GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI
DEPARTMENT OF TRAINING & TECHNICAL EDUCATION/ HIGHER EDUCATION
MUNI MAYA RAM MARG, PITAMPURA, DELHI-88

No.F.1(17)/2025/Misc./CDN/TTE/Pt.-2/ 490 Dated: 04.11.2026

CIRCULAR

Sub:- Sensitization of Students Against the Burning of Firecrackers During Festive Season.

Please find enclosed the judgement dated 29-10-2026 of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in WP(C) No. 728/2015, titled Arjun Gopal Vs Ors. with Suo Moto WPC No. 15/2026 regarding burning of firecrackers and air quality management during the festive season.

The salient essential features of the above judgement are as under:

1. All Universities/Colleges/ITIs shall take adequate measures to sensitize students regarding the impact of environmental pollution, particularly during festival times.

2. Students shall be made aware of the harmful effects of bursting firecrackers on the environment and health of all living beings.

3. There shall not be any bursting of fireworks within a 300-metre radius of hospitals, nursing homes, primary and district health centres, old-age homes and any notified silence zones. These areas will be declared as 'No-Cracker Zones'.

Therefore, in order to safeguard public health and preserve environmental integrity and in pursuance of directions received from Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide above mentioned judgement, all the Heads of Universities/Colleges/ITIs under the Department of Training & Technical Education / Higher Education are hereby directed to undertake the following measures with immediate effect:

a) Conduct 'Special Assemblies' on 5th & 6th November, 2026 to sensitize the students on the impact of pollution, especially during the festival times, Firecrackers cause air and noise pollution and generate solid waste. Apart from this, one faculty/teacher of the Institute shall read aloud the main directions/contents of the Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 29-10-2026 among the students so that students could understand the main objective of the Hon'ble Court order.

b) Educate students during assemblies and classroom sessions on the hazardous environmental and health impacts of burning firecrackers.

c) Motivate students to **'Say No to Firecrackers'** and instead adopt safer, sustainable alternatives such as lighting earthen lamps (diyas), candles and electric decorative lights.

d) Sensitize the students that there shall not be any bursting of fireworks within a 300-metre radius of hospitals, nursing homes, primary and district health centres, old-age homes and any notified silence zones.

e) Instruct teachers to actively guide students toward adopting green, eco-friendly practice to keep their surroundings clean and pollution-free during the festive season.

f) Universities/Colleges/ITIs shall organise appropriate activities such as poster-making, slogan-writing, essay-writing, debates, drawing competitions and other

creative activities to encourage students to become ambassadors of environmental protection and spread awareness in their families and communities.

All Heads of Universities/Colleges/ITIs must ensure strict compliance with these directives to promote a healthier and cleaner environment.

Further, all the Head of Universities/Colleges/ITIs are requested to submit an ATR by 9th November, 2026 along with 10 time-stamped photos and 5 videos regarding execution of the above guidelines. The ATR shall be submitted to this Branch of DTTE **at email- aocdntte@gmail.com** The photos and videos should also be uploaded at the link given below:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12odZu70LjjAnf_R6cTzs8etr3dHuydpy?usp=sharing

This issues with prior approval of Director (TTE/HE).

Encl: As above.

04/11/26
(ASHISH KUMAR)
DY. DIRECTOR (ADMN.)

All the Universities/Colleges/ITIs is including Recognised/Private Institutions are under Department of Training & Technical Education / Higher Education.

No.F.1(17)/2025/Misc./CDN/TTE/Pt.-2/ 490 Dated: 04.11.2026

Copy to:-

1. Secretary to Hon'ble CM.
2. Secretary to Hon'ble Minister (TTE/HE), GNCTD.
3. PS to Pr. Secretary (TTE/HE).
4. PS to Director (TTE).
5. All VCs/Registrars, Principals of Universities/Colleges/ITIs for strict compliance.
6. AD (IT) to please upload it on the website.
7. Guard File.

04/11/26
(ASHISH KUMAR)
DY. DIRECTOR (ADMN.)

