The Kalyani Chronicle

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Mind over Matter

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THE 'GREAT INDIAN FESTIVAL' AND ITS ECONOMY

- by Parnika Rane

Diwali, in all its glory, is a traditional festival that includes lights, prayers, and lots of gifts! It is celebrated as the victory of light over darkness. In Sivakasi, it is also the festival that decides whether a family can pay its bills in the months that follow. The spending bunches up for cultural and financial reasons. Families buy gold, clothes and sweets on auspicious days, and many workers receive generous festival bonuses. Because everyone shops together, sellers can plan for a known peak, though they must build stock months ahead and risk unsold goods. In Sivakasi, poor farmland meant cheap labour, so matchstick-making and then fireworks took root. Many jobs together formed a cluster that makes over 80% of India's firecrackers and supports 7 lakh or more livelihoods. Since 2018, 'green cracker' rules have cut demand, and some manufacturers reported orders falling by about 60%. The reason is clear: smoke is a negative externality, a cost that buyers do not pay but city residents breathe. The festival earns lakhs of crores for India, yet the workers who make it happen, have the least security. Even while promoting environmental well being, let us reach out to the lesser privileged this Diwali and ensure that the glow in our home does not risk someone's security.

INSPIRING TKS DEBATERS

Clicked by Mishaa Singh








DIWALI IN THE COLONIAL AND MUGHAL ARCHIVES

- by Shreeya Zundaray

Wouldn't it be interesting if modern Diwali could tell us stories from the days of long ago, with royal courts and a colonial past?

Colonial and Mughal records depict the history of the development of this festival of lights in India. Mughal Emperor Akbar was known for being secular. Emperor Akbar started grand court celebrations for Diwali, in Agra and Fatehpur Sikri; influenced partly by his Rajput wives. He also had the Ramayana translated into Persian and read in court. Even the later Mughal emperors like Shah Jahan celebrated Diwali with great pomp, by lighting a massive lamp or an Akash Diya which illuminated the entire darbar. Some sources depict festivals along with lamps and fireworks. With the advent of the British, Diwali grew into a highly commercialized and urban festival, where merchants used the occasion to launch their fiscal new year. Traditional home illuminations expanded into massive public fairs and regional celebrations, while the migration of indentured labourers spread Diwali traditions across the globe. It is evident from the British records how the festival was unique to every region and how it differed from place to place. As much as records say about the culture of India, we can never overlook the colonial context. Every lit diya reveals an interesting history of culture. These documents remind us how this festival, through faith, culture, and tradition, has evolved over the years and is a legacy that we have to appreciate.

The Brainy Bit

1. According to Sikh tradition, Diwali coincides with which important historical event?
a. The founding of the Khalsa
b. The return of Guru Hargobind Sahib to Amritsar
c. The birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
d. The construction of the Golden Temple

2. In the Hindu calendar, Diwali generally falls on which lunar phase?
a. Full moon b. First quarter
c. New Moon d. Waxing crescent

Answers of the last edition: 1-B, 2-C

- by Twishi Pabreja

Caught on Camera

Clicked by Mishaa Singh



Little Hearts, Big Friendships

Palette of Potential



Artwork by Sanjana Akula XI-D

BATTLE OF THE BANDS COMPETITION

Clicked by Keemaya Makhija












Diction Digest

FESTOONED

Pronunciation: Fes-toon-ed
Meaning: Adorned, decorated, or draped with chains, ribbons, flowers, or lights, usually hanging in a curve or loop.
Synonym: Decorated, adorned, draped.
Antonym: Plain, unembellished, bare.
Sentence: My house is festooned with marigold garlands and glowing fairy lights to welcome the auspicious festival of Diwali.

Submitted by Kushagrh Gaurav Deb

In West Bengal, instead of worshipping Goddess Lakshmi, devotees perform Kali puja to honour Goddess Kali.

During Nepal's Tihar festival, dogs receive flower garlands, tika and special food on Kukur Tihar. Crows and oxen are also honoured on separate days.

In Varanasi, Dev Deepawali transforms the Ganges ghats with hundreds of shining lamps

HAPPY DIWALI

In Maharashtra, some families build miniature mud forts decorated with tiny soldiers during Diwali. Inspired by the hill forts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, this tradition celebrates the region's rich history.

On Bhoot Chaturdashi, some Bengali households light 14 earthen lamps and prepare a dish with 14 types of leafy greens. The tradition is linked to local beliefs about ancestral spirits.

Submitted by Indira Banerjee and Ananya Rajol

For Sikhs, Diwali coincides with Bandi Chhor Divas, celebrating liberation and unity.

For many Gujarati merchants, Diwali means a fresh financial beginning. During Chopda Pujan, they worship account books and open new ledgers for prosperity. The following day, Bestu Varas, marks the Gujarati New Year.

Weekly Wisdom

Diwali means being in the present - dropping the regrets of the past, the worries of the future and living in the moment. It is a time to forget the bickering and negativities that have happened through the year. It is a time when you throw light on the wisdom you have gained and welcome a new beginning.

- Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji

- Submitted by Advika Negi

TEACHERS SPEAK

Interviewed by Karan Nambisan

How have your Diwali celebrations changed over the years, from childhood to now?



Ashish Tripathi Sir

On the surface, Diwali looks pretty much the same—the lights are just as bright, and the excitement in the air hasn't faded. But if I look closely, the heart of it has shifted quite a bit since I was a child. Earlier, Diwali was a full-on family production. Cleaning the house wasn't just a chore; the two-day team effort and making sweets and namkeen together was half the fun. We used to share and trade firecrackers with our friends, celebrating as a tight-knit community of family and neighbours. Today, so much of that has been outsourced to professionals and the sweets often come in a box from a store, rather than out of our own kitchen. Life is certainly faster now, but I really miss those messy, hands-on preparations. That personal touch is something I deeply cherish and miss.



Priyanka Singh Ma'am

Diwali is the time of the year when not only my home but also my life brightens up. Like everything else in the world, Diwali celebrations have evolved. As a kid, this festival always brought loads of happiness and excitement for sweets and gifts. Take the evolution of sweets, for instance—they have evolved from simple batashas and homemade barfi to modern-day exotic mithais and healthy snacks. Today, it often feels like the festival is more about showing people that you are happy rather than actually being happy. I miss my old Diwali!

Meet The Editorial Squad

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