

FESTIVE BOOM

Deepa Mishra finds out how investors are trying to play safe this Diwali combating financial and market crisis and how inflation has hampered Diwali shopping too



Festive fever has gripped everyone again this season. But recent market catastrophe before Diwali has lowered the ecstasy. Economy slow down and inflation has hampered the joy of festival. On one hand where Investors are dealing with tough time to risk money in market, on other hand there has been change observed in customers buying behaviour.

Owing to unstable market, investors have lost faith in their own investing strategy. The central government and RBI had already applied measures to solve the liquidity crisis in the market to pump more money and to save

the existing credit by not letting FII's "Foreign Institutional Investors" to pull out. The results of which will come in the span of one to two weeks till then the probability of a volatile market will be there. But still few may run risk this Diwali again. Investors are eyeing every minute development in the market so as to set their Diwali investment right. They are also seeking advice from the experts.

Let's hear it from financial experts what they have to say on this... "Market is down at the moment and share prices are low so one should invest only if they are long time investor. This is

good time to buy shares but not suitable for immediate benefits," said Mubashir Ahmedi, financial expert. "In fact one can invest in mutual funds," he adds further. "I will most probably risk money on the shares of big companies like L&T, Reliance, and BHEL. It is safe to invest in any big fundamentally strong companies because during Diwali they give many bonus and profits by getting higher in values," said Gagan khandelwal, a regular intra-day investor in the share market.

Besides buying this Diwali, one will also deal with issues on purchases related to festivals. Gifting metal coins has been

trend during Diwali. But rising prices of gold and silver may hold you back. "Gold prices have raised and this has lead the change in customers buying behaviour. I have observed that my loyal customers have not done enough shopping like they used to do until last year," said Vishal Soni, who owns a jewelry shop in central suburbs. But unlike the previous year, when Diwali brought a positive effect on Indian stock markets, this year due to the economic slowdown, the so called "Diwali Effect" won't cast a bigger impetus on the markets.

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Festive Financing...

This Diwali, people are finding innovative ways of making the most of the festivity, for example by changing the common gift to a funky gadget...

This year people seem to have found a better place to invest their finances. With Diwali festivities having taken the shape of something new and different, this new option has won many hearts and wallets.

Popular 'Croma' hoardings that say, "Sweets are out, electronics are in" must have placed the situation in perspective. Where people would spend hundreds of rupees on expensive sweets and dry fruits wrapped in fancy coloured paper, they now have decided to buy something that lasts and doesn't add to the popular Indian punch.

After having invested as much as possible in the share market in its vulnerable state, people are investing the rest of the money in buying friends and family electronic devices that someone might not actually spare time to go purchase as Diwali presents.

As instance, unusual yet very 'happening' gifts this season could involve spending a meagre amount of Rs.4000/- for a foot massager and pedicure set available freely at Croma, the electronics store in Bandra. Things like these that people might have set their eyes

on but never ended up buying due to various lethargies, seem to fit the Diwali gift budget ideally.

"I would love to be gifted a MP3 player or something of the likes instead of people over loading my house with crockery and showpieces," laughs Mrs. Kapoor, a housewife.

Another very interesting though a little complicated gift could be the purchase of 'shares' for other people; a gift that according to the current market speculations might prove more beneficial than expected at the time of gifting, making it more memorable than ever.

Diwali seems to have arrived at a very dicey time in the economy and has people looking for ways to manage festivities with finances, these new options of buying electronics might not only introduce the many 'not so tech savvy' people to interesting gadgets but will also strike a different note amongst the monotony of the presents people receive on the usual.

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Unusual yet very interesting gifts this season:

MP3 Players are a rage with the younger generation. Price - Rs. 1000/- and beyond.

Cell Phones for those who you think need one, like grand parents who might not have discovered the thrill of being in touch, or feeling like being contacted. Price - Rs. 1000/- and above.

Hair styling gadgets for the women who may never find time to indulge. Price - Rs. 900/- and above

Foot Massagers for the tiring life this city brings with it. Price - Rs. 4000/- and above

Portable DVD Players as the perfect family hamper. Price - Rs. 3500/- and above