2026 INSC 1181

REPORTABLE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

I.A. No. 245432/2026

I.A. No. 251493/2026

I.A. No. 245387/2026

I.A. No. 264010/2026

I.A. No. 325852/2025

I.A. No. 103495/2026

in

Writ Petition (Civil) No. 728/2015

ARJUN GOPAL & ORS. **Petitioner(s)**

VERSUS

UNION OF INDIA & ORS. **Respondent(s)**

WITH
Suo Motu Writ Petition (Civil) No. 15/2026

ORDER

1. I.A. No. 245432/2026 seeking intervention on behalf of the Delhi Fireworks Shopkeepers Association and I.A. No. 245387/2026 seeking intervention on behalf of Federation of Fireworks Traders, are allowed.

2. We have heard Ms. Uttara Babbar, the learned *Amicus Curiae*, Mr. Gopal Sankaranarayanan, the learned Senior Counsel appearing on behalf of the writ petitioners, Mr. J. Sai Deepak, learned Senior Counsel appearing for the intervening applicant(s) and Ms. Aishwarya Bhati, the learned Additional Solicitor General of India (**'ASG'**) appearing on behalf of the Union of India, Government of NCT of Delhi (for short, '**GNCTD'**) and the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (for short, '**CAQM'**).

PRELUDE

3. Philosophers and thinkers of Ancient India have always treated environment as an integral part of religion. For them, all the living beings are one and the same. Life, truly exists in every being and form, apart from human beings. In their profound wisdom, any religious practice, including the celebration of a festival, should facilitate this heightened thinking in every possible way. This is evident in the way that the natural elements such as air, water, fire, earth and the sky are treated as gods and worshipped with great reverence.

4. *'Deepawali*' or '*Diwali'* is the festival of lights. Over the centuries, it has partaken the character of a national festival, so much so that, at present, one can even consider it as an international festival. The festival is celebrated by people regardless of their caste, community and religion. It is a festival celebrated for

centuries, bringing joy and prosperity to every individual, dispelling darkness and ensuring righteousness.

5. Ancient Hindu scriptures such as the '*Skandapurana'* and the '*Padmapurana'* refer to the use of lamps as a ritual, while observing the festival of *Deepawali*. With the introduction of gun-powder in India a few centuries ago, the celebration, underwent a change. This led to the introduction of bursting firecrackers, which have been extensively done for many years.

6. Bursting of firecrackers, though constitutes a religious practice meant to celebrate the occasion, shall result in severe environmental pollution, especially air and noise, apart from the creation of solid wastes. The unregulated practice, thus, affects everyone including the end user. Amongst human beings, children, disabled and the elderly people constitute the most vulnerable groups. Every year, the statistics also reflect a huge spike in the 'Air Quality Index' (for short, **'AQI'**) as well as the pollution levels, including the release of 'Particulate Matter' **(**for short, **'PM')** in the atmosphere, after the festival is celebrated across the country, and more significantly, in the Delhi-NCR region.

7. It is concerning to note that PM particles, emanating from firecrackers, stay in the atmosphere for an extensive period of time, stretching up to several days even after the culmination of the festival. These PM particles are so tiny and microscopic, that once they enter the human body, it becomes incapable of

filtration. Thus, these particles freely enter the bloodstream upon being inhaled, causing substantial damage. The same position stands extended to other forms of life. Over the years, this has resulted in an increase in health-related complications.

8. Before we proceed to deal with the history of proceedings before this Court, *qua* the Delhi-NCR region, it is apposite to mention that the said region has a peculiar geographical setting, as there is no free passage of air, due to the low wind speed which makes the pollution persist. Further, the temperature inversion during the winter months aggravates the said phenomena.

BRIEF HISTORY OF PROCEEDINGS

9. Taking note of the then prevailing situation, a spate of directions has been issued by this Court from time to time, since the year 2018, to regulate the bursting of firecrackers, especially, in and around Delhi-NCR region.

10. On 23.10.2018, this Court in **Arjun Gopal & Ors. v. Union of India & Ors**., in W.P. (C.) No. 728/2015, while dealing with the issue of banning firecrackers, struck a balance between the competing interests and permitted manufacture and sale of crackers with reduced emission (improved crackers) and Green Crackers. The directions thereunder held the field till the year 2024. In fact, an application seeking complete ban was also dismissed by this Court on 29.10.2021.

