








## 12 Instances Where Judicial Rulings Affected Hindu Festivals and Traditions

On **June 7, 2025**, the Supreme Court [declined](#) an urgent hearing on a plea challenging the Bombay High Court's June 3, 2025, order allowing **animal slaughter at a Dargah inside Vishalgad Fort**, a protected monument in Maharashtra, during Bakri Eid and Urs (June 7–12). The **petitioner argued it violated heritage laws**, but the High Court had permitted the practice under conditions, citing similar permissions granted in 2024. The SC bench, led by Justices Sanjay Karol and Satish Chandra Sharma, **refused immediate intervention, allowing the High Court's order to stand**.



However, the judiciary has often intervened in Hindu festivals and traditions. This report outlines **12 cases from 2013 to 2024** where **courts imposed restrictions on Hindu festivals** — such as bans on Murti Visarjan, limits on Dahi Handi height, Diwali firecrackers, and the Kanwar Yatra — **citing concerns related to pollution, safety, or public order**.


S.No	Incident	Visual & Source
Statement/Verdict against Hindu processions		
1.	<p><b>High Court orders action on noise pollution during Durga Puja</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> October 3, 2024,  <b>Place :</b> Odisha  <b>Occasion :</b> Durga Puja  <b>Court :</b> Odisha High Court  <b>Name of Judges :</b> Sangam Kumar Sahoo and Justice V Narasingh</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict :</b> The special bench of the Odisha High Court made a strong comment on the noise pollution during <b>Durga Puja</b> and said that loud noise during festivals has a serious impact on people's health, sleep, mental peace and environment, which also affects the studies of students.</p> <p>The court said that "<b>Everyone has the right to celebrate the festival, but it should not be at the cost of the well-being of others.</b>" Along with this, the court directed the DCP of Cuttack to file an affidavit by September 26, stating what arrangements have been made for noise control, traffic management and parking near the pandals.</p> <p>The court ordered that the sound level should not exceed <b>65 decibels</b> and if any person or institution violates this, then the administration will have to take <b>strict action against them</b>.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Timesofindia</a></p>

2.	<p><b>Bombay HC Defers Decision on VHP's Plea for Ganpati Immersion in Aarey Lake</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> September 16, 2023  <b>Place :</b> Aarey, Mumbai, Maharashtra  <b>Occasion :</b> Ganpati idol immersion (Visarjan)  <b>Court :</b> Bombay High Court  <b>Name of Judges :</b> Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya, Justice Arif Doctor (original bench); Justice Nitin Jamdar, Justice Manjusha Deshpande (interim hearing)</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict :</b> The Bombay High Court refused immediate relief on VHP leader Rajiv Chaubey's plea seeking permission for Ganpati idol immersion in Aarey Lake, citing an ongoing petition highlighting environmental concerns. The court deferred the hearing to September 25, after the festival, as the original bench was unavailable.</p> <p><b>Controversy:</b> The plea was filed after municipal authorities prohibited idol immersion in Aarey's natural lakes, following criticism from the court over environmental damage. VHP sought either an exemption for this year or the creation of artificial ponds, arguing for religious accommodation.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Indiatoday</a></p>
3.	<p><b>Orissa High Court Allows Sale and Use of Green Crackers on Diwali</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> November 1, 2021  <b>Place:</b> Odisha  <b>Occasion:</b> Diwali Festival  <b>Court:</b> Orissa High Court  <b>Name of Judges:</b> Chief Justice S. Muralidhar and Justice B. P. Routray</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The Orissa High Court allowed the sale and use of "green" fireworks during Diwali, restricting their usage between 8 PM and 10 PM on November 4. The court accepted the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC)'s directives, which require that only green crackers conforming to NEERI's formulation and certified by PESO may be sold. Traders must sell only in designated zones, and mere labeling as "green" with QR codes will not be enough for sale.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The court's decision was based on the Supreme Court's order, which banned only firecrackers containing barium salts, not all firecrackers. The ruling was in response to a petition by the All Odisha Fireworks Dealers Association challenging the earlier blanket ban.</p>	 <p><a href="#">NDTV</a></p>
4.	<p><b>Supreme Court Upholds Odisha Govt's Ban on Rath Yatra Outside Puri Amid Covid Concerns</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> July 06, 2021  <b>Place :</b> Odisha  <b>Occasion :</b> Rath Yatra festival  <b>Court :</b> Supreme Court of India  <b>Name of Judges :</b> Chief Justice NV Ramana</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict :</b> The Supreme Court dismissed all petitions challenging the Odisha government's decision to restrict Rath Yatra celebrations to Puri Jagannath Temple due to Covid-19. The court ruled that it was a policy decision beyond judicial interference, emphasizing that maintaining Covid protocols across multiple temples was impractical.</p> <p><b>Controversy:</b> Petitioners argued that the restriction violated Articles 14 and 25 of the Constitution by discriminating against other Jagannath temples. However, the court upheld the state's stance, stating that public health concerns outweighed religious gatherings.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Bar and Bench</a></p> <p><a href="#">Opindia</a></p>

