

RAJYA SABHA

***SUPPLEMENT**

TO

SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Wednesday, December 10, 2025/ Agrahayana 19, 1947 (Saka)

DISCUSSION ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL SONG “VANDE MATARAM”- (Contd.)

***SHRI NARHARI AMIN:** The words "Vande Mataram" are more than just a slogan. "Vande Mataram" is a mantra of Revolution that touches the hearts of all 140 crore Indians. It is not only the national song of India but also an inspiring sacred song that has held a special place in people's hearts from the freedom movement to the present day. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee used to say that Vande Mataram is the song of the soul of India. the Government of India has announced a grand celebration to mark the 150th anniversary, aiming to help the nation and especially the younger generation, understand its importance and pride. Many important moments in the Indian history are linked to "Vande Mataram." The song became deeply embedded in the nation's consciousness. Surendranath Banerjee was the first to hoist the Indian national flag in Kolkata, which had "Vande Mataram" written on its yellow stripe. Similarly, the flag hoisted by Sardar Singh Rana and Madam Bhikhaiji Cama in Germany also featured Vande Mataram. The song is closely tied to the Swadeshi movement. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel often signed his letters with "Vande Mataram," and leaders like Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar played key roles in establishing it as the national song.

‡SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: I pay my respects to the unfading memory of Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. Along with him, I also pay respect to the unfading memory of all those brave Indians, most of whom were brave Bengalis, who sang the victory song of life while chanting "Vande Mataram" on the gallows. In 1885, when Rishi Bankim was still alive, the poet of the world, Rabindranath Tagore, composed the tune for this song in 1885, in Raga Desh Raagini. Bankim was so mesmerized by the first seven lines that they were included in the third edition of Anandamath -- the tune composed by Rabindranath... those seven lines... In 1896, at the Calcutta session of the National Congress, Rabindranath himself performed this song, the portion he had composed." In 1905, Lord Curzon decided to divide Bengal. Anti-partition movement erupted . On 7th August, 1905, there was a Town Hall meeting. Tagore himself sung Vande Mataram only the first two stanzas!

∞SHRIMATI RAJATHI, making her maiden speech, said: I begin by expressing my gratitude to Kalaingar, who secured dignity and rights for countless women in Tamil Nadu. For me, India is united not by a single religion but by justice, equality, harmony and humanity. Yet instead of addressing real issues like rising prices, unemployment and livelihood concerns, we are pushed into emotional debates such as "Vande Mataram," revived only for electoral benefit and to distract

*This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.

*Synopsis of the speech delivered by Hon'ble Member in Gujarati.

‡ Synopsis of the speech delivered by Hon'ble Member in Bengali.

∞ Spoke in Tamil.

people. This old politics of blaming Congress or Jinnah creates division and uses national symbols as political weapons. As a Muslim woman, it pains me when our patriotism is constantly questioned, even though our ancestors chose to stay in India with faith that the majority community were our brothers. Leaders like Hazrath Mohani, Maulana Azad, Quaid-e-Milleth Mohammed Ismail and Surayya Tyabji devoted themselves to the freedom struggle, and their contributions reflect true unity in diversity. Our history shows that figures like Tipu Sultan and Velu Nachiyar, despite different faiths, fought together against British rule, and Akbar promoted equality without imposing any symbol or ritual on citizens.

Today the government speaks of Amrit Kaal, but the suffering during COVID—people searching for oxygen, migrants walking hundreds of kilometres due to transport restrictions—reveals the reality behind the slogans. Children need nutrition, healthcare and safety more than forced lessons in patriotism, when data shows high levels of malnutrition. Whenever the nation faces crises, the government hides behind attacks on Nehru, Muslims and now Jinnah, ignoring Nehru's own sacrifices. Even Atal Bihari Vajpayee once praised Indira Gandhi as “Maa Durga,” but such history is selectively rewritten. Our Dravidian movement has always upheld equality, as when Kalaignar modified the Tamil anthem to avoid hurting anyone's sentiments. Like Martin Luther King Jr., I too have a dream—that we may live in this country as equal human beings, as brothers and sisters, united in harmony and working together for India's next stage of progress.

DR. SUMER SINGH SOLANKI: *Vande Mataram* has been resounding continuously for one and a half centuries. It is not merely a song, but the divine great mantra of national awakening. This song is a symbol of the collective consciousness of the whole of India. This consciousness has been formed from thousands of years of civilization, culture, and spirituality. This song has taught us that the nation is not just a geographical boundary, but a living, sensitive, mother-like entity. The creation of *Vande Mataram* was in itself a spiritual and cultural renaissance. On 24 January 1950, the Constituent Assembly of India unanimously recognized *Vande Mataram* as the national song. Our generations have seen the vision of a living and grand form of India in *Vande Mataram*. This song reminds us that India's strength lies in its diversity, in the harmony of its folk life, languages, and cultures. It is unfortunate that today some so-called intellectuals dare to question *Vande Mataram* and sometimes attempt to limit it by calling it communal. I urge that the national song “*Vande Mataram*” should be sung in full even inside the House.

SHRI A. A. RAHIM: I wish to remind this House of our shared legacy of the freedom struggle. In 1943, INA heroes like Vakkom Abdul Khader and Anandan Nair were hanged together, and Khader insisted that a Muslim and a Hindu be executed side-by-side so history would record our unity against colonialism. This spirit is the essence of India. From the 1941 Kayyur struggle to the Anti-Imperialist Day protests, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Tribals and Communists all shed their blood for freedom. When so many diverse groups fought shoulder to shoulder, it is only fair to ask: what role did the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS play in India's freedom struggle?

DR. SANGEETA BALWANT: For me, *Vande Mataram* is not just two words, but a powerful force that once halted the whips of the British Empire and transformed ordinary people into martyrs. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay composed it in 1875, giving us a divine vision of Mother India in the forms of Lakshmi, Saