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High Commission of India

&

स्वामी विवेकानन्द सांस्कृतिक केन्द्र, जॉर्जटाउन, गयाना

Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Georgetown, Guyana

भारत संदेश - *Bharat Sandesh*



Quarterly Newsletter of SVCC, Guyana

*ISSUE V & VI
AUG - DEC, 2025*

 **Newsletter** 

*A quarterly newsletter of High Commission of India &
Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Georgetown, Guyana*

High Commission of India

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Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre

50-52 Anira Street, Queenstown, Georgetown, Guyana



ICCR_GUYANA



**ICCR in Guyana-Swami Vivekananda Cultural
Centre, Georgetown**



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India in Guyana



ICCRINGUYANA

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Namaste

I write to all my Guyanese brothers and sisters through this edition of Bharat Sandesh—a newsletter whose very name embodies the "Message of India." Over the years, it has been my humble effort to spread a message of love and goodwill among the citizens of this beautiful land, using culture as a bridge to connect our hearts.

I am deeply moved by the warm embrace with which the Guyanese people have welcomed these expressions of our shared heritage. Guyana's cultural landscape is tremendously rich, and its profound connection with its ancestral land, Bharat, has made this journey even more meaningful. Under the guidance of the High Commission, the Cultural Centre has worked proactively to celebrate and strengthen the bonds of our shared history, and I am confident that this connection will only grow stronger with time.

Bharat Sandesh, as a quarterly newsletter, stands as a testament to our shared heritage. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team for their dedication and tireless efforts in bringing our cultures to life through its pages. Your work has not only informed but also inspired.

May God bless you all.



Dr. Amit Telang

Informations - Outreach Classes

High Commission of India
&
Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre
Georgetown, Guyana

are delighted to announce

Sanskriti-Sahayog

a new initiative to promote India- Guyana Cultural Cooperation

We invite our partners including socio-cultural organizations, schools, colleges and Mandirs to send to us their interest in organizing such free classes/workshops at their premises on following subjects: -

- **Yoga**
- **Hindi**
- **Indian Classical Dance - KATHAK**
- **Indian Classical Vocal Music**

An initiative of cultural outreach programme offered free of cost by the qualified teachers from Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in various Regions of Guyana.

Sanskriti-Sahayog

Celebrating our shared culture and heritage with Guyana and to further cement our strong people to people ties, the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre is delighted to announce a new Sanskriti-Sahayog (Cultural Cooperation) initiative. As part of this new initiative Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre invites proposals for cultural outreach and collaboration in the form of Indian classical dance, Indian classical music and Yoga classes offered free of cost by the qualified teachers from the Cultural Centre in various Regions of Guyana, besides the regular classes at our premises in Georgetown.

The new initiative has been launched with an objective to offer such classes and workshops to interested children and youth in various regions of Guyana and to nurture and promote the immense talent in different parts of Guyana. It will also be our endeavor to connect people and promote people to people ties through appreciation of our common culture and shared heritage.

We invite our partners including socio-cultural organizations, schools, colleges and Mandirs to send to us their interest in organizing such free classes/workshops at their premises. The classes will be conducted free of cost and we look forward to the collaboration from such organizations in the form of only a complimentary venue at their premises where children and youth could be offered these classes.

Kindly send us your expression of interest addressed to the Director, Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre via email on svcc.georgetown@mea.gov.in

Raksha Bandhan, commonly referred to as Rakhi, is a festival that holds a profound and multi-layered significance in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. Far beyond its religious origins, the celebration in Guyana has evolved into a powerful symbol of cultural preservation, familial love, and national unity, reflecting the unique socio-cultural fabric of this Caribbean nation. In Guyana, Raksha Bandhan is a living tradition that narrates a history of resilience, a cultural practice that strengthens community bonds, and a social custom that promotes inter-ethnic harmony. It transcends its religious origins to become a day where the values of love, duty, and protection are celebrated by a wide cross-section of Guyanese society. As such, Raksha Bandhan stands as a powerful testament to how ancestral traditions can not only survive in a new land but can also adapt and flourish, becoming a vital thread in the rich and colourful tapestry of the nation's identity.

