

## HC curbs use of fireworks in Punjab and Haryana

Sales pitch A poster outside a closed shop says bursting of crackers can help in getting rid of mosquitoes which cause diseases like dengue and chikugunya. Shiv Kumar Pushpakar

Concerned at the depleting air quality Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Friday restricted bursting of crackers on the occasion of Diwali this year between 6.30 p.m. and 9.30 p.m.

### Issues guidelines

The division bench of justice A. K. Mittal and justice Amit Rawal also issued guidelines for issuing licences to firecracker sellers.

Senior advocate Anupam Gupta, who has been appointed amicus curiae in the case, said the order would be applicable in the two States and Union Territory for this year's Diwali.

### 'Ensure compliance'

"The court has asked the local administrations to ensure strict compliance of the order.

Police should deploy adequate PCR vans," said Mr. Gupta. Taking a cue from the Supreme Court order banning fire crackers in the national capital region for Diwali, the High Court had on Thursday suo motu asked Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh to share details of permanent and temporary licences issued for selling crackers in their respective regions.

### Licences

Issuing guidelines for granting licences, the court ordered that no permanent licence should be issued to sellers without the court's permission.

"Also, temporary licences will be issued only by deputy commissioners and nobody else," said Mr. Gupta

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