11. Thereafter in the year 2024, pursuant to the directions issued by this Court in **M.C. Mehta v. Union of India & Ors.** in W.P.(C.) 13029/1985 on 11.11.2024, GNCTD on 19.12.2024, imposed a complete perpetual ban on manufacturing, storage, selling and bursting all kinds of firecrackers throughout the year, with immediate effect from 01.01.2025. On the even date, this Court while noticing the aforesaid order and a similar order passed by the State of Rajasthan, directed the States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana to impose a similar ban in those parts of the State which fall into the National Capital Region. In compliance thereof, the States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana imposed a similar ban. The same came to be extended by this Court on 17.01.2025.

12. On 03.04.2025, another order was passed by this Court observing that the issue of reconsideration of the complete ban in order to permit the manufacturing, storage, selling and bursting of the "so-called Green Crackers" will not be done unless it is satisfied by scientific evidence, that the pollution caused by them is bare minimum. This order further refused to take the view that was taken in 2018 by this Court in **Arjun Gopal** ***(supra),*** by noting that much water had flown since the decision rendered in 2018.

13. By a subsequent order dated 26.09.2025, and after noting the lack of effective implementation despite the ban, it was observed by this Court while issuing certain directions, that a balanced approach would thus be required. The

manufacturers possessing valid certification for green crackers were permitted to manufacture, subject to filing an undertaking before this Court.

14. This was followed by a subsequent order dated 15.10.2025 in **M.C. Mehta *(supra),*** wherein, the Court decided to follow the approach adopted by this Court in the year 2018, and as a temporary measure issued the following directions:

> "**24.** In that view of the matter, as a temporary measure, we propose to follow the approach adopted by this Court in the year 2018 in *Arjun Gopal*. We, therefore, issue the following directions:
>
> **A.** The sale of green crackers as uploaded on the website of NEERI shall be permitted commencing from 18.10.2025 and continuing only till 20.10.2025.
> **B.** The sale of these products shall be permitted only from the designated locations in the entire National Capital Region which shall be identified by the District Collectors/Commissioners in consultation with the District Superintendent of Police and given wide publicity.
> **C.** The police authorities, in consultation with the district administration shall constitute patrolling teams to keep a vigil on the designated locations of sale, including Officers as nominated from the Regional Offices of the State Pollution Control Boards. The patrol teams so constituted shall acquaint themselves with the green cracker products as uploaded in the website of NEERI and the registrations granted as also the QR Codes issued to individual manufacturers.
> **D.** The patrol teams shall conduct regular reconnaissance in the designated sites to ensure that only the permitted products shall be sold and that too having the QR Codes issued. They shall also take random samples for the purpose of analysis, which shall be transmitted to PESO. On violations noticed, the responsibility shall attach to those involved in manufacturing or sale of prohibited products who shall not only be penalised but also their licence/registration from PESO or with NEERI shall stand cancelled.
> **E**. The district administration and the police shall ensure that use of firecrackers shall be confined between 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM on the two days i.e., the one before and on the Diwali day.
> **F.** The sale shall be only through licensed traders and of the products i.e. the green crackers manufactured by those who are registered with the NEERI and obtained license from PESO. Any firecracker seized which are not manufactured by the registered/licensed manufacturers shall be immediately confiscated.

G. There shall be no firecrackers allowed into the NCR region from outside the said region.
H. The use of firecrackers with Barium and those not approved by the NEERI as green cracker, shall not be permitted and if found for sale or in the possession of individuals/traders, the same shall be confiscated immediately.
I. There shall be no manufacture or sale of firecrackers joined in series (laris).
J. There shall be no sale or purchase of firecrackers through e-commerce networks and any supply of such products shall be detained and the product confiscated.
K. The licences of traders, expired or cancelled after the ban was introduced shall be renewed for the period stipulated by the statutory authorities.
L. The Central Pollution Control Board, in consultation with the State Pollution Control Boards and their respective regional offices within the districts coming under the NCR shall monitor the air quality index in their respective jurisdictions starting from 14.10.2025 till 25.10.2025 and file a report before this Court, specifying the air quality of each day indicated hereinabove. Along with such monitoring the Regional Offices of the State Pollution Control Boards shall also take samples of sand and water from sites having more density of use for analysis.
M. We make it clear that the relaxation is only on a test case basis and the same shall be only for the period specified."