The celebration of Raksha Bandhan in Guyana is significantly elevated and amplified through the active and thoughtful involvement of the High Commission of India in Georgetown and the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre. Their contributions transform the festival from a private, family-oriented observance into a grand public celebration that reinforces cultural diplomacy, strengthens bilateral ties, and promotes inclusivity. By organizing and hosting large-scale Rakhi celebrations, the HCl and SVCC confers a sense of official importance and recognition to the festival. This validates the cultural practices of the Indo-Guyanese community and acknowledges their integral role in the national fabric of Guyana. For the Indian diaspora in Guyana, this event serves as a powerful symbolic link to India. It is a reminder of their cultural roots and demonstrates the Indian government's commitment to engaging with and nurturing its overseas community.

Raksha Bandhan

This year, as per tradition, Rakhi was celebrated with a wide cross-section of Guyanese society. The celebrations included His Excellency the President of Guyana, the Honourable Prime Minister, other Cabinet Ministers, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and various community leaders and organisations. The festival's spirit of fellowship was also extended to prisons, orphanages, old age homes, and the wider diaspora.



Raksha Bandhan celebration with
HIS EXCELLENCY President of Guyana





Raksha Bandhan



Raksha Bandhan celebration with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana



Raksha Bandhan celebration with Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Guyana



Raksha Bandhan celebration with Hon'ble Finance Minister of Guyana

Raksha Bandhan



Raksha Bandhan with Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly



Raksha Bandhan celebration at India House



Raksha Bandhan celebration at Badrinath Ashram, Essequibo



Viswa Sanskrit Divas

The High Commission of India in Georgetown, the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre and the Ayush Information Cell, in association with Brahma Kumaris and Badrinath Aashram, Guyana, jointly celebrated Raksha Bandhan and Vishwa Sanskrit Divas at the Badrinath Aashram in Essequibo on August 9, 2025. The event featured the tying of Rakhis for hundreds of diaspora members, alongside captivating cultural performances that extended to the wider Essequibo region.



79th Independence Day Celebration

79th Independence Day was celebrated by the High Commission of India and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre with enthusiasm and festive fervor. Members of the Indian community, diaspora, Indian students and businesspersons participated in the celebration. Dr Amit Telang, High Commissioner of India to Guyana, Antigua & Barbuda and St. Kitts & Nevis and Ambassador of India to CARICOM hoisted the Indian Tricolor and read out the excerpts from Hon'ble Rashtrapati's address to the Nation delivered on the eve of the Independence Day. A colourful cultural programme with patriotic dances and songs along with a special presentation on Indian handlooms by Surabhi- a women's group affiliated to the High Commission, comprising members from the Indian community and diaspora enthralled the audience.



79th Independence Day Celebration



79th Independence Day Celebration



Vikashit Run

The High Commission of India and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Georgetown organized the Viksit Bharat Run 2025 at the historical National Park as part of Seva Pakhwada observed from 17th September to 2nd October, being celebrated globally as Seva Parv reflecting the timeless Indian values. Thanks to Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport - Guyana, Caricom Secretariat, Indian companies, diaspora & community members for enthusiastic participation, reflecting strong ties between India and Guyana. Also undertook tree plantation drive EK PED MAA KE NAAM campaign on the occasion.





The High Commission of India, in collaboration with the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Surabhi (an Indian community ladies' group affiliated with the High Commission), and members of the Indian community and diaspora, celebrated Navratri and Dussehra on the premises of the SVCC in Georgetown from September 22 to October 2, 2025.

Navratri and Dandia have been celebrated on the premises of the SVCC since 2023 in collaboration with the Maa Ambe Indian community. Since then, this event has grown to gather and connect thousands of people to celebrate this sacred occasion. This year, Navratri was also celebrated with great enthusiasm on the premises, with every night attracting huge crowds who marked the occasion with deep devotion.





