

## Bal Urja Rakshak Dal 2009-10

### Hari Urja Festival

The celebration of Indian festivals with an energy and environment focus this year is re introduced. While the integration of an understanding of energy use and its impact on Development, natural resources, environment and concerns of global warming and climate change was an original program objective, effective work in this direction was not undertaken in the BURD activities. To activate integration of energy, environment and sustainable development a “*hari urja, hariyali dharti*” (green energy, green earth) campaign was introduced in the BURD action plan. This campaign draws on the positive power of festivals rituals rich in symbolic acts to reinforce positive emotions and values.

1. **Raksha Bandhan** (bonding of love between brothers and sisters) is celebrated by pledging to protect and save trees by tying a *Raksha* (thread of love) to trees and pledging to protect them. *Raksha Bandhan* becomes *Vruksha Bandhan* (bond of love between humankind and trees).
2. **Ganesh Utsav** (hindu festival of the elephant God), is celebrated by *Urja Rakshaks* to popularize the use of small recyclable *ganesh* idols instead of the large plaster of paris idols popular today, and advocate the immersion of the idols at home in buckets to protect our lakes.
3. **Janmashatmi**, the birth of lord Krishna, a retake on the *matki-fod* ritual (breaking of an earthen pot hung tantalizingly at an unreachable height by teamwork to retrieve the treasures inside) Children retrieve planet earth by breaking the earthen pot, symbolically destroying the carbon dioxide blanket engulfing planet earth.
4. **Samvatsari**, the jain festival that emphasizes repentance for acts that harm living beings through one’s thoughts, speech and actions gets *Urja Rakshaks* to contemplate on their thoughts and deeds that have being harmful to all life and resources on planet earth. They pledge not to do so in the future.
5. **Diwali**, the festival of lights focuses on the need to recycle and precycle, as cleaning of the house and disposing collected waste is an important ritual.
6. **Christmas**, is an occasion for *Urja Rakshaks* to sing energy carols in their neighborhood.
7. **Ramzan**, the month long festival, wherein Muslims fast and pray during the day to shun and avoid all mental and physical acts or omissions which have the propensity of nipping the spiritual sublimity of the soul. *Urja Rakshaks* ‘fast’ by not using plastics in the month of *Ramzan* in their efforts to contribute to clean the environment.
8. **Uttarayan**, will see *Urja Rakshaks* flying kites and cooking undhiya (mixed vegetables) in a solar cooker to celebrate solar and wind and other green energy options.
9. **Holi**, the harvest festival of colours symbolizes the triumph of good over evil will be celebrated by rejoicing in the beauty of the colour green and rejoicing in the triumph of *Urja Rakshaks* to save the community from an energy crisis.