

# ASHA to celebrate Holi at Stanford University in big way on March 27

SAM RAO

Stanford, Calif.

THE POPULAR annual Holi celebrations and fundraiser by non-profit organization Asha Stanford Chapter, which helps support projects in education of Disadvantaged Children in India, will be held on March 27 at Sandhill fields, Stanford University. This event has been the Bay Area's best-loved Holi celebration for more than a decade now and is expected to attract an attendance of over 3,000 this year.

All net proceeds will benefit Asha Stanford's education projects in India. Although the traditional Holi festival falls in early March, this event is celebrated more as a populist cultural event rather than a religious festival by ASHA Stanford.

Asha for Education, based in the USA, is a non-profit, non-religious volunteer development organization, with several chapters all over the USA, which believes that education is empower-



Holi celebrations at ASHA Stanford last year.

ment and works towards catalyzing socio-economic change in India through the medium of education. The benefiting projects include schools in

rural and as-yet-untouched areas, and Asha Stanford currently supports 11 projects across six States and 2,200 students annually, said coordinator Swami.

This year Asha Stanford's featured project for Holi 2010 is Project SAMARTH, a residential school for disabled students in Ganjam district of Orissa state, India. This school reaches out to disabled students from rural and

urban areas to impart basic education and vocational training.

The school aspires to help disabled students to assert their right of assimilating with mainstream society. Currently, the school educates 58 students annually with Asha Stanford's financial support.

Holi, an ancient festival, is celebrated even today throughout India with large crowds spanning differences to accompany popular songs and traditional folk music.

The same scenario will be recreated at the Stanford University grounds as Gulal — color powder — and lots of water are sprayed on each other.

The event organizers have invited general public to celebrate with a cause and as past celebrations indicate, a good compliment of non-Indians will join in the revelry as Indian music, song, dance and colors fill the air.

The event is open to the public and all are invited. Information tables and food booths will be set up at the event.

Tickets are available at [www.ashanet.org/stanford](http://www.ashanet.org/stanford).

## Vedika Global launches path-breaking book on Ayurveda

SAM RAO

Berkeley, Calif.

RAM Harsh Singh spoke at the launch of his new book, *Body-Mind-Spirit: Integrative Medicine in Ayurveda, Yoga and Nature Cure*, at Berkeley, Calif. The program was organized by Vedika Global, an East Bay non-profit school dedicated to igniting a community healing and wellness movement with classical Ayurveda.

Singh is Professor Emeritus and former Dean of Ayurveda at Banaras Hindu University and was the founding Vice-Chancellor of Jodhpur Ayurveda University. He is a key consultant on Ayurveda to the Indian Central Government's Dept. of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha & Homeopathy).

He also teaches Ayurveda in international colleges and is a champion of the revitalization of Ayurveda's inherent holistic character. Dr. R. H. Singh was visiting the Bay Area as a guest Faculty of Ayurveda at Mount Madonna Institute in Santa Cruz and at Vedika Global's Gurukula in Emeryville.

"The integrative medicine approach has characterized the practice of Ayurveda, India's ancient science of life and health, for over 5,000 years," said Dr. Ram Harsh Singh. "Ayurveda has always encompassed health and healing in multiple dimensions."

Speaking to a gathering of Ayurveda students and health lovers in Berkeley, Calif., Singh said that Ayurveda is all the more relevant in current times because it is safe, holistic, cost-effective, pro-nature. It highlights the prevention of disease and promotion of health, and opens new paradigms for exploring the health challenges of today.

Elaborating on these points, Singh said Ayurveda has no negative side effects when practiced knowledgeably. This is because Ayurveda works with nature, not against it.

Health, he says, is the inherent nature of life and the body has an innate capacity towards healing itself. The role of the doctor in Ayurveda is to act as nature's assistant. Therefore Ayurveda uses nutraceuticals that nourish and work with the body, rather than pharmaceuticals that create reactions in the body.

Speaking on the same day that members of Congress debated skyrocketing health care costs in the US, Singh pointed out that Ayurveda has always been a cost-effective system that draws on the immense benefits of appropriate dietary and lifestyle modifications more than relying on its renowned herbal medicines.

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## SABA celebrates law in public service

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Following the Gala, SABA-NC President Kiran Jain commented on the success of the event, "This year's South Asian Bar Association of Northern California gala showcased the great strides our members have made in law and public service. We celebrated the successes of accomplished SABA-NC members, San Jose Councilmember Ash Kalra and Stanford Law



San Jose City Council member Ash Kalra.

Professor Jayashri Srikantiah."

Jain added, "With over \$40,000 raised, the gala was a resounding success in raising money for public interest scholarships, as well as supporting other SABA-NC programs including our pro bono legal clinics, the 'Know Your Rights' seminar series and ongoing civil rights work. This great success speaks of the strength of our organization and our supporters."



Prof R. H. Singh with Vedika Global President Hema Patankar.