Ramaleela & Ravan Dahan in Georgetown revitalizes the living bridge of shared culture and traditions connecting India with its diaspora

Coinciding with Dussehra, the High Commission of India in collaboration with the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Surabhi- an Indian community ladies group affiliated to the High Commission, and members of the Indian community and diaspora underlined the rich cultural connect between India and Guyana through a magnificent portrayal of Ram Leela- an artistic depiction of scenes from the Indian epic Ramayana.

Based on the Ramcharitmanas, a treatise by Goswami Tulsidas, Ramleela is well-known folk-tradition across northern India. Incidentally the tradition has its roots in India where many from the Indo-Guyanese and the wider Ind-Caribbean community trace their ancestral roots. The performance of Ramleela, although has undergone modifications over the years, continues to be widely practiced in many countries like Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago that witnessed significant migration of Indian indentured workers under the British colonial rule in the 18th and 19th century. It was with an intention to preserve this tradition and recognize its undeniable significance as a folk-tradition, Ramleela was inscribed as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Humanity by UNESCO in 2008.

Along with the depiction of Ramleela, by members of the High Commission, the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre and enthusiastic members of the Indian community and diaspora, one of the highlights of the event was an equally interesting tradition of Ravan Dahan- burning of an effigy of demon-king Ravana, that culminates the Ramleela and Dussehra celebration.

The event received jubilant response from members of the Indian community and diaspora, besides presence of diplomats and international community in Georgetown, Guyana encouraging the performers. Hon'ble Gail Teixeira, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, performing the duties of Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana, H.E. Brig Retd Mark Anthony Phillips, presided over the event and commended the efforts made by the High Commission and the Indian Cultural Center in reviving and preserving these folk-traditions, shared by India and Guyana.

The High Commission of India and the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre express their heartfelt gratitude to members of the Indian community and diaspora for their support to this community endeavor strengthening people to people ties and celebrating our common roots and shared heritage. In particular, the High Commission would like to thank its sponsors M/s Bank of Baroda, Shamdas Kirpalani, Broadway Fashions and Shri Maa Ambe Indian Cultural Organization for their support in making the event a big success.

The High Commission also thanks members of the media and members of the Indian diaspora for their steadfast support to the initiative. It will be our constant endeavour to work with members of the Indian community and diaspora to forge closer people to people links and strengthen the deep bonds of friendship between India and Guyana through such community-oriented cultural







