Holi colours cause pain and anxiety

BANGALORE, DHNS: Revelry using synthetic chemical colours by a few adults on Holi day on Saturday proved to be damaging to the eye of a one-and-a-half-month-old baby in Nandini Layout here.

The yet-to-be-named baby girl, daughter of Mangala and Narayan, was lying on her mother's lap, when the colour powder, being used by the revelling elders in the house, fell by accident into the eye of the child. The panic stricken parents poured water into the eyes to wash away the colour powder, but the condition of the eye got worse and the child was brought to Narayana Netralaya on Sunday afternoon.
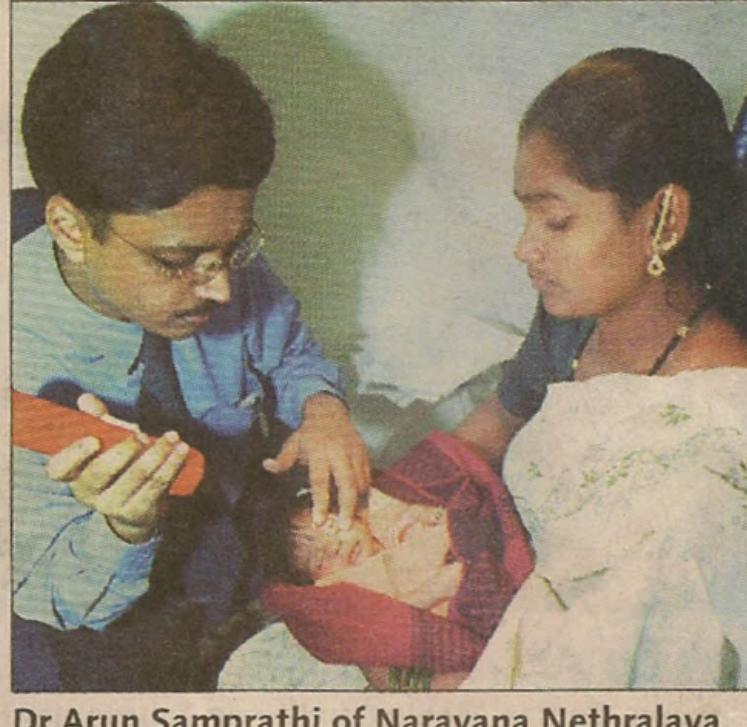
Dr Arun Samprathi, Paediatric Ophthalmologist of Narayana Netralaya, who is treating the child, said that when the child was brought to him the infant's eye had severe infection of the lids and conjunctiva besides the powder had caused corneal burn causing the cornea to turn slightly opaque (grey) probably caused by the chemical contents in the colour powder.

However, he said that the chemical contents of the powder could not be analysed as the parents were not able to produce sample.

The plant-derived (organic) colours used in the past are now largely replaced by synthetic chemical-based colours which can prove to be harmful as they contain lead oxide, copper sulphate, chromium iodide, aluminium bromide and mercury sulphite, he said.

He said the injuries to eyes by chemical burn is common during Holi and last year he had nearly six cases of adults who sustained chemical burn injuries Dr Samprathi said that the child was responding well to treatment and is likely to recover normal vision in a week's time. The baby is on mild sedatives and is undergoing no apparent discomfort, he added.

DH photo

Dr Arun Samprathi of Narayana Nethralaya examines a one-and-half-month old girl child's eyes as mother Mangala and father Narayana look on in Bangalore on Tuesday.

TRAIN RESERVATIONS

Earliest dates on which reserved berths are available on 09-03-2004. The position does not imply that berths