5.	<p><b>Supreme Court Cites Right to Life, UP Cancels Kanwar Yatra Amid Covid Concerns</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> July 18, 2021  <b>Place :</b> Uttar Pradesh, India  <b>Occasion :</b> Annual Kanwar Yatra (Scheduled to start on July 25)  <b>Court :</b> Supreme Court of India  <b>Name of Judges :</b> Justices R F Nariman and B R Gavai</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict :</b> The Supreme Court stressed that the Right to Life under Article 21 is paramount and asked the Uttar Pradesh government to reconsider its decision to allow a "symbolic" Kanwar Yatra amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Following this, the Uttar Pradesh government announced the cancellation of the yatra after discussions with Kanwar Sanghs.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The Uttarakhand government had already canceled the yatra over fears of a third Covid wave, while the Union government advised against allowing the pilgrimage. The Supreme Court took suo motu cognizance and ruled that religious sentiments must yield to public health and safety.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Bar and Bench</a></p> <p><a href="#">The News Minute</a></p>
6.	<p><b>Calcutta High Court Imposes Complete Ban on Firecrackers During Diwali and Kali Puja</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 29 October 2021  <b>Place:</b> West Bengal  <b>Occasion:</b> Diwali and Kali Puja  <b>Court:</b> Calcutta High Court</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The Calcutta High Court ordered a total ban on the sale and use of all kinds of firecrackers, including green crackers, across West Bengal during Diwali and Kali Puja. The court stated that this ban shall remain in force during all remaining festivities of the year.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The decision was taken due to concerns over rising air pollution and its harmful effects on public health and environment.</p>	 <p><a href="#">The Economic Times</a></p>
7.	<p><b>Bombay HC Bans Production, Sale &amp; Immersion of PoP Idols Before Maghi Ganpati</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> July 18, 2021  <b>Place :</b> Maharashtra  <b>Occasion :</b> Maghi Ganpati festival (February 1-2)  <b>Court :</b> Bombay High Court  <b>Name of Judges :</b> Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Bharti Dangre</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict :</b> The Bombay High Court issued an interim order prohibiting the making, sale, and immersion of Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols, directing strict enforcement of CPCB guidelines. The court emphasized the need to stop environmental damage while acknowledging the livelihood concerns of artisans.</p> <p><b>Controversy:</b> The ban just before Maghi Ganpati sparked a debate between environmental protection and artisans' livelihoods. While petitioners highlighted pollution concerns, idol makers argued the guidelines were not binding and affected their businesses.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Indiatoday</a></p>