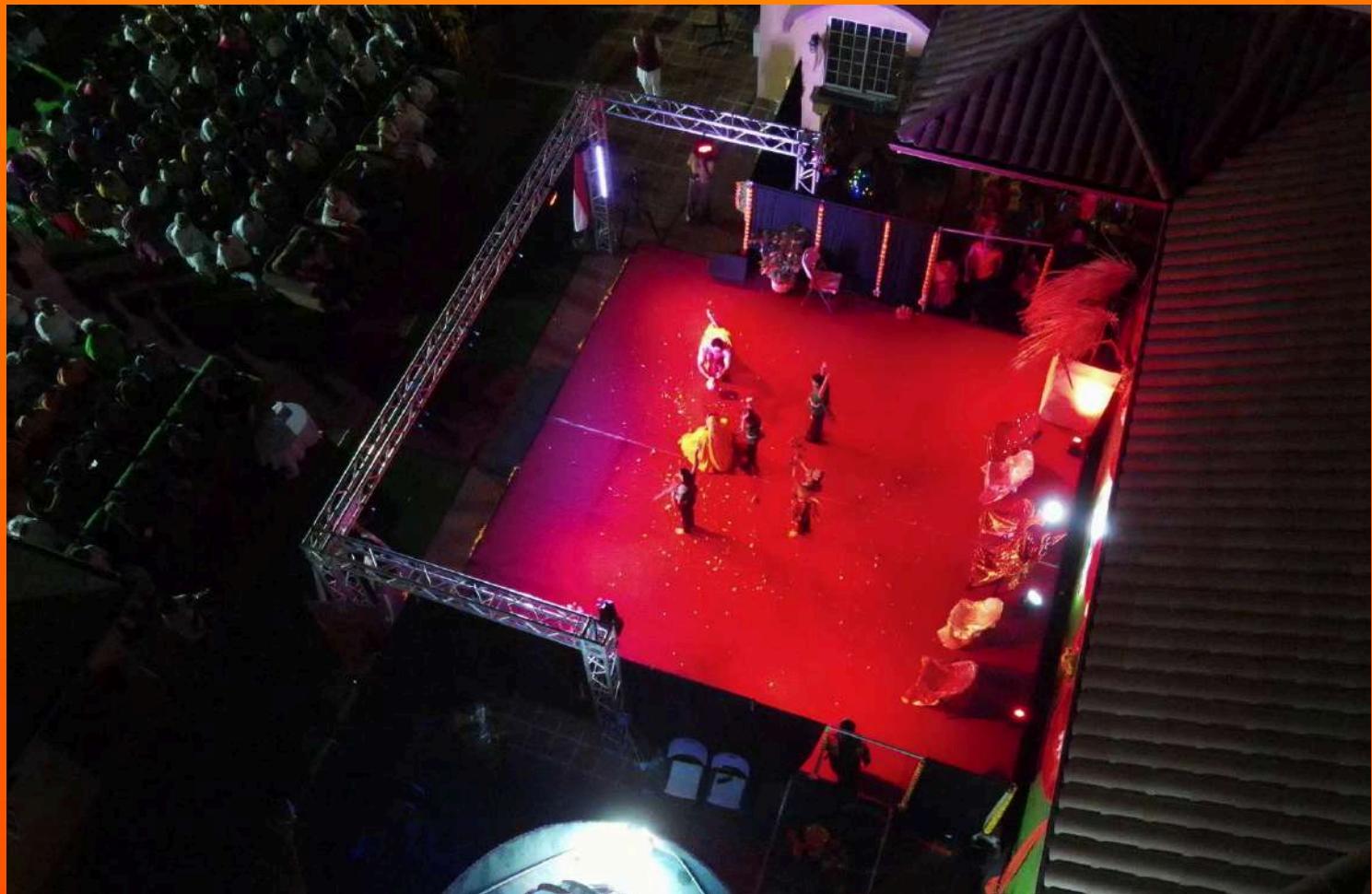














The Vraj Sanskritik Group of folk dance from Uttar Pradesh



The Vraj Sanskritik Group with His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana

The folk-dance and music group from Uttar Pradesh, India recently visited Guyana from October 15th to 22nd to celebrate Diwali across the country. The group concluded its tour with nine performances, as detailed below. The Vraj Sanskritik Group, part of this cultural delegation, showcased the beautiful folk culture of Brijbhumi. A highlight of the tour was a prime performance at a special Deepawali celebration hosted by His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana, and First Lady H.E. Ms. Arya Ali, where they presented their unique Diya Dance and Mayur Nritya. The Hon'ble Prime Minister of Guyana, Brig. (Retd.) Mark Phillips, the Hon'ble Vice President of Guyana, Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo and the Hon'ble High Commissioner Dr. Amit Telang also joined the celebrations, along with members of the Cabinet, the diplomatic corps, and other prominent Guyanese dignitaries.

Our Collaborators:



D'Edwards Vigimeshwar Mandir,
West Coast Berbice

Radha Krishna Mandir,
Reliance Essequibo Coast



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The Vraj Sanskritik Group of folk dance from Uttar Pradesh



The troupe's visit was facilitated under the Cultural Exchange Programme signed during the historic visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to Guyana. It was sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi, and hosted across Guyana in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, the High Commission of India, the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, and several Guyanese organizations. These included the Radha Krishna Mandir, Reliance Essequibo, the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha, Saraswati Vidya Niketan, the Indian Commemoration Trust (ICT) Guyana, the University of Guyana, ISKCON Georgetown, and the D'edwards Vighneshwar Mandir in Berbice. The group also received local sponsorship from the Bank of Baroda, KALPA-TARU, ENGINEERS INDIA LIMITED, RITES, and Ashoka Buildcon Ltd.

