

## Vande Matram and National Song

### What is the issue?

The Madhya Pradesh recently government announced that Vande Mataram will be sung on the first working day of every month in the secretariat.

### What is the history of our National Song?

- In the 1870s, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, deputy collector of Jessore under the British government wrote Bande Mataram (I pray/bow down to thee, Mother).
- It is a poetic identification was written in Bengali and Sanskrit.
- It was inspired by the Sanyasi Rebellion of the late 18th century and the rebellion of 1857.
- Both rebellions were against the East India Company.
- It was first published in Bankim's magazine Banga darshan to fill up a blank page.
- The poem eventually ended up becoming one of the significant highlights of the Bengal Renaissance,
- It was also found in Chattopadhyay's seminal book Anand Math, which was written after three famines ravaged Bengal.
- The Anand Math story was of the Fakir Sanyasi Rebellion and described a group of monks that fought the British.

### Does the song have a pan-Indian appeal?

- Bande Mataram, the first phrase of this poem, **an ode to Bengal**, like all Hindi pronunciations of Bengali words, became Vande Matram.
- The words go Saptakotikantha kala kala ninadakarale, Dbisaptakoti Bhujaidhrta kharakarbale (When the swords flash out in 70 million hands, and 70 million voices roar).
- The population of Bengal at the time the song was penned was about 6.2 crore (70 million).
- The population of undivided India was about 23 crore.

### What made Bande Mataram as a 'Cry for Independence'?

- Rabindranath Tagore sang the song in the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress.

- This event turned it into a rallying cry for the days leading up to Independence.
- Tagore considered it universal and made it about India while many made it about religion, and about politics.

**Source: Indian Express**

