

**Address by H.E. Ms Muanpui Saiawi, High Commissioner
on the occasion of Gujarat Day Celebration**

22nd May 2026

Mrs Manisha Morar, President of Wellington Indian Association and its members;
Distinguished leaders and members of Indian Diaspora,
Ladies & Gentleman!

Tēnā koutou kato

Namaskar

Aap sabhi ko Gujarat Divas ni hardik shubhkamnao.

It is a pleasure to celebrate Gujarat Diwas with you all, here in Wellington.

2. Gujarat, “the Jewel of Western India”, is renowned for its vibrant traditions, colourful festivals and warm-hearted people. From the white desert of Kutch to its long and beautiful coastline, the state is full of natural beauty and rich culture. It is home to over 200 Indus Valley Civilization sites, has four official UNESCO World Heritage Sites and one Intangible Cultural Heritage element-Garba.

3. Gujarat grew as a major port and trade hub connecting India with the Middle East and Europe. It contributes nearly 18% to India's manufacturing GDP and its people are known for their business acumen. The state has emerged as the industrial powerhouse that drives national growth. Gujarat has established itself as a High-Tech Manufacturing and Innovation Hub. This transformation encompasses advanced manufacturing capabilities, technology adoption, and the creation of specialised industrial ecosystems that attract global investments. Gujarat accounts for the largest share of the total investments in the food processing sector of India. Technical textiles are a key emerging area, with over 860 units in Gujarat. Surat today processes more than 90% of the world’s diamonds. The world's largest refinery and petrochemical complex is at Jamnagar.

4. Gujarat is the birthplace of great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel whose enduring legacy of ahimsa, unity, and leadership continue to inspire us even today. It is also the birthplace of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

5. My personal experiences with Gujarat have included a pilgrimage to Sabarmati Ashram, a visit to the Statue of Unity in Narmada and shopping for Patola and Ajrakh sarees. I have attended mid-career training courses in the premier business school Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and School of Cyber Security & Digital Forensics in National Forensic Sciences University. While at the Ministry of External Affairs, I looked after international cooperation with Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space. This involved visits to their premier centres in Gujarat: such as accompanying a foreign delegation to India's first indigenously developed, 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors in Kakrapar and working with Space Application Centre in Ahmedabad.

6. I would like to appreciate the work of Wellington Indian Association, many of whose members trace their roots back to Gujarat, in your laudable efforts to propagate Gujarati language, nurturing your traditions and celebrating your festivals. I understand that elaborate Navratri celebrations of Wellington Indian Association would rival those back in India. I congratulate all those who are performing today and those who contributed towards the success of this programme. It is also my challenge to you to help promote further connections between New Zealand and Gujarat: to help bring investment and trade, promote tourism to Gujarat and people-to-people ties.

7. We are very fortunate to receive a congratulatory video address from the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel on this occasion. We thank the Hon'ble Chief Minister and his officers who have been so forthcoming when we made the request for this programme. Let us all celebrate Gujarat Day with joy and pride.

Thank you ! Jai Hind! Jai Jai Garvi Gujarat!