Our Collaborators:



D'Edwards Vighneshwar Mandir,
West Coast Berbice

Radha Krishna Mandir,
Reliance Essequibo Coast



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The Vraj Sanskritik Group of folk dance from Uttar Pradesh

From October 16th to 21st, the group performed at the following destinations across Guyana:

- Radha Krishna Mandir, Reliance, Essequibo on October 16
- Anna Regina Car Park, Essequibo on October 16
- Saraswati Vidya Niketan, West Coast Demerara on October 17
- State House, Georgetown on October 17
- Indian Monument Gardens, Camp and Church Streets on October 18
- University of Guyana, Turkeyen Campus on October 18
- LBI Community Center Ground, East Coast Demerara on October 19
- ISKCON, UG Road, Railway Embankment, Georgetown on October 20
- D'edwards Vighneshwar Mandir, West Coast Berbice on October 21



Our Collaborators:



D'Edwards Vighneshwar Mandir,
West Coast Berbice

Radha Krishna Mandir,
Reliance Essequibo Coast



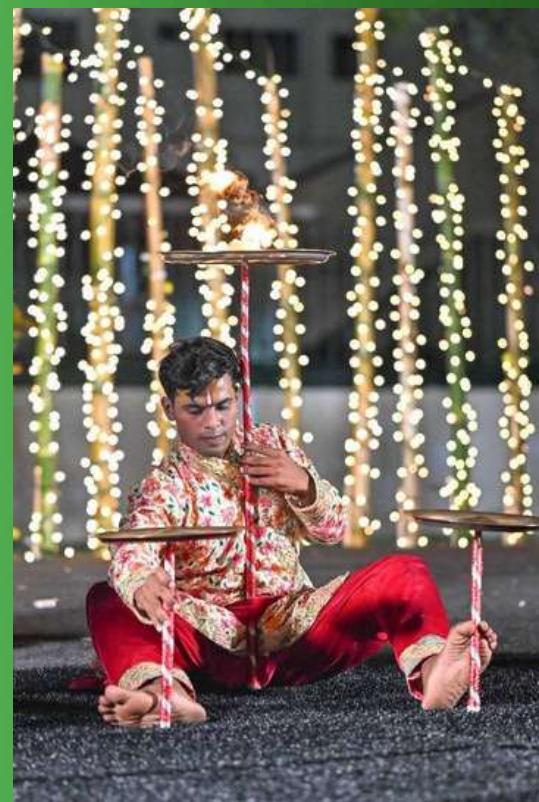
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The Vraj Sanskritik Group of folk dance from Uttar Pradesh



Our Collaborators:



D'Edwards Vigimeshwar Mandir,
West Coast Berbice

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A Spiritual & Patriotic Ode to Mother India

VANDE MATARAM

Commemoration of 150 Years of National Song

Commemorating 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', the High Commission of India and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in collaboration with Saraswati Vidya Niketan, Guyana organized special event in 29 November 2025.



During an interactive session, Shri Milind Parande shared an interesting perspective on a range of issues covering Bharatiya Sanskriti, Indian Philosophy, Hindu Dharma and also addressed contemporary issues including ideas about spreading this valuable to our youth and children and children as it also helps in addressing issues like alcoholism, drug-addiction, stress related disorders and suicides. An interesting Quiz on 'Vande Mataram' was also received well by the young audience comprising students of Indian universities in Guyana.



A Spiritual & Patriotic Ode to Mother India

VANDE MATARAM

Commemoration of 150 Years of National Song

The highlight of the event was a release of special Vande Mataram rendition by the students of Saraswati Vidya Niketan. The event was graced by Swami Aksharananda, Principal of Saraswati Vidya Niketan, Shri Milind Parande, Organising Secretary, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Shri Prabhu Deva from ISKON along with several prominent members of the Indian community and diaspora in Guyana including community organisations like ISKON, Art of Living, Chinmaya Mission, HSS and Indian Commemoration Trust to name a few.



