

# Indians in Korea celebrate Holi Hungama fest

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Spring arrives this year in an explosion of colors with Holi Hungama, a major Hindu festival celebrated mainly in India and Nepal and by diaspora communities worldwide. Participants throw colored water and powder at each other in a celebration symbolizing the victory of good over evil, the arrival of spring and the celebration of love, unity and renewal.

For anyone in Korea interested in taking part in this high-energy festival, the Indian community here is organizing its own Holi Hungama event.

Organizers highlighted that Holi celebrations in Korea began informally within the Indian community in the early 2000s. Over time, through the structured efforts of Indians in Korea (IIK), a registered nonprofit organization and community chamber established in 2002, the festival has evolved into a well-organized multicultural event in Seoul and other cities.

IIK President Nagendra Kumar Kaushik, a professor at Kwangwoon University, told *The Korea Times* about the festival's origins.

"Holi has deep roots in Indian mythology," he explained. "One of its most significant origins is linked to the legend of Prahlada, whose devotion to (the Hindu deity) Vishnu saved him from the evil intentions of his father, King Hiranyakashipu, and his aunt Holika. The burn-



People covered in colored powder celebrate Holi Hungama in Seoul in a previous year.

Courtesy of Indians in Korea

ing of Holika, commemorated as Holika Dahan, symbolizes the triumph of faith and righteousness over arrogance and evil. It is also associated with (another Hindu god) Krishna, symbolizing divine love and the joyful celebration of colors."

Traditionally in India, the festival begins with Holika Dahan, a ceremonial bonfire symbolizing the burning away of negativity. The following day, known as Rangwali Holi, people gather to play with colors, music and dance. Families and friends visit one another, exchange sweets and celebrate with traditional foods and cultural performances.

"It is truly a festival of emotional and cultural integration that emphasizes unity and social harmony, forgiveness and renewal of relation-

ships, joy and collective celebration, equality beyond social divisions, as well as the triumph of good over evil," Kaushik said.

Initially, the celebration was attended mainly by Indians residing in Korea, but in recent years it has attracted a diverse crowd, including Korean citizens, international students, diplomats, expatriates and families from many nationalities. Today, Holi in Korea reflects true global participation and cultural harmony.

"Korean participants are often fascinated and delighted by the vibrant colors and energetic atmosphere. Many experience Holi for the first time and appreciate its deeper message of unity, joy and friendship. It serves as a powerful platform for India-Korea cultural exchange," Kaushik said.

According to official estimates,

more than 18,000 Indians currently reside in Korea, including professionals, academics and blue-collar workers.

This year's festival will take place on Sunday at Ichon Hangang Park in central Seoul from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event will feature lively music and dance performances, games, authentic Indian cuisine and a lucky draw. The entrance fee is 15,000 won for participants age 5 and above, and includes colors for the event, a Holi cap and a food coupon for a light Indian lunch.

Visit [indiansinkorea.com](http://indiansinkorea.com) for more information.

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