Eco-club (the_last_leaf) Shyam Lal College

Title of the event: Celebration of festivals in Eco-friendly Way

The tradition of Indian sculpture is the oldest in the world, Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga pooja are the most famous and religious traditions of our India. In ancient period people started making sculptures of their idols like Durga Mata and lord Shiva and in many places archaeologists found many sculptures of Lord Ganesh as well. Sculpture worship is very ancient tradition and still going on but there's some difference between in Old worshiping methods and Current worshiping methods. In ancient times the materials used for statues and idols was made of bronze, stone and terracotta which are eco- friendly materials but now in the present scenario use of plastic statues, metals, ornaments, oily substances, synthetic/chemical based clay statues are used which are neither eco-friendly nor biodegradable. When these idols are immersed in aquatic ecosystem our environment gets severally affected. As we all know that festive season is on its peak and now all the festivals going on are related to idol worship like Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Pooja, Dussehra and Diwali. The puja is performed at homes and in public, the latter featuring a temporary stage and structural decorations (known as Pandals). People worship the sculptures of Ganesh, Maa Durga and it ends with a procession where the sculpture- idols are ceremoniously taken to a river or coast for immersion rites.

As these festivities concluded rivers and lakes became more polluted following immersion of idols worshipped in puja pandals across cities. Water's became dirty which caused- Water pollution, dirty rivers, damage to our aquatic life, and threaten human health. Heavy metal pollution caused by idol immersion can damage the ecosystem as it kills fishes, damages plants, blocks the natural flow of the water, causing stagnation. So with the aim to create awareness among masses team of 20 volunteers has decided to take the initiative (Jagrukta Abhiyan) among people during the festival season from (10^{th}Sep - 4^{th} Nov 2021) to take care of our environment. They motivated them to conduct eco-friendly pooja using the idols made of paper, eco- friendly clay, seeds and waste materials that can be dissolve at their own. Even they can immerse these idols at home in their balcony in a bucket because these types of idols dissolves completely in water within just few hours and doesn't pollute our surroundings and rivers. Volunteers also made posters and slogans to make this more effective by giving them full information, how can they help by making eco-friendly idols and eco-friendly immersions by letting them know the damages caused by using types of chemicals.

On eve of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav our team collaborated with Swacchta Action Plan and personally met some sculpture artist in various parts of Delhi like Jasola, Apollo and Navin Shahdara was very glad that whatever they tried to convince them they cooperated and also supported them in this awareness drive. They stepped ahead during this pandemic and visited different areas like Yamuna Ghat near Shakarpur and Vikramshila Setu Bihar and also create awareness among people through online mode. We can't make our deities happy if we destroy their precious gift i.e. nature. So with the aim our team try to aware people to celebrate all our festivals in eco-friendly way. They also spread awareness to enjoy festival like Dussehra and Diwali without causing damage to the environment and should take care about the high risk of health hazards linked to excessive noise and air pollution. So they encourage people to use eco-friendly decoration, use organic colors and real flowers for rangoli. They also encourage people to go for earthen lamps and say no to crackers. Instead of they should donate fruits, sweets, food to the needy and also gift the plants to save our earth.

(Yamuna Ghat near Shakarpur police station, Laxmi Nagar Delhi)

(Vikramshila Setu Bridge located in Bhagalpur city of Bihar)