

Sri A.S.N.M Government College (A), Palakol

Department of Chemistry

Best Practices - 2023-2024

Distribution of Eco-friendly Ganesh Idols

On the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi, the Chemistry Department of Sri ASNM Govt. College (A) exemplified its commitment to environmental sustainability by presenting eco-friendly Ganesh idols to Principal Dr. T. Raja Rajeswari and all attending faculty during the International Ozone Day celebrations on September 16, 2023. These idols, crafted from clay, natural fibers, paper, and other biodegradable materials, symbolize a conscious effort to reduce environmental impact. By distributing these naturally made idols to both faculty and students on the same day, the college not only honored tradition but also advocated for eco-conscious practices. Eco-friendly Ganesh idols, unlike those made of Plaster of Paris (POP), decompose rapidly upon immersion in water, minimizing harm to the environment. This initiative embodies the college's commitment to instilling sustainable practices and environmental responsibility within its community.

Objective:

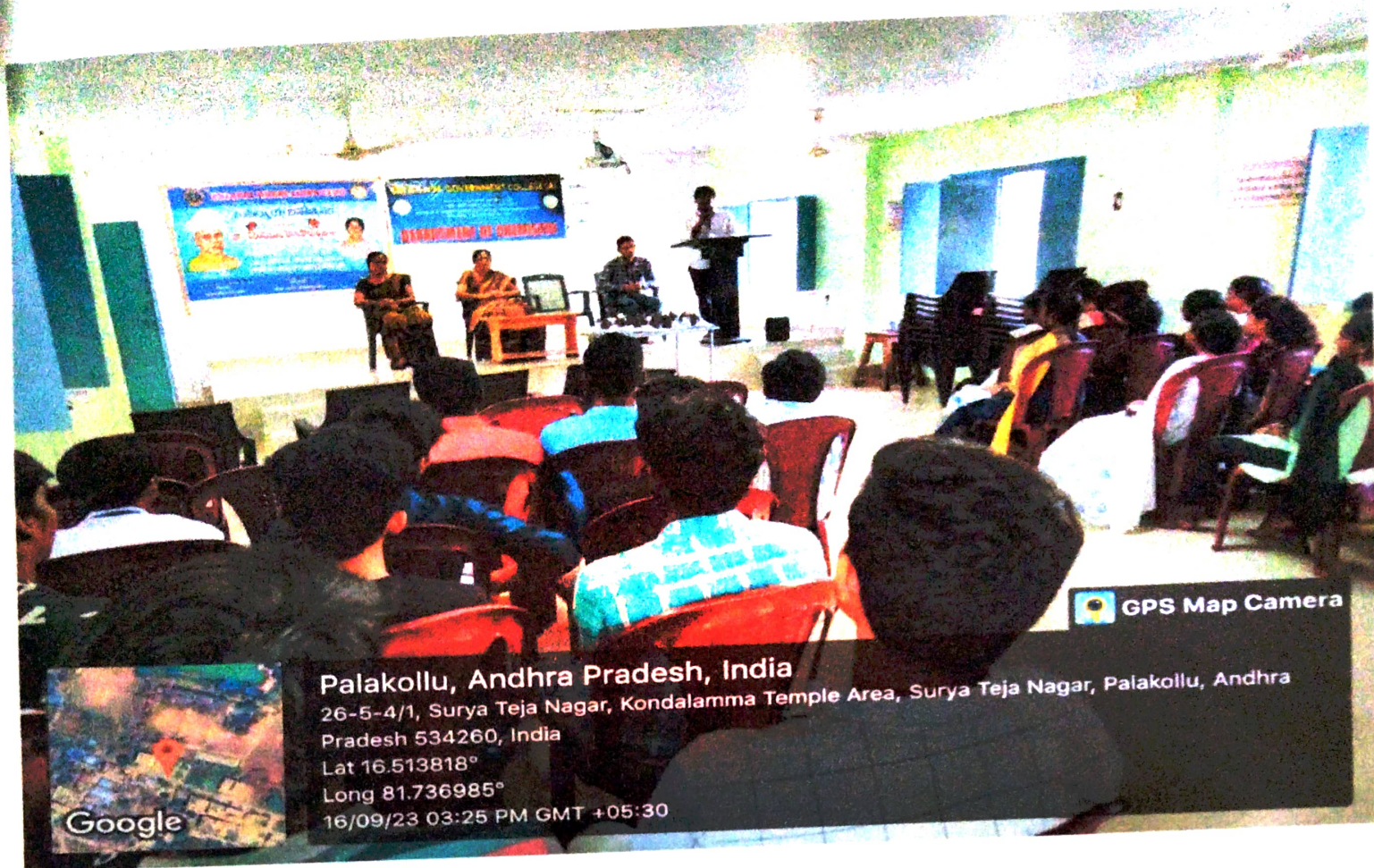
1. Raise awareness among students, faculty, and the community about the detrimental effects caused by immersing idols of Lord Ganesh made with plaster of Paris and artificial colors during Ganesh Chaturthi in water bodies and also the significance of preserving water bodies and ecosystems by avoiding the immersion of non-biodegradable idols
2. Promote the adoption of eco-friendly practices by encouraging people to purchase idols made with clay and natural colors, which also helps to empower local artisans and promote traditional craftsmanship by supporting the production and sale of eco-friendly Ganesh idols.
3. Inspire other communities and institutions to adopt similar eco-friendly practices during religious and cultural festivities.