(emphasis supplied)

15. Needless to state, the aforesaid order was only in the nature of a temporary relaxation, facilitating further action on a trial basis for a specified period.

PRESENT PROCEEDINGS

16. We are cognizant of the fact that the efforts made so far have not improved the situation till date. Despite the clear directions issued by this Court time and again, neither was there effective implementation to the satisfaction of this Court, nor were any of the relevant materials/documents placed to our satisfaction.

17. As the festival of *Deepawali* approaches, the instant applications have also been filed seeking appropriate orders by various stakeholders seeking the following reliefs:

i. **I.A. NO. 251493/2026** – The Application for directions on behalf of Delhi Fireworks Shopkeepers Association seeking restoration/ reinstatement of licenses cancelled.

ii. **I.A. NO. 264010/2026** – The Application for directions on behalf of Federation of Fireworks Traders seeking directions to allow manufacture, storage, sale and use of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (for short, **'CSIR-NEERI')** approved green crackers in the National Capital Region.

iii. **I.A. NO. 325852/2025 –** The Application on behalf of the Respondent No. 7- Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (for short, **'MoEF&CC'**), seeking directions to permit the use of further reduced quantities of Barium Nitrate in the formulation for the manufacture and sale for the products as tested by the RACE facility, Sivakasi and CSIR-NEERI, Nagpur, achieving an emission reduction of 45-50%, and already submitted to the MoEF&CC, which has been duly approved by Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (for short, **'PESO'**), while

ensuring full compliance with all prescribed safety standards, and ancillary reliefs.

iv. **I.A. NO. 103495/2026** – The Application on behalf of the Petitioners seeking directions to impose a complete ban on the manufacture, transport, distribution, sale, purchase and use of all firecrackers seeking directions for suspension of license of all manufacturers and distributors of firecrackers in India and to direct the State Government and Police to take immediate steps against anyone seeking to manufacture, sell or purchase firecrackers.

SUBMISSIONS

18. Learned *Amicus Curiae*, Ms. Uttara Babbar by placing substantial reliance on the documents filed, backed by the submissions made Mr. Gopal Sankarnarayanan, learned Senior Counsel, submitted that the prevailing situation warrants a complete ban on manufacture, storage, sale and usage of firecrackers. It is further submitted that a comprehensive assessment on the health of the inhabitants of Delhi-NCR, as a consequence of bursting firecrackers, shall have to be conducted. Such an exercise becomes imperative, especially, when the so-called preventive and regulatory measures purported to be undertaken by various authorities have not yielded any positive result to reduce the levels of pollution or the AQI levels.

19. Learned Senior Counsel Mr. J. Sai Deepak appearing for the intervening applicant(s) submitted that the intervenors are the traders or manufacturers, who have been duly licensed to carry out or engage in the manufacturing, storage and sale of firecrackers, and their goods have cleared the rigours of tests conducted and duly complied with all the terms and conditions stipulated by various authorities such as CSIR-NEERI, etc. Hence, by not restoring or reinstating their licenses, thereby preventing them from doing their business would facilitate the business of illegal firecrackers, manufactured and transported from across the border. Such firecrackers would certainly be more hazardous in nature and, therefore, the very purpose of imposing a ban would be defeated.

20. It is further submitted that for the purpose of necessary compliance by the proposed violators, stricter implementation is required with specific reference to registration of fireworks traders and printing of a Quick Response Code **(**for short**, 'QR Code'**) by the concerned manufacturer on the packaging of the firecracker.

21. Learned ASG appearing for the respondent(s) highlighted the measures which have been taken so far, and the proposed steps which are to be undertaken commencing from November, 2026 in the territory of Delhi-NCR. Accordingly, she has assured this Court that the proposed Action Plan to mitigate pollution

would be given effect to, and the entire machinery is geared up for tackling the environmental pollution days following the festivals.

DISCUSSION

22. It is not in dispute that the right to practice, profess and propagate religion conferred under Article 25(1) of the Constitution is certainly subject to public order, morality, health and other provisions of Part III of the Constitution. This Court has repeatedly held that the 'right to life' envisaged under Article 21 of the Constitution includes the right to a healthy, safe and a pollution-free environment, and the said position has been crystallized and, hence, requires no repetition. Therefore, the right of an individual to engage in a particular practice, which may have a religious color, is only a qualified one and cannot go beyond the Constitutional restrictions.

