

HOLI CELEBRATIONS AT ARYA SAMAJ

By Roma S. Nayyar

Neither rain nor wind could keep away the spirit of Holi at Arya Samaj this year. Despite the rain and windy weather conditions, the Arya Samaj Greater Houston community gathered to celebrate Holi with friends and family on Sunday, March 16, 2014. Everyone had a blast throwing dry *gulal* of every shade of the rainbow.

The day started with havan and Acharya Suryananda ji gave his weekly sermon on Holi - how one should try to experience all the colors of life. The children also had their weekly prayer and attended their moral education and Hindi classes at the DAV Sanskriti School ("DAVSS"). Everyone was treated to a wonderful performance prepared by DAVSS dance students to celebrate Holi. This was followed by a delicious meal of warm, fresh *aloo puri*, *pulau*, *raita*, red pumpkin, *halwa*, multicolored *guldana*, topped off with hot tea, *thandai* as well as a cookie cake for the kids, before the Holi celebrations started.

Once the Holi celebrations kicked off, there was no stopping the festive spirit, and in a matter of minutes, everyone was smeared with every shade and color imaginable. Pink, red, blue, green, purple, and yellow *gulal* filled the air along with the cry of Happy Holi, as everyone embraced and colored one another. And to keep everyone's energy up, all were treated to delicious, fresh *Jalebi*, made right on the spot, and live music. The young and old gathered to dance to the peppy beats of the *dhol* delivered by Sh. Chidanand, smear each other with color, and celebrate Holi together.

The outstanding efforts of the AYM team were much appreciated for set-up and clean-up and many of the members had arrived at Arya Samaj an hour early to help get ready for the day's celebrations. The AYM volunteers worked tirelessly to coordinate and serve food, distribute colors, set everything up and deliver steaming hot cups of chai and freshly made jalebi and cake to all attending the Holi celebrations. All the hard work of the volunteers and AYM was rewarded with an amazing Holi and lots of fun for everyone. However, if you were unable to attend, make sure not to miss Holi at Arya Samaj next year!

For a slide show of a few pictures from the celebrations, please [click here](#).