

**Address by H.E. Ms Neeta Bhushan, High Commissioner
on the occasion of 65th Anniversary of Maharashtra Day Celebration
(2nd May 2025)**

Namaskar and Warm greetings to everyone,

Sir Anand Satyanand, former Governor General of New Zealand

Shri Dayanand Deshpande ji, President of Wellington Maharashtra Association,

Distinguished leaders and members of Indian Diaspora,

Friends,

Ladies & Gentleman!

It is a great honour to stand before you today as we celebrate the 65th anniversary of the formation of the vibrant and dynamic state of Maharashtra, in collaboration with Wellington Maharashtra Association.

2. As we all know, on 1st May 1960, the state of Maharashtra was formed on linguistic lines, uniting a region rich in history, culture, and enterprise. Today, we not only mark this important milestone but also celebrate strength, spirit, growing business and tourism opportunities in Maharashtra, and the remarkable contributions of its people.

3. Yesterday, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi jee extended his heartfelt congratulations and warm greetings to the people of

Maharashtra. He acknowledged the significant role that the state has consistently played in the development of the nation. Reflecting on Maharashtra's rich cultural heritage and the enduring spirit of its people, the Prime Minister noted that the state stands as a symbol of progress while remaining deeply rooted in its traditions. He conveyed his best wishes for Maharashtra's continued growth and prosperity.

4. From the scenic beauty of Western Ghats to the non-stop energy of Mumbai which is also called the Gateway of India. Mumbai as a capital, is not only the financial hub of India but also a global centre for cinema, music, and literature. Maharashtra is a land of incredible diversity and boundless opportunity. Maharashtra has played a key role in India's economy, education, innovation, and arts.

5. It is the birthplace of legendary leaders like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who inspired courage, leadership, and nation-building. It is also the home of visionary social reformers such as Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who laid the foundation for social equality and justice. Maharashtra has long given voice to the soul of its people through its saints, poets, and artists.

6. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Shri Dayanand Deshpande Ji, the newly elected President of the Wellington Maharashtrian Association, and to all its hardworking members here in

New Zealand. Your dedication to preserving Maharashtrian values and culture is truly commendable.

7. I also want to acknowledge the Marathi community in New Zealand. Your efforts in keeping our traditions alive and building cultural bridges are a source of pride for all of us. On this special day, let us reaffirm the commitment to friendship between our countries and celebrate the diversity that makes India truly incredible.

8. I am also pleased to share that on 3rd October 2024, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, approved the conferment of Classical Language status to Marathi, Assamese, Bengali, Pali, and Prakrit. These languages preserve rich and ancient culture of India and show the history and traditions of their communities. High Commission in association with three organizations including the Wellington Maharashtrian Association, hosted a special event and celebrated this milestone on November 22nd, 2024.

8. In closing, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all those who have roots in Maharashtra or cherish its legacy. Let us celebrate with pride, with purpose, and with unity.

Jai Hind!

Jai Maharashtra!