23. The fact remains that bursting firecrackers would certainly cause pollution. We find that the measures undertaken either by the authorities based on the orders of this Court or by their own, have not yielded the desired result. Therefore, it can be seen that the problem lies in the implementation. Certainly, there has to be better coordination amongst all relevant stakeholders. We are of the opinion that the process of regulating, implementing and monitoring by the authorities should continue not only during the festival times, but more importantly, even thereafter. In fact, there has to be a periodic review of the environmental

pollution and its consequential effects, after the festive season. The data with respect the AQI ought to be collected from different AQI monitoring stations managed by the Central Pollution Control Board (for short, **'CPCB'**) and Delhi Pollution Control Committee (for short, **'DPCC'**). We are also of the view that statistics pertaining to increase in the number of patients, as well as the reported deaths, if any, due to the pollution, have to be collected from Hospitals and Health Care Centres across Delhi-NCR. Further discussion and deliberation should take place between requisite stakeholders, including public health officials, towards alleviation of environmental pollution.

24. We are also conscious of the fact that the celebration of *Deepawali* has a religious, social, psychological and emotional connotation amongst people, creating a positive atmosphere of hope, welfare and prosperity. That being said, allowing the environment to degrade, which results in a health hazard to all the living beings, defeats the very purpose of the festivities, and the celebrations would be rendered nugatory. All parties before us are *ad idem* on the fact that bursting of firecrackers is contributing enormously to the pollution in the Delhi-National Capital Region.

25. The issue before us at present is whether the situation warrants a complete ban on firecrackers, or whether the same must be regulated. Though imposition of a blanket ban seems to be the ideal solution, we are of the opinion that this Court,

at this point in time, is short of adequate data to decide whether or not a complete ban would be the best solution to solve the problem of environmental pollution, caused by bursting firecrackers. At the cost of repetition, this Court has not been furnished with adequate data as to whether the complete ban on firecrackers imposed in 2024 in Delhi-NCR has served its purpose, particularly, since there has been no significant improvement in the AQI readings.

26. While considering the detrimental effect due to potential entry of illegal firecrackers in the Indian market, and to balance the competing interests, this Court had passed directions *vide* its order dated 15.10.2025, relaxing the complete ban that had been imposed previously. Another intention behind the temporary relaxation was also to enable the States to precisely determine the effects of allowing bursting of Green Crackers on the environment and health, and place its findings before this Court, to enable it to take a decision. Unfortunately, we find that the State has utterly failed in complying with the directions thereunder.

27. Thereafter, the situation has not improved even after resumption of the complete ban on firecrackers. The background note submitted by the learned *Amicus Curiae* also shows that despite there being a complete ban, there was a significant spike in the AQI levels on the day of Dussehra festival and the following day this year. Further, it is worrisome to note that despite the

complete ban having resumed, as aforestated, conventional firecrackers were sold and continue to be sold under the guise of Green Crackers. This clearly indicates that the complete ban is not only facilitating the illegal sale of firecrackers, but also preventing people from purchasing legitimate Green Crackers and Next-Generation Joined Green Crackers, which have been tested at established facilities.

28. The non-implementation and flouting of the directions passed in various orders of this Court has also been a recurring problem. Hence, this Court is inclined to regulate the manufacture, storage, sale and bursting of green firecrackers, instead of maintaining the complete ban on the same, for a temporary period, in view of the aforesaid discussion.

DIRECTIONS

29. Accordingly, by taking note of the balanced approach adopted by this Court in **Arjun Gopal** ***(supra)*** in 2018 and **M.C. Mehta** ***(supra)*** in 2025, we issue the following directions:

GENERAL DIRECTIVES

A. The permission to burst firecrackers is granted on the same lines, as passed by this Court *vide* order dated 15.10.2025. Accordingly, the authorities shall ensure that bursting of firecrackers is allowed only between 6:00 A.M. – 7:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M. on 7th and 8th November, 2026.