A Spiritual & Patriotic Ode to Mother India

VANDE MATARAM

Commemoration of 150 Years of National Song



A Spiritual & Patriotic Ode to Mother India

VANDE MATARAM

Commemoration of 150 Years of National Song



High Commission of India
&
Kananda Cultural Centre, Georgetown, Guyana

Present



A Spiritual & Patriotic Ode to Mother India

VANDE MATARAM

Commemoration of 150 Years of National Song



SRI GITA JAYANTI



Coinciding with the Gita Mahotsav celebrated in Kurukshetra, Haryana, India, and on the auspicious occasion of Gita Jayanti 2025, the High Commission of India and the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre in Georgetown, Guyana in collaboration with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) Hare Krishna Study Centre of Guyana, celebrated Sri Gita Jayanti with a Maha Yagna (Havan) on November 30, 2025.

SRI GITA JAYANTI



A video message from the Honourable External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, was also displayed. In a contribution towards spreading the Gita's profound global importance, the High Commissioner, on behalf of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), presented 108 copies of the Bhagavad Gita to ISKCON and several Indian musical instruments to their KIRTAN group.



SRI GITA JAYANTI

The event featured the sacred Havan and a recitation of verses from the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Several pandits, scholars, and devotees attended the sacred ceremony. They addressed the gathering, speaking on the relevance of the Bhagavad Gita in various aspects of life, society, and culture.



SRI GITA JAYANTI



Celebration of the Inscription of

Deepavali

On UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

To celebrate the UNESCO inscription of Deepavali as Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Indian community and diaspora in Guyana gathered at the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre. The Hon'ble Minister for Human Services & Social Security and President of the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha, Dr. Vindhya Vasini Persaud, and the Honourable High Commissioner, Dr. Amit Telang, graced the event alongside prominent diaspora supporters. As the Centre was illuminated, representatives from key socio-cultural organizations performed the traditional lamp-lighting ceremony.

The event featured several videographic presentations, including A message from the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, The official Deepavali video from UNESCO, Footage of the declaration and celebrations of Deepavali's inscription onto UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, Visuals of the Deepavali celebration at State House hosted by His Excellency, the President of Guyana, A video message and glimpses of the Diwali Motorcade organized by the Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha, Glimpses of Diwali celebrations by the Hindu Swayam Sevak Sangh.

Delivering her remarks, the Hon. Minister emphasized that Diwali is a milan (meeting) of jeevatma (the individual soul) with parmatma (the supreme soul). She stated it is a celebration of humanity and expressed her privilege in celebrating the momentous occasion of Deepavali's inscription by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage with the diaspora.

In his address, the Honourable High Commissioner, Dr. Amit Telang, emphasized that the significance of Diwali is not merely a celebration of light's triumph over darkness; it is also a light that connects hearts with the utmost love. On the occasion, the High Commissioner also read a message from His Excellency, Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, which he posted on his Twitter account. The message from His Excellency is quoted here:

"I proudly welcome UNESCO's inscription of the sacred and radiant festival of Deepavali/Diwali onto its Intangible Heritage List. Long celebrated with resplendent splendor in Guyana, Diwali's enduring message that light conquers darkness and virtue overcomes despair continues to uplift our nation. May its luminous spirit shine forever."



Celebration of the Inscription of

Deepavali

On UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



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Celebration of the Inscription of

Deepavali

On UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



World Meditation Day 2025



The High Commission and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center Georgetown, in association with Brahma Kumaris Guyana celebrated World Meditation Day on 21 December 2025, underlining benefits of meditation for emotional, mental and physical well-being.

The event was attended by members of the Indian community and diaspora comprising Yoga and meditation enthusiasts. The event included an introductory message by Sister Mohini from Brahmakumaris followed by a brief meditation session conducted by Sister Kinnari.

In his brief remarks, High Commissioner Dr Amit Telang highlighted the relevance of meditation in training and relaxation of mind and in context of the World Meditation Day being observed by the United Nations underscored mediation's utility in promoting global peace and harmony.



