Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Polity and Governance*

Why in News?

Union Home Minister is set to introduce the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026 in Rajya Sabha.

Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill

- The Bill seeks to extend ***statutory protection to the national song Vande Mataram***, placing it on par with the national anthem Jana Gana Mana under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.

  Vande Mataram authored by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

- **Existing Law – *Section 3 of the 1971 Act*** criminalises intentionally preventing the singing of the national anthem or disturbing assemblies engaged in such singing.
  - Punishment – Up to 3 years imprisonment or fine, or both
- **Court stated –** Proper respect is shown by standing; refusal to sing does not amount to disrespect.
- **Bijoe Emmanuel v. State of Kerala (1986)** – Supreme Court ruled that expelling students for refusing to sing the national anthem violated ***Article 19(1)(a) – Freedom of speech and expression*** *and* ***Article 25(1) – Freedom of religion***.

Reference

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