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

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