021 at Lakshit Golden Nest Apartment, Basaveshwara Nagar for the local community. She interacted with the residents and children in the apartment and shared the importance of celebrating ‘Eco-friendly Ganesh Festival’ using natural materials like Clay, Turmeric, wood, leaves, cereals/pulses and wheat/refined flour followed by decorations using flowers, leaves, chandan, pulses etc. She demonstrated by making Turmeric Ganesha Idol before residents and children. Children actively participated and were curious to learn the method of making Turmeric Ganesha Idol.

Photographs taken during awareness and demonstration are given as **Annexure II**.

### **Outcome of Awareness and Demonstration Programme:**

1. The awareness programme conducted in educational institutions and apartment complexes was well received and participants shown keen interest in understanding the importance and concept of making Turmeric Ganesha which is eco-friendly.
2. All participants were requested to spread this message among their friends and known circle in order to protect the environment and save themselves from COVID19 pandemic by following guidelines of Government of Karnataka.
3. The celebration of Ganesha festival in environmental friendly manner will definitely reduce the pollution load on the environment and is a positive step towards environment sustainability.
4. Karnataka State Pollution Control Board has prepared an action plan to study the quality of lakes before, during and after idol immersion of the festival to ascertain the pollution load released into the environment as per guidelines of CPCB.

5. CPCB, Regional Directorate, Bengaluru is actively involved in all such activities and discuss the matter with different NGOs, RWAs, Educational Institutions and local communities to go for Environment Friendly celebration of Ganesha Festival on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021.
6. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in consultation with KSPCB and CPCB has made elaborate arrangements for immersion of idols by deploying water tankers at strategic locations throughout Bengaluru city.
7. BBMP has issued guidelines for celebration of the festival with restrictions on usage of lights, speakers, Firecrackers, decorative items (Plantain leaves, flowers, papers etc.) and cultural programmes in order to keep a check on Noise pollution as well.
8. CPCB Guidelines for Idol Immersion during Ganesha Festival revised in 2020 was widely publicized among all stakeholders for strict compliance.
9. A programme on making Turmeric Ganesha idol was demonstrated among colleagues at Regional Directorate, Bengaluru and all of them have taken oath to follow the same to celebrate the festival.
10. KSPCB has taken a drive to campaign for achieving 10 lakh turmeric Ganesha this year throughout the state in order to protect the environment. Government of Karnataka is actively campaigning in all possible manner to promote the scheme and in fact cash prizes have been announced for best idols and practices. CPCB, RD Bengaluru is also involved in promoting the activity.

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*Annexure I*

**Photographs taken during the Awareness and Demonstration programme in Gangamma Thimmiah School, Rajaji Nagar on 08.09.2021**





*Annexure II*

Photographs taken during Awareness and Demonstration programme in Lakshit Golden Nest, Basaveshwaranagar on 09.09.2021

