

Conscious celebrations

Where Joy Meets Responsibility And Tradition Leads To A Greener Future

Youth Power is an annual social leadership programme organised by The Global Times, where different teams from Amity schools engage in varied social causes in several stages. One of them is 'Panel Discussion' where experts from different walks of life discuss several aspects of the chosen social cause. Here's presenting **Part II** of this exclusive series, based on the panel discussions organised by YP teams for the year 2025-26, and a host of opinions as experts share their insights on 'Eco-friendly Celebrations', the cause chosen by YP team of AIS Gurugram 46.



Panellists share their views on sustainable celebrations

Awareness through storytelling

Panellist: Asha Vats
Founder, Keshav Farm

"Celebrations can go hand in hand with nature. At Keshav Farm, everything we do is rooted in nature. For decorations and return gifts, we never use plastic. We use cloth *potlis* and handmade flowers that can later become hair clips or decorations. We plant around five thousand trees every year and we take care of them like children. We do not just plant and walk away. We also believe in celebrating by planting. Instead of burning crackers, we connect with the earth by growing something. Our diyas are made from cow dung. Storytelling is very important for us. When people hear how waste becomes something beautiful and how it creates livelihood for underprivileged communities, they remember it. Every product carries a story, and that story gives it meaning. This helps create awareness about our planet. That is how celebrations become purposeful."



Start asking questions

Panellist: Sameera Satija
Founder, Crockery Bank for Everyone

"Fun has nothing to do with fancy venues or expensive things. It has everything to do with who you are with. I work a lot with children and textiles. When they sit down with colourful threads and bits of fabric and make something with their own hands - a pouch, a toy - their joy is real. They carry that home proudly because it means something. Through Crockery Bank, I give people party kits with reusable crockery and decorations. You borrow them, enjoy your party, and return them. It saves money and it saves the planet. We also take groups to ponds and heritage water bodies. The air is cleaner, the birds are beautiful, and you go back feeling lighter. One thing I always say - make sustainability cool. Make it part of who you are."



Focus on mindful consumption

Panellist: Sandeep Trehan
COO, Karma Lakelands

"Celebrations today are happening at the cost of the planet. Balloons and plastic cutlery take years to decompose. At Karma Lakelands, we decided that purpose comes before profit for us. Today, people come to us because of what we stand for. We have made our golf course non-smoking. People resisted at first, but slowly they accepted it. During events, we are now seeing cloth décor, flowers, and more mindful planning. Food waste is still a huge problem. One of the simplest things we did was remove dustbins from cafeterias. When people had nowhere to throw half-eaten food, they became careful about what they took. At Karma, we serve half a glass of water for the same reason. You can refill, but do not waste. Mindfulness in small actions adds up. You just need to celebrate with respect for the resources you are using."



Being sustainable is our duty

Panellist: Ashutosh Senger
Environmental lawyer

"From a legal point of view, being sustainable is fulfilling your constitutional duty. Article 51A(g) of our Constitution says every citizen must protect the environment. When you recycle ceremonial cloth, when you avoid chemicals in your *havan samagri*, you are doing exactly that. The Supreme Court has also linked the right to life to the right to a clean environment. So, when you protect the planet, you are protecting your own right to breathe. Another important idea is the precautionary prin-



ciple - if you know something will harm the environment, you do not wait for proof, you avoid the harm in the first place. That is exactly what sustainable celebrations do. They prevent damage before it happens. Green crackers and sustainable idols - these are not bans on celebration, they are ways to celebrate without creating tragedy. Our environmental laws are among the best in the world. Enforcement is a challenge, but that is where citizens come in. When you do your part, you have the moral authority to demand better systems."

Part II



Expert Speak

Move away from excess

Panellist: Dr Sonam Mahajan
Media professor & founder
The Content Canvas

"Indian households were once deeply sustainable without even calling it that. A saree was not just worn seldomly, but repurposed too. Switching lights off and closing taps while brushing were not trends; they were habits. I feel we have moved far away from that wisdom. We buy balloons that will sit in landfills for years. We cut massive cakes that harm both our health and the planet. Celebration is about



togetherness. It is about sitting with your family, eating together, laughing together. If you want décor, we already have the most beautiful options at home - dupattas, sarees, cloth backdrops. Substitute junk food with traditional home-cooked food that nourishes us. Even gifting has become an exercise in excess. Why not gift a plant, a book, something handmade? These are small shifts, but together they change everything. Celebration should move away from excess and come back to joy, love, and belonging."