

9 October 2017

Dear Parents and Friends,

The festival of Diwali is celebrated with great vigour all across the nation. Known as the festival of Lights, and symbolic of the triumph of good over the evil, it has today become one of the foremost reasons for alarming levels of atmospheric and noise pollution. We the student council of Junior School are writing this letter as we are very concerned about the impact our Diwali celebrations will have on the environment.

As you all are aware a lot of pollution comes due to the burning of crops in Punjab. All the pollution rushes towards Delhi and during this time the weather is so bad that people have to wear masks to withstand the harsh weather. We, citizens of New Delhi are just adding to the pollution by bursting crackers. The crackers not only cause noise and air pollution but they also cause accidents and the cracker industry involves child labour. Most of the fireworks are made by children of our age who instead of going to school have to work in factories. Our buying crackers encourages child-labour. If we will not buy crackers, children will get a chance of a better life and instead of working in factories may just be lucky enough to go to school like we do.

Most of the firecrackers, when burnt, give out excess smoke. These contain tiny metallic particles. When burnt on the streets and roads, it produces smog that is so dense and foggy. People walking or driving on the roads cannot see who is coming in the opposite direction as it leads to poor visibility of the traffic causing accidents. The noise generated by crackers on Diwali create sound pollution.

Fire accidents are common in cracker markets, be it in Faridabad or in Kozhikode, Kerala. A small spark is enough to set ablaze a whole region, and the accident can damage properties, and claim lives. Why risk our lives?

Bursting crackers is fun but we also need to care for other living beings near us. For example, our pets suffer because of the noise as they have a greater sense of sound than us. Imagine if you think its loud how loud would it be for these suffering creatures! Firecrackers especially affect elderly people, sick people and babies. They result in a lot of garbage which ultimately finds its way into rivers. Breathing polluted air is effectively like smoking ten cigarettes a day.

We have some suggestions on how we can reduce the ill impact of Diwali:

- We should all pledge to not burn any crackers at all
- Since Diwali is the festival of lights kids can also get together and decorate the neighbourhood with lights and eco-friendly diya's
- We should all celebrate the traditional way by doing Pooja and attending Diwali Mela's in which families can get together and have fun.
- Instead of burning and spending money on crackers this Diwali we can stop pollution and use our money for a much greater cause. We could donate money to charity and of course enjoy the festival by decorating our house and preparing sweets for family and friends

Diwali is the festival of light not crackers. Let us celebrate this Diwali as a festival of light not a festival of crackers.

Junior School Student Council.