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## SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF IDOL IMMERSION: DIMENSIONS AND DIRECTIONS

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### Abstract

India possesses a diverse and rich cultural heritage and is renowned as a 'land of festivals'. These festivals attract massive community involvement paving way to new materials such as 'Plaster of Paris' being used for 'modernizing' the representation of idols with very little thought given to the issues of toxicity and environmental impacts. Another dimension to the whole issue is the plight of the artisans and the workers involved in the trade. Owing to the unorganized nature of the industry there is minimal or no guidelines pertaining to the worker safety and health risks of the people involved. This paper attempts to address the complexities of the inherent hazards as a consequence of these socio-environmental issues and trace the scientific rationale in addressing them in a practical and pragmatic way.

*Key words:* environmental pollution, idol immersion, Plaster of Paris, socio-environmental impacts

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