B. There shall not be any bursting of fireworks within a 300-metre radius of hospitals, nursing homes, primary and district health centres, old-age homes and any notified silence zones. These areas will be declared as **'No-Cracker Zones',** and shall be marked on the ground and published. The same restriction shall also be applicable to educational institutions. All necessary efforts will have to be made to ensure due compliance as endeavours should be made not to cause any inconvenience to those who are suffering from ailments.

***QUA* MANUFACTURERS AND TRADERS**

C. The firecracker and fireworks manufacturers who possess valid certification for the Green Crackers, as certified by the CSIR-NEERI, as well as PESO, are permitted to manufacture only those Green Crackers that have been uploaded on the website of CSIR-NEERI from 02.11.2026 to 06.11.2026.

D. The boxes containing the Green Crackers must be completely sealed to ensure that they are not mixed with any of the unauthorised or conventional firecrackers.

E. There shall be no manufacture or sale of firecrackers joined in series ('*ladis'*) and garlands. It is reiterated that the use of firecrackers with Barium and those not approved by the CSIR-NEERI as Green Crackers, shall not be permitted.

F. Each of such boxes shall contain the QR code, and there shall be sale of only those firecrackers that carry product-specific QR codes. Every box should carry a QR code issued for the specific product and batch. Upon scanning the QR code, it should show the manufacturer, NEERI registration, PESO/DM License, formulation and test certificate. QR codes must be non-transferable, and the sale of QR codes shall be treated as a violation leading to cancellation of registration license.

G. The licences of traders that have been cancelled, shall be restored for a temporary period commencing from 04.11.2026 to 06.11.2026, to facilitate the sale of approved green crackers purchased from CSIR-NEERI certified manufacturers. Such licences shall be immediately cancelled, if they are found flouting the aforesaid directions, and they shall be prohibited from selling the firecrackers during the remaining period.

***QUA* STATE MACHINERY**

H. We direct the concerned authorities to mandate all manufacturers and traders of firecrackers in Delhi-NCR to furnish a monetary security, which shall be a handsome amount, as determined by them. The said security deposit shall immediately stand forfeited, in case any manufacturer or trader of firecrackers violates any of the directions passed by this Court, and the regulations governing.

I. The District Collectors/Commissioners, in consultation with the concerned District Superintendent of Police, shall identify and designate locations in the entire National Capital Region to facilitate the sale of the Green Crackers. The sale of firecrackers shall be strictly prohibited in any other location, other than the designated ones, including sale through online platforms.

J. Steps will have to be taken to stop the flow of illegal and conventional firecrackers. For the aforesaid purpose, the concerned authorities will have to check the vehicles entering into the territory of Delhi-NCR and take appropriate actions.

K. Measures must also be taken by the authorities to put up banners at such designated locations, including shops, to inform the general public of the following:

- **i.** Mode of identifying if the goods that are being sold are CSIR-NEERI approved Green Crackers.
- **ii.** To ensure that the boxes in which the Green Crackers are being sold are properly sealed.
- **iii.** The dates on which the sale of Green Crackers is permitted, as well as the dates and timings at which bursting of Green Crackers is permitted.

iv. The mode on how and where to file any complaint against the manufacturers or traders, who are found to be violating the directions passed by this Court and the regulations governing.

v. The consequential action that will be taken for bursting the firecrackers beyond the stipulated time, as provided by this Court.

In the context of the aforesaid directions, we further direct that the shopkeepers and traders shall affix a copy of these directions in a conspicuous place in their shops and also facilitate the concerned authorities to ensure necessary compliance.

L. The Police authorities, in coordination with the District administration in Delhi-NCR, shall constitute patrolling teams consisting of a sufficient number of Police officers and other necessary personnel, to keep a vigil on the designated locations of sale of such Green Crackers.

M. The patrolling teams are directed to acquaint themselves with this order and the directions issued herein. They shall also be acquainted with the requisite details of the Green Crackers, as uploaded on the website of CSIR-NEERI.

N. The teams shall undertake regular reconnaissance in such designated sites to ensure compliance with the directions contained herein. Illegal or conventional firecrackers shall be confiscated immediately, and prosecutions shall be initiated against the offending manufacturers or traders, including

those who have violated any of the directions passed by this Court and the regulations governing. These teams shall also conduct checks at random intervals of the QR codes contained on the products to ensure their veracity and authenticity.

