

The COVID-19 situation has thrown the world out of their comfort zones. The lockdown is bringing out the best as well as the worst in human behaviour in myriad ways. Given that the next few weeks are crucial for India, which is sitting on the tip of the infection which may enter the phase of community transmission, the caution for festivities will need continuous underscoring.

Given global projections, it appears that there is no early end to this pandemic. Festivities then will have to adapt to the new rules of society and strictly adhere to the norms of social distancing. Places of worship are shut; large gatherings need to be avoided. Now, our homes would become sacred in their truest sense. The phrase *Ghar hi Mandir hai (Our homes are sacred)* will soon become a reality for all the right reasons.

Change has always been an inevitable part of history. The ongoing pandemic has forced humans to rethink solutions and adapt to a new lifestyle. Be it [Navratri](#), (the nine-day long Goddess Durga's Festival), [Mahavir Jayanti](#) or the upcoming Holy [month of Ramadan](#), the pomp and splendour on a public scale would be definitely missed. But, at the same time, this would give us a chance to introspect by engaging in prayers within our respective households and further strengthening the family bond, which had somewhere evaporated in the hectic schedule of our daily life.

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But in the middle of this hectic life, you have to find those moments of silence when you revisit your core. And there is no denying that most of our core is shaped by the special experiences and memories your childhood carried. In India (and many other cultures), festivals come with a special aura and occupy a special place in our hearts. The sumptuous sweets that would be prepared at home, the enchanting smells which would fill the ambience thus, adding up to the charm of spending quality time with family members.

No doubt, festivals confer the special window of bonding time with family. But the COVID situation has forced us to change certain traditions while continuing some. We are no longer able to visit our near and dear ones. We can't indulge in celebrations on a grand scale and so many of us are unable to visit the banks of Holy rivers too.

Nevertheless, as per the recent report of a weekly magazine India today, the ongoing lockdown in India to contain the spread of COVID-19, has been a blessing in disguise for improving the health of River Ganga. In the past, various government schemes for cleaning

the river had failed to bring down pollution levels. However, officials are now witnessing an unprecedented improvement in the quality of water due to the shutting of factories in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. At many places, the water has even become fit for drinking. And if research carried out, this improvement can be witnessed for many other rivers too. In other words, the message of our mother nature is very clear towards humanity. It can thrive, rejuvenate and replenish without human interference. It is high time we humans realize our role as responsible and sustainable citizens of the present as well as the coming future. Because we must not forget that we live at the mercy of nature and not the other way round. We owe everything to it, our needs, our resources, and to say the least, even our life.

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