

Bankimchandra Chatterji

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | History

Why in news?

Ministry of Minority Affairs to inaugurate the celebration of Commemoration of 150 Years of the National Song "Vande Mataram" on 7th November 2025.

• Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1894), was a novelist, poet and journalist.

Early Life & Education

- He was born on 26/27 June 1838 in Naihati, Bengal Presidency.
- He was graduated from the University of Calcutta in 1858.
- He joined the *British Indian Civil Service* and served as a Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector.

• Literary contribution

- **Inspiration** His first novel Durgeshnandini (1865) was inspired by the ruins of Gar Mandaran Fort; it is considered the first modern Bengali romance novel.
- Works He authored 14 novels and numerous satirical, scientific, and critical essays in Bengali.
- **Pen name** "Kamalakanta" used for satirical essays.
- Notable works, including Anandamath (1882), Durgeshnandini (1865), Kapalkundala (1866), and Devi Chaudhurani (1884).
- **Anandamath -** A novel, published in 1882 introduced the song "Vande Mataram", later composed by Rabindranath Tagore, which became a symbol of India's freedom movement.
- Publication "Vande Mataram" was first published in Bangadarshan, Bankim's literary magazine.
- **Historical Impact** The song gained prominence during the *Swadeshi movement*, following the *partition of Bengal*.

• Role in Bengal Renaissance

- He was instrumental in the cultural and intellectual awakening of 19th-century Bengal.
- He promoted national pride, social reform, and literary excellence.

Awards & Titles

- Known as "Sahitya Samrat" meaning "Emperor of Literature", for his pioneering role in Bengali prose and nationalism.
- In 1891, awarded the title of *Rai Bahadur*, a colonial honour for distinguished officials.
- In 1894, conferred the title Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire *(CMEOIE)*, a prestigious award for service to the country.
- He died April 8, 1894, Calcutta.

Quick Fact

Highlights about Vande Mataram

- Vande Mataram was originally penned in Sanskrit & Bengali.
- 1st sung by Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 Congress Session in Calcutta.
- Vande Mataram, as a **political slogan**, was first used on 7 August 1905.
- Adopted as India's *National Song* by the Constituent Assembly in *1950*.

References

- 1. PIB | 150 Years of the National Song "Vande Mataram"
- 2. NDTV | Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

