

Supreme Court's Diwali special order, allows firecracker for two hours



The Supreme Court on Tuesday released a Diwali special order by refusing blanket ban on the sale of firecrackers across India (but with conditions) and has also allowed the bursting of firecrackers - but only during a two-hour timeframe from 8 pm to 10 pm during Diwali.

Considering the worsening air pollution rates and the inevitable need of clean air to breathe, the Supreme Court bench comprising of justices A K Sikri and Ashok Bhushan passed the much awaited firecracker verdict ahead of Diwali. Rejecting the blanket ban on manufacturing, sale and bursting of firecrackers, the court has allowed the sale of firecrackers but with conditions. The court has directed that only "green" firecrackers which are less polluting and have low smoke emissions will be allowed to be sold in the country.

For this, the SC has defined norms for manufacturing of crackers and directed the companies to stick to the reduced emission norms which keep potassium, sulphur, and barium levels within prescribed limits. The court has revoked the license and disallowed the sale of firecrackers on ecommerce websites like Amazon and Flipkart. Besides this, the court has also selling of 'larries' or series firecrackers will not be allowed and bursting permitted crackers will also be allowed only at designated places during the fixated hours.

Firecracker bursting will be allowed only for two hours on the day of Diwali from 8 PM to 10 PM - and for Christmas and New Year it will be allowed between 11:55 PM to 12:30 AM. The local police stations will be responsible to ensure that all the prohibitions are respected and followed by people and that crackers are burst only within permitted time. The norms and rules were proposed by the court keeping the air and noise pollution in mind, as well as taking account of the fundamental right of livelihood of firecracker manufacturers.