The Context:

As the festive season commences with Ganesh Chaturthi, we anticipate a spectacle of splendid celebrations, featuring a variety of idols ranging from towering structures in pandals to smaller ones for personal worship. However, many of these idols are crafted using materials like Plaster of Paris (POP), plastic, and cement, adorned with synthetic paints for a visually striking appearance.

Once the festivities conclude after a period of 10 days, the immersion of these idols poses a significant environmental threat. They do not readily dissolve in water; instead, they persist for years, contaminating water bodies and endangering aquatic life. This pollution extends beyond the immediate celebration, as these non-biodegradable materials can linger in rivers and lakes for decades, especially when combined with other toxic waste, perpetuating harm for generations to come.





The Practice:

This practice includes,

- The practice entails creating idols using eco-friendly and organic materials like clay, sand, newspaper, and sugarcane. These materials are chosen for their ability to dissolve quickly and avoid prolonged floating.
- Natural dyes are preferred for coloring the idols as they dissolve easily and minimize the use of chemicals and heavy metals. Options like dried flower powder or dry natural colorants are encouraged.
- To ensure minimal environmental impact, the idols are immersed in designated artificial ponds rather than larger bodies of water. This measure helps prevent water contamination by avoiding the release of contaminants and heavy metals. Moreover, the practice emphasizes recyclability, further reducing environmental footprint.

Outcome:

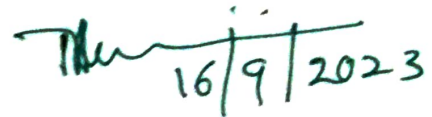
1. Increased awareness among students and the community regarding the pollution affecting water bodies during Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations.
2. Enhanced participation as individuals proactively opted for clay idols for worship after understanding the environmental concerns.
3. Positive feedback and appreciation expressed for the initiative, acknowledging the efforts of the Chemistry Department in organizing the program.
4. Savings in time and expenses for individuals who traditionally purchased idols from commercial vendors, as the eco-friendly idols were freely distributed.

5. Creation of new avenues for eco-friendly entrepreneurship, with opportunities emerging for the production and distribution of sustainable religious artifacts beyond Ganesha idols

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

1. Scaling up the distribution of eco-friendly idols may strain the department's annual budget, requiring additional financial resources to accommodate the increased demand.
2. Identifying and engaging with artisans who specialize in crafting clay idols poses a logistical challenge, requiring dedicated efforts to locate and collaborate with skilled practitioners.
3. The aesthetic appeal of natural colors used in eco-friendly idols may be perceived as less vibrant compared to artificial alternatives, necessitating creative strategies to enhance their visual attractiveness and market appeal.
4. Securing financial support and sponsorship from

- Organizers:**
1. Dr. V. Yamini, Lecturer In-Charge, Department of Chemistry
 2. A. Vamsi Subbarayan, Contract Faculty in Chemistry
 3. K. Jagapathi Babu, Guest Faculty in Chemistry
 3. S. Pujitha, Guest Faculty in Chemistry


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