NON-RESIDENT NEPALI ASSOCIATION TASMANIA
NEPAL FESTIVAL TASMANIA 2026
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WELLS AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
HOBART, SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2026

Namaste and good afternoon, everyone. What a pleasure it is to be here for the 2026 Nepal Festival Tasmania.

This event provides an opportunity for all Tasmanians to reflect on the rich cultural heritage of Nepal and also on the many vibrant contributions that our Nepalese community make to our way of life here in Tasmania.

Today is **all** about fostering inclusion and promoting cultural understanding within our broader community.

So, in keeping with that spirit of inclusion, may I also acknowledge and pay my respects to the Palawa people as the First Peoples of Lutruwita/Tasmania and the Traditional Custodians of the land we're gathered on today. For countless generations, they have cared for this island, its landscapes, its waterways and its communities, and I'm grateful to be able to live here.

I am honoured to join you today as Chief Guest as we celebrate the contribution of the Nepalese community to Tasmania's cultural, social and economic life.

Tasmania and Nepal share a long-standing connection built through education, tourism and international friendship. We have **much** in common, from our cool, temperate climate to the warmth of our people.

Many of you may not know that Nepali is now the third most spoken language in Tasmania and our State is home to a growing Nepalese community which continues to make a valuable contribution across many areas of Tasmanian life.

While today is a time for celebration, it is also an opportunity to recognise the strength of the bonds that unite us, particularly in times of hardship.

Earlier this year, Tasmanians joined with Nepalese people here and around the world in mourning the loss of life and devastation caused by the tragic flooding in the Himalayan region. Our heartfelt condolences remain with all those who lost loved ones and with everyone whose lives were affected by this disaster.

The courage and resilience shown by the Nepali people in the face of adversity has been an inspiration, and we continue to keep Nepal in our thoughts as recovery efforts progress in the months and years ahead.

As Governor, one of the great privileges of my role is spending time with people who have brought their traditions, talents and experiences from around the world to make Tasmania their home. Today is a wonderful demonstration of the many ways the Nepalese community enriches our State and helps to make Tasmania an even more welcoming, vibrant and inclusive place to live.

That is because our State, and our country, are built on diversity. However, diversity is not only something we celebrate on special occasions. It is one of the great strengths of our community and an important part of who we are.

When I came into this role, promoting unity and inclusion for **all Tasmanians** was one of my key priorities. Gatherings such as today's remind us that diversity is about far more than recognising our differences. It is about building a society where **everyone** feels a genuine sense of belonging, where **every** voice is valued, and where **every** person is treated with dignity and respect.

Inclusion means ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in community life and to contribute their talents, regardless of their cultural background, language, age, ability, gender or beliefs.

Sadly, recently we have seen division and discord feature too often in the headlines, both here and around the world.

That is why events like as this are so important. They remind us that diversity is not a challenge to overcome, but a strength to embrace. When people from different backgrounds come together, sharing their perspectives, experiences and ideas, our communities become stronger, more compassionate and more resilient.

So, let us recommit ourselves to building communities where everyone feels welcome, where differences are respected, and where inclusion is not just an aspiration but a lived reality.

When people are free to celebrate their heritage while sharing their skills, knowledge and experiences, Tasmania benefits. Our State becomes richer in understanding, stronger in community spirit, and more confident in the future we are building together.

Our shared future depends on continuing to foster respect, inclusion and opportunity for everyone. Regardless of where we were born, the language we speak at home, or the faith we practise, we all share a responsibility to build communities where every person feels like they belong and can contribute their talents.

Community organisations such as the Non-Resident Nepali Association play an important role in bringing people together and strengthening the bonds between cultures. Through preserving and celebrating Nepalese traditions while encouraging participation in the **broader Tasmanian community**, you help create a stronger, more connected and more inclusive society.

May I congratulate NRNA Tasmania on organising this vibrant Festival and for bringing a slice of Nepal to the Parliament Lawns today. I acknowledge the valuable contributions of the volunteers, community leaders and sponsors who have made this celebration possible.

I am particularly pleased to see so many young people playing a role in today's festivities. Seeing our younger generations embrace both their cultural identity and their place within our broader community gives me great confidence in the strength and vitality of Tasmania’s future.

Thank you, and I wish you all a joyful and memorable 2026 Nepal Festival.