

08 BRIEFING Hindu Greetings, Terms, and Pronunciations

A practical language guide for meetings, remarks, proclamations, and community events.

TERM	SAY IT	MEANING
Namaste	nuh-muh-STAY	Literally “I bow to you”; often understood as honoring the Divine within the other person.
Hindu	HIN-doo	A person who follows Hinduism.
Sanatan Dharma	suh-NAH-tun DHAR-muh	A traditional name for Hinduism meaning the eternal path or order.
Mandir	mun-DEER	A Hindu temple.
Dharma	DHAR-muh	Right conduct, responsibility, duty, or sustaining order.
Karma	KAR-muh	Action and its consequences.
Puja	POO-jah	Worship or a devotional ritual.
Aarti	AAR-tee	A ceremony in which light is offered to the Divine.
Murti	MOOR-tee	A sacred form or image of the Divine.
Prasad	pruh-SAH	Food or another offering that has been blessed.
Diwali	dee-WAH-lee	A major festival of lights.
Om (Aum)	OHM	A sacred sound and symbol.
Panditji	PUHN-dit jee	A respectful title for a learned Hindu scholar or priest, depending on context.
Swamiji	SWAA-mee-jee	A respectful title for a Hindu monk or spiritual teacher.
Shubh Deepavali	shubh dee-PAH-vuh-lee	“Auspicious Diwali.” A traditional Diwali greeting; “Happy Diwali” is also widely used.
Shubh Navaratri	shubh nuh-vuh-RAH-tree	“Auspicious Navaratri.” A greeting for the nine-night festival; “Happy Navaratri” is also common.
Happy Holi	HAP-ee HO-lee	The common greeting for the festival of colors.

FOR PUBLIC LEADERS Pronunciations vary by language and region. When speaking at a local event, ask the host for the preferred pronunciation.