

■ 'Carelessness during festivities leads to accidents, many tend to lose their sight'

# Patients with eye injuries flock hospitals during Diwali

JINAL SHAH

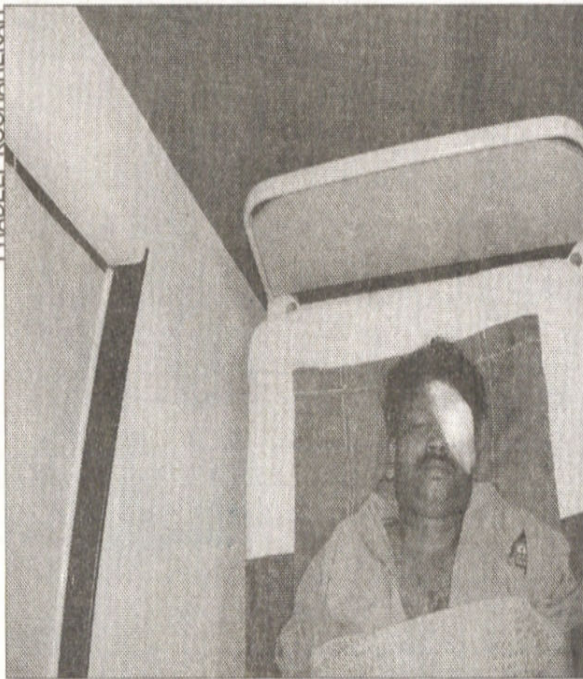
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**S**UNIL Singla (28) lies unconscious at the Aditya Jyot Eye Hospital, Wadala. He has just undergone a surgery to remove his left eye which was infected after a 'rocket' firecracker hit him on Saturday afternoon.

Father of two, this Surat resident was rushed to Mumbai after the infection in his eye started spreading. "His left eye had to be removed as the orbit was also infected. There was a threat of the infection spreading to the rest of the body. His cornea was melting," said Dr S Natarajan, medical director of the hospital.

On Saturday night, Singla went out of home after Laxmi pooja to watch

PRADEEP KOCHAREKAR



Sunil Singla had to undergo surgery to remove his left eye, which was hit by a 'rocket' firecracker on Saturday

the fire-cracker display. "In Surat, they burst crackers all through the night. His life has been ruined. We request people to stop playing with other people's life," said Sunil's distraught

father Bajranglal Singla (52). "We have shut our business for a week now," he added.

Singla is one of the several hundred persons who sustain minor and major

eye injuries during Diwali festivities throughout the country. Aditya Jyot Eye Hospital itself had five patients since Diwali, two of whom with serious injuries. Among them, thirteen-year-old Amit Kumar from Kharghar injured his left eye while bursting crackers on Saturday night.

He sustained a closed globe injury for which he is being treated with antibiotics to control the pressure on the eye.

"His prognosis is better. His eye might be salvaged. However, he has to undergo a surgery tomorrow," said Svetlana Toshniwal, a resident doctor at the hospital. Vatsal Dedia (10) from Malad will be coming in for regular check-ups to the hospital for his eye injury.

KEM and Nair hospitals

have also seen several cases of eye injuries. "There were two children who were there for a check-up at the OPD. We keep getting several cases during Diwali, especially children," said Dr Anjali Nicolson, an ophthalmologist from Nair Hospital.

"Children get affected the most. Every year we get several cases of minor and major eye injuries. It is just carelessness. Only if people were a little more cautious, so many eyes could be saved," said Dr Nimanshu Mehta from Nanavati Hospital, Vile Parle.

The shaken Singla family now can't help feeling completely lost. "When people in Surat buy firecrackers, they are buying pollution. They are buying death, actually," said Sanjay Singla, Sunil's elder brother.