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## **Mysore palace declared 'plastic-free' zone**

Authorities have begun cracking down on tourists carrying plastics into the Mysore palace, as it has been declared as a “plastic-free zone”.

All visitors to the palace are being frisked for water bottles and plastic covers, which are confiscated to ensure that the premises is free of plastic.

This is part of ongoing efforts to make places of tourist interest “plastic free”.

M.V. Sudha, one of the nodal officers of the campaign and an official of the Mysore City Corporation, said that even vendors near the palace premises dealing with memorabilia have been advised against packing their products in plastic covers. “In the run-up to Dasara, the corporation led by Commissioner C.G. Betsurmath raided a few wholesale dealers and manufacturing units,” she added.

Besides declaring the palace plastic-free, the Scouts and Guides Grounds, which is the venue of the Dasara Ahara Mela, will be plastic-free. Organisers have been directed to provide only paper cups and plates.

The biggest challenge confronting authorities is at Chamundi Hills, which has a steady stream of visitors throughout the day.

## **Queue system**

However, Ms. Sudha said that since the entry was through queue system, it was easy to ensure that plastic was not carried into the temple premises or dumped around it. The long-term objective is to ensure that all places of tourist interest in and around Mysore are plastic-free, she added.

The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board intends to make all tourist destinations and pilgrim centres free of plastic not only during Dasara but in the future as well.

Notices have been put up to inform tourists that the venue is a plastic-free zone.

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