O. The CPCB, in consultation with the State Pollution Control Boards and their respective regional offices within the districts coming under the NCR, shall monitor the AQI readings in their respective jurisdictions and prepare reports in the following manner:

i. **Pre-Diwali report:** A report shall be prepared specifying the air quality of each day from 02.11.2026 to 06.11.2026.

ii. **Diwali report:** A report shall be prepared specifying the air quality of each day on 07.11.2026 and 08.11.2026.

iii. **Post-Diwali Report:** A report shall be prepared specifying the air quality of each day from 09.11.2026 to 30.11.2026.

iv. Samples of sand and water shall also be collected during the aforesaid period in order to do a comparative analysis.

P. The AQI Monitoring Stations, which are alleged to be non-functional, as no data could be retrieved therefrom, ought to be inspected once again. If any defects in their functioning are found, they will have to be rectified with immediate effect. All possible endeavours shall be made for effective monitoring of AQI levels.

Q. Appropriate measures will have to be taken after the festival is over. This will include the clearing of all solid waste, as well as its management and disposal. Further, the most polluted areas shall be cleansed using water sprinklers, amongst any other measures that may possibly be undertaken.

R. The State Authorities, including the Government of GNCTD, shall duly notify and publish the measures proposed to be taken, including the Winter Action Plan 2026, Air Pollution Mitigation Plan 2026 and the CAQM Annual Action Plan amongst others, along with their advisory in the leading newspapers and news channels.

S. The Secretaries of the concerned Education Departments of all the States falling within the National Capital Region to take adequate steps to sensitize the children studying in schools on the impact of pollution, especially during the festival times.

T. The State shall direct the respective departments to take steps to notify and publish the directions contained herein, and the measures proposed to be taken by the State machinery to comply with the same. It shall also contain awareness regarding the harmful effects of bursting firecrackers on the environment and health of all living beings. The concerned departments shall also publish the same on their official websites and their social media

handles. The State shall also direct the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation to use its audio systems for achieving the said purpose.

U. Needless to the state that the complete ban on the firecrackers, as imposed earlier, shall be restored with effect from 09.11.2026.

COMPLIANCE REPORTS TO BE FURNISHED

V. In order to ensure strict compliance by the authorities in its true letter and spirit, we pass the following directions to the State machineries falling in Delhi-NCR:

i. To file an affsidavit indicating the precise steps taken in compliance with directions issued under direction ***H.***

ii. To file an affidavit indicating the precise steps taken in compliance with directions issued under directions ***I, J, K and L.***

iii. To file a detailed report supported by an affidavit indicating the actions taken and prosecutions initiated against those offenders, found in violation of the aforesaid directions issued under direction ***N***.

iv. To file the reports supported by affidavits, as prepared under direction ***O.***

v. To file an affidavit on the impact of bursting firecrackers, categorically stating the exact extent of the increase of admission of patients till 30.11.2026, in all Hospitals and Health Centres across Delhi-NCR, following the festival.

Accordingly, all the aforesaid reports supported by affidavits shall be filed on or before 14.12.2026. Needless to state, strict actions of contempt will be taken against the responsible officials, if the aforesaid directions are not complied with.

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

30. It is made clear that we are inclined to monitor the progress on the implementation through periodic hearing of the instant writ petitions.

31. Regardless of the directions passed by this Court to regulate the upcoming situation, the endeavour is to bring about a holistic change for which the public perception has to change. One must embrace the Precautionary Principle by being proactive to prevent issues, instead of merely reacting after they have occurred.

32. While parting, we wish to make a sincere plea regarding the feasibility of raising awareness by the members of the Bar, prominent personalities, including celebrities and sportspersons, to lend their voice and influence through a voluntary public-awareness campaign. Such participation can play a significant role in encouraging citizens to celebrate the upcoming festivals in a safe, responsible, and environmentally conscious manner, without causing harm to public health, or aggravating the already precarious air quality.

33. List the instant interlocutory applications for further compliance on 16.12.2026.

……...J.
[M.M. SUNDRESH]

……...J.
[PRASANNA B. VARALE]

NEW DELHI;
OCTOBER 29, 2026.