World Meditation Day 2025

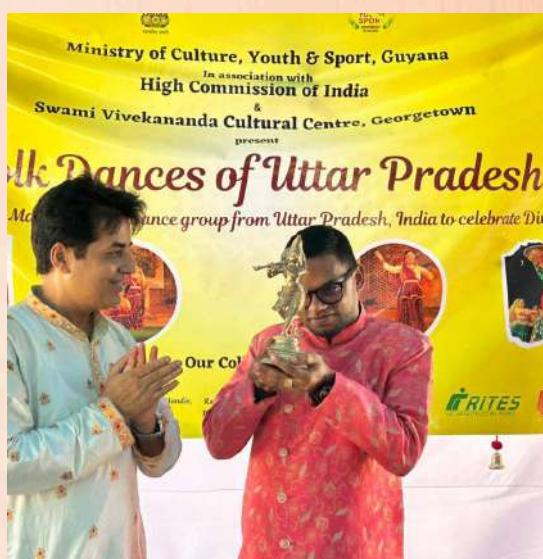




Donation of musical Instruments by the Hon'ble High Commissioner Dr. Amit Telang



Donation of Bhagavad Gita by the Hon'ble High Commissioner Dr. Amit Telang



Presentation of Lord Krishna idol to a Pandit by the Director of SVCC.

Outreach yoga class conducted by SVCC Yoga Guru



Presenting the 'Bharat Sandesh' newsletter to Hon'ble Charles Ramson, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Guyana by the Director, SVCC



Outreach class and park yoga conducted by SVCC Yoga Guru

Registrations Open for

Indian Classical Vocal, Indian Classical Dance & Yoga



ENROLL NOW

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

**Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), Georgetown
Lot 50 Anira Street, Queenstown, Georgetown.
Telephone: 227-4685**



संगच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।

(*Sangacchaadhvam sam vadadhvam sam vo manahsi janatam*)

“Walk together, speak together, let your minds be in harmony.” – Rigveda 10.191.2

As the golden months from August to December unfold, two nations—India and Guyana—though separated by oceans, weave an identical thread of celebration, reflection, and unity. This period illuminates not only calendars but hearts, drawing from deep cultural wells and colonial histories that shaped the Caribbean diaspora.

In India, the festive wave begins with Raksha Bandhan in August, a bond of love between siblings, and swells with Janmashtami, celebrating Lord Krishna's birth. By autumn, Navratri brings nine nights of dance and devotion, crescendoing into Dussehra—the triumph of good over evil. Then comes the crown jewel: Diwali, the festival of lights, where homes, streets, and hearts glow with diyas and hope. Close behind, Chhath Puja honours the Sun God with serene rituals at riverbanks, and Guru Nanak Jayanti echoes messages of equality and peace.

These same festivals burn bright in Guyana too which is known as Land of Many Water. Here, Diwali is a national holiday—a spectacle of diyas lighting up the Georgetown Sea Wall, shared by Guyanese of all ethnicities. Phagwah paints the spring in March, but the spirit continues through Diwali Melas and cultural shows in the year-end season. Mashramani, though in February, sets a precedent for grand national celebrations that find echoes in the shared joy of Christmas and Eid, which also fall in this vibrant period, reflecting Guyana's beautiful multicultural tapestry.

What makes this parallel remarkable is not just the preservation of traditions but their evolution into symbols of national unity. In Guyana, Diwali is as much an Indian-Guyanese heritage as it is a Guyanese celebration—embraced by Afro-Guyanese, Indigenous, and other communities. Similarly, in India, festivals transcend regional and religious boundaries, becoming national expressions of joy.

This season reminds us that culture is both a root and a bridge. The same Sanskrit shloka that calls for minds to be in harmony resonates in Guyana's national motto: “One People, One Nation, One Destiny.” As diyas flicker from the Ganges to the Demerara, they tell a story of resilience, adaptation, and shared light.

In a world often divided, these months stand testament to a beautiful truth: traditions can travel, adapt, and yet keep their soul—illuminating not just where they came from, but where they now belong, together.

Rudra Jayanta Bhagawati
Director
Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre
Georgetown, Guyana