8.	<p><b>Telangana High Court Refuses to Modify Ban on PoP Idol Immersion in Lakes</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> September 13, 2021  <b>Place:</b> Telangana  <b>Occasion:</b> Ganesh Idol Immersion  <b>Court:</b> Telangana High Court  <b>Name of Judges:</b> Chief Justice M Ramachandra Rao and Justice T Vinod Kumar</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The High Court refused to revise its earlier ban on immersion of Plaster of Paris (PoP) Ganesh idols in Hussain Sagar and other lakes. It stated that the court cannot pass any order that permits water pollution, even temporarily. The court said the government had ample time since the previous year to make alternate arrangements and rejected the plea to allow immersion for just one year.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The High Court said that the government had a full year to make alternative arrangements, but adequate steps were not taken. Therefore, the ban was maintained to prevent water pollution.</p>	 <p><a href="#">The News Minute</a></p>
9.	<p><b>Punjab &amp; Haryana High Court Restricts Firecracker Bursting on Diwali to 3 Hours</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 13 October 2017  <b>Place:</b> Punjab, Haryana, and Chandigarh  <b>Occasion:</b> Diwali Festival  <b>Court:</b> Punjab and Haryana High Court  <b>Name of Judges:</b> Justices Ajay Kumar Mittal and Amit Rawal</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The Punjab and Haryana High Court restricted bursting of firecrackers to a 3-hour window from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM on Diwali in Punjab, Haryana, and Chandigarh. The court also prohibited firecracker use before and after Diwali until the next hearing. It barred authorities from issuing permanent firecracker licences without court approval and limited temporary licences to only 20% of those issued the previous year. Licences already granted were declared inoperative.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The order was issued to prevent rising air pollution levels and to ensure public safety during the festive season. The court had taken suo motu cognizance of air quality concerns in the region and emphasized strict enforcement through local authorities and NGO monitoring.</p>	 <p><a href="#">The Indian Express</a></p>

10.	<p><b>Supreme Court Bars Minors and Restricts Pyramid Height in Dahi Handi Festival</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 17 August 2016  <b>Place:</b> Maharashtra  <b>Occasion:</b> Janmashtami – Dahi Handi Festival  <b>Court:</b> Supreme Court of India</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The Supreme Court prohibited participation of children below 18 years in the Dahi Handi ritual and upheld the 20-feet height limit on human pyramids as earlier fixed by the Bombay High Court on <b>August 11, 2014</b>. Responding to a clarification plea by the Maharashtra government, the Court said allowing minors in such dangerous stunts is unsafe and against public interest.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> The decision was based on safety concerns due to frequent injuries in the ritual. The issue re-emerged after a contempt petition was filed by activist Swati Patil alleging non-implementation of the 2014 HC order. The SC remarked humorously that while Lord Krishna stole butter, he never performed dangerous stunts for it.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Hindustan Times</a></p>
11.	<p><b>Bombay High Court Orders Strict Action Against Noise Pollution Violators During Festivals</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> October 9, 2015  <b>Place:</b> Maharashtra  <b>Occasion:</b> Festivals like Dahi Handi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratri  <b>Court:</b> Bombay High Court  <b>Name of Judges:</b> Justice Abhay Oka and Justice V L Achilya</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> The High Court directed all civic bodies and government authorities to take strict action against organizations violating noise pollution norms during Dahi Handi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratri, and other festivals. The court warned that officers failing to act could face contempt of court and asked for firm enforcement of noise pollution rules during all upcoming festivals to protect public interest.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> Several PILs highlighted that noise pollution rules were widely flouted during recent festivals, especially Ganesh and Dahi Handi celebrations, and authorities failed to take adequate action, leading to public disturbance.</p>	 <p><a href="#">India Today</a></p>

12.	<p><b>Allahabad High Court Bans Idol Immersion in Ganga and Yamuna</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 7 October 2013  <b>Place:</b> Uttar Pradesh  <b>Occasion:</b> Idol immersion during Ganpati and Navratri festivals  <b>Court:</b> Allahabad High Court  <b>Name of Judges:</b> Justice Ashok Bhushan and Justice Arun Tandon</p> <p><b>Statement/Verdict:</b> Allahabad High Court ordered a complete ban on idol immersion in Ganga and Yamuna rivers in Uttar Pradesh. The court rejected the state government's plea that the idols would be immersed and removed immediately. It also directed that the rivers of the state should be free from this activity within a year.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> This order was given during the hearing of a petition, in which concerns were raised about the condition and order of the rivers. The court had earlier also given instructions to monitor pollution, and some impact was revealed in the report.</p>	 <p><a href="#">India Today</a></p>
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