

Want a green Ganesh this yr? Ask MPCB

Shrutl Karthikeyan VASHI

For the upcoming festive season, the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) is encouraging citizens to go green. MPCB is conducting free workshops to enable devotees to celebrate a green Ganesh Chaturthi.

The Rs25 lakh project initiated by MPCB includes free 10-day workshops, short movies, competitions, sale of eco-friendly Ganesh idols and decorative materials. The workshop, which commenced on July 22, will continue till August 2 at MPCB Mahape laboratory. Regional officer of MPCB, Bharat Nimbarte, said, "Through these workshops and other campaigns we aim to reduce pollution in public water bodies, set an example in other areas and celebrate the festival with the same spirit and devotion."

The pollution board will also hold competitions amongst devotees who opt for eco-friendly Ganesh idols this year.

Although devotees are interested to use eco-friendly idols over Plaster of Paris (PoP), many of them are not aware about the supply of such idols in Navi Mumbai. Taking Navi Mumbai as a model area, the pollution board has decided to give training to self-help groups in Navi Mumbai, mentally and physically challenged people along with people in remand homes.

Nimbarte said this idea will witness ample of eco-friendly murthikars in Navi Mumbai and through the success of this demo project, this programme will be conducted in other districts of



Maharashtra too.

MPCB also plans to sell these idols prepared by the students in Vashi or Belapur, added the officer.

The workshops are divided into three categories. Students will be taught to make idols with shadu mud so that pop can be avoided.

Training will be given to paint with natural colours. The use of paper, wood and cardboard materials will be encouraged to stop the use of plastic in making decorative items in pandal.

Three NGOs have tied-up with MPCB to conduct these workshops in Navi Mumbai. Two short movies will be screened for children and elderly people in schools, colleges and industries to make people aware the hazards of pop idols and plastic and to encourage people use eco-friendly idols in the future. MPCB will soon launch an eco-Ganesh website, through which people can get details regarding eco-friendly idols, benefits and also book their requirements.

navimumbai@enindia.net

**GREEN
WARRIORS**