

## DISPLAY GUIDELINES

**D**eepavali is truly a festival of lights, and to create the effect of a row of lights the Hindus use hundreds of wicks placed into small bowls of wax, something similar to a tealight.

We have used circles in this display to portray the points of light. They are placed at different levels to add movement made by flames.

The display is easy to assemble as you have the templates for the lettering and logo. We have used a dark brown background to achieve good contrast with the choice of the colours of yellow and orange for the heading. If you do not have the cardboard use a dark wooden panel or wall as background.

Enlarge and copy the lettering onto alternating shades of yellow and orange which will add more depth to the effect

of circles of light, which are continued on a small scale as a group beneath the logo.

Using real flames of light could be a fire hazard in your library, therefore I made three flames from tissue paper. Cut a basic leaf shape from white cardboard then repeat this shape slightly larger in yellow tissue paper to overlap the card. Then another smaller leaf in orange, followed by an even smaller leaf in deep purple in the centre. These layers can be lightly glued on top of each other with glue stick. Using tissue paper allows the colours to blend into each other, thereby simulating the movement of flames of light. Anchor your completed flame to a film container filled with sand (to prevent it from falling over) by using a blob of Prestik. This will keep it firmly upright. The large box covered in orange paper forms a solid platform for the flames as a central point, around which relevant books are placed.

# DEEPAVALI

## Festival of lights

UMMENDRA RAMJEE CARA

### Correspondent

**D**eepavali or Divedi, the Festival of lights is an important Hindu festival celebrated during the month of Kartik (October/November).

Deep means 'light' and Avali means 'row', so Deepavali means 'row of lights'.

For some it is a three, and others a four-day festival. It commences with the Dhan-Teras or the 13th day of the dark half of Kartik, followed by the next day, the Narak Chaudas, the 14th day and by Deepavali prayer on the 15th day.

There are various origins attributed to this festival. Some hold that they celebrate the marriage of Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu. In Bengal, the festival is dedicated to the worship of Kali. It also commemorates that blessed day on which the triumphant Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana, the demon-king of Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

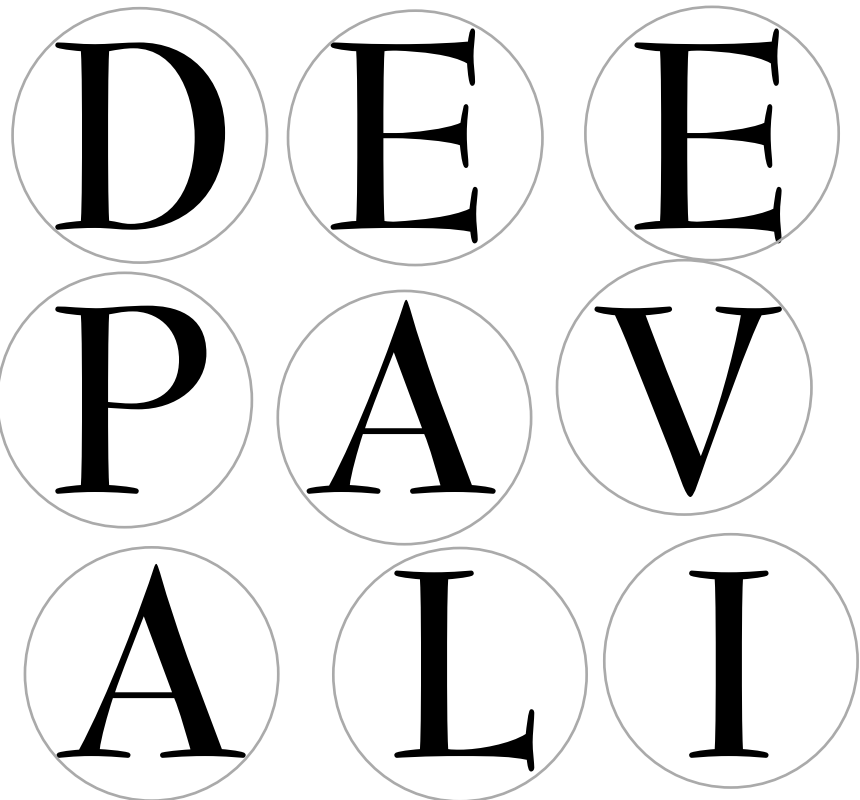
Preparations for Deepavali usually start two to three weeks before the festival.

On the day that the festival starts, homes are cleaned and decorated by day and illuminated by night with earthen oil-lamps. Some people will even renovate their homes for the festival.

On the morning of Deepavali, people generally take an oil bath (symbolic of having had a bath in the holy Ganges) and greet each other with: 'Have you had your Ganges bath?' New clothes are worn and women will be clad in silk saris or Punjabi suits. In some cases employers will buy new clothes for their employees. Hindus particularly dislike dressing in black on that day as black is considered inappropriate for a festival. Everybody partakes in the eating and exchange of sweet meats. Hindu merchants in the north of India open their new account books on this day and pray for success and prosperity during the coming year. Children light firecrackers and a general sense of festivity abounds. On the first day of Deepavali people don't go visiting but stay at home to receive guests. Certain Hindus will go to the temple to pray for happiness and prosperity and will pay their respects to the elderly.

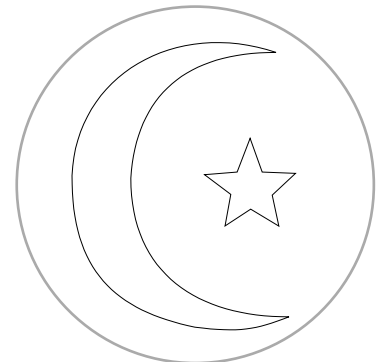
During this period people forget and forgive the wrongs done by others. There is an air of freedom, festivity and friendliness everywhere. The festival brings about unity and instils charity in the hearts of people.

Waking up during the Brahmamuhurta (at around three o'clock in the morning) is considered a great blessing from the standpoint of health, ethical discipline, efficiency in work and spiritual advancement. Ideally, the sages who instituted this custom, cherished the hope that their descendants would realise its benefits and make it a regular habit in their lives.



## FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

### month of fasting



Templates for both displays  
Enlarge to suitable size on  
photocopier