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My cracker of a Diwali...

From gorging on sweets to bursting crackers, these high-flyers share their fondest memory of the festival of lights

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Ashwin Sanghi, author
"My father moved from Jodhpur to Mumbai in 1962, but our family would gather at our ancestral house during Diwali. I have vivid memories of uninhibited feasts, firecrackers, pujas, card sessions and the mischief that we kids would get into. Even today, during Diwali, the smells, sights and sounds of Jodhpur are triggered in my memories."



memory lane

PICS: NISHIKANT GAMRE, GETTY IMAGES, R RAMESH SHANKAR, THINKSTOCK PHOTOS/GETTY IMAGES, KARAN JOHAR/INSTAGRAM



Saina Nehwal, badminton player
"This was in Hisar. I was about seven and not afraid to light a cracker in my hand. Everybody came to watch me. But I stopped that when we moved to Hyderabad in 1998. It's very risky and shouldn't be encouraged. Today, I find bursting crackers very cruel, especially for my pet dog, Chopsy, who gets frightened."

on guard

Sakshi Malik, wrestler

"For me, every Diwali spent with my family is special. Just being with them during the festival is great, given the number of times I have been away because of my training and tournaments. We light diyas, have a party, exchange gifts and distribute sweets."



family time

Prabal Gurung, fashion designer

"The Diwali I spent with Karan Johar a couple of years ago is quite memorable. He is one of my closest friends. Apart from the humour and fun at his parties, he is loved by all."



fireworks



strong bond

Roland Folger, CEO and MD, Mercedes-Benz, India

"I came to India [from Malaysia] around Diwali time last year. Pune looked like a different place for those three days. There were yummy sweets, lamps all around and we had some fireworks at office, which was a great experience. It was my first Diwali and I thoroughly enjoyed the dry fruits and the staff in their Indian attire."



PICS FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE

A time to celebrate

It's a special Diwali for Kaustubh Shah, son of the Mukand Ltd co-chairman, who got married earlier this month

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This year, Diwali will sparkle some more at the household of Mukand Ltd co-chairman and MD Rajesh Shah. The festivities began early for the family with son Kaustubh's wedding to London-based Radha Brahmhatt earlier this month.

While the newlyweds are enjoying a quiet Diwali with the family in London, guests at the wedding continue to rave about the elegant affair.

The pheras took place in Udaipur on October 14. However, the celebrations were kicked off in Mumbai with a party on October 8. It was hosted by Shah's siblings, brother Suketu

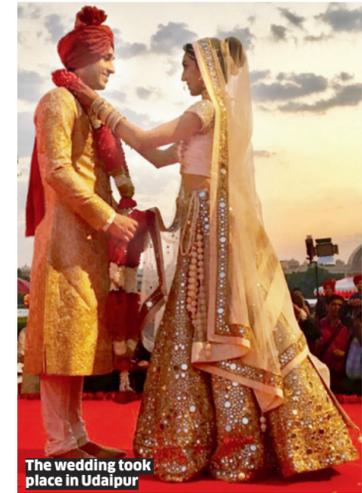
and his wife, Czaee, and sister Amita Chatterjee and her husband, Purnendu. The wedding ceremony was kept tra-

ditional, with the chanting of many mantras lending an air of piety to the proceedings. Vishnu mantras

were chanted as the groom entered the mandap, and Laxmi mantras, as the bride came in, on a boat over the waters of Lake Pichola. The couple exchanged the varmala against the backdrop of the lake and the accompanying sunset. Later, guests danced away to the beats of jazz music.

The select guest list of 250 included invitees from the US, the UK, Greece, Turkey, France and Germany. Shah and wife, Bansri, ensured that they were present to personally welcome each invitee. Top names from business and political circles were a part of the festivities. LK Advani, Nitin Gadhkari, Piyush Goyal, P Chidambaram and Dushyant Singh Rajee were present. From the business world, Mukesh Ambani, Niraj Bajaj, Baba Kalyani, Sajjan Jindal, Pawan Munjal and Uday Kotak attended the ceremony.

The bridal couple's friends, including Kaustubh's school friend, Alexander de Carvalho, heir to the Heineken empire, also joined the party.



The wedding took place in Udaipur



(From left) Shashank Rishyasringa, Priya Shah, Radha Brahmhatt, Kaustubh Shah, Bansri Shah and Rajesh Shah

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