

POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD :: ASSAM
BAMUNIMAIDAM, GUWAHATI-21

No. WB/G-901/13-14/87

Dated Guwahati the 26th September 2014

NOTIFICATION

(General Guidelines for Idol Immersion)

In exercise of the power conferred under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act 1986, the Pollution Control Board, Assam has issued the following guidelines for Idol immersion for implementation by the Concern Authority/Organization/Government Departments.

- (i) Worship material like flowers, vastras (clothes), decorating material (made of paper and plastic) etc. should be removed before immersion of idols. Biodegradable materials should be collected separately for recycling or composting. Non-biodegradable materials should be collected separately for disposal in sanitary landfills. Clothes may be sent to local orphan house(s).
- (ii) The 'Idol Immersion Point' should be cordoned off and barricaded. Synthetic liner may be placed in the bottom which should be removed on completion of immersion ceremony so that remaining of idols would be brought to the bank.
- (iii) Local Bodies/District Authorities must take efforts to identify adequate number of immersion spots to avoid overcrowding and also to reduce pollution load on the water bodies with proper notification to public and Puja Committee. All the stakeholder, such as Inland Water Transport Corporation, Public Health Engineering Department, Irrigation Department, Water Resource Department etc. be consulted for identification of the Immersion Ghats, where flow in stream is naturally available.
- (iv) A co-ordination committee comprising District Police, NGO, Local Authorities, District Administration, Official of PCBA, representative of Puja Committee and stakeholders may be setup for guiding the public in carrying out the immersion with minimal impact on water bodies.
- (v) At the immersion sites, burning of solid waste, so generated comprising of used flowers, cloths, decorating materials etc. is prohibited.
- (vi) Within 48 hours of the immersion of idols, the left over material at idol immersion ghats and on the banks of rivers, lakes, beaches etc. should be collected by the local bodies for disposal as mentioned at Point (i).
- (vii) In case of immersion of idols in rivers, temporary ponds having earthen bunds along the river bank should be created as idols immersion spots. Removable synthetic liner may be placed well in advance at the bottom of pond. The said liner along with remains of idols should be removed from the point within 48 hours of immersion of idols.
- (viii) In case of immersion of idols in lake or ponds all the flowers, leaves and artificial ornaments of idols should be removed and idols may be immersed into a corner of pond using removable synthetic liners at the bottom. The immersion liners should be taken out along with the remains of the idols within 48 hours of immersion of idols and lime should be added to the pond water for settling the solids. Desludging of the pond should be undertaken afterwards.
- (ix) The Puja Organizers or Committee must organize campaign on the ill effects of the toxic component of coloring materials, not only of the idols, but also other decorating materials used during the festive season. Specific leaflets and poster for mass awareness may be prepared and the Puja committees are persuaded to display such posters and distribute leaflets among worshipers.

Issued by POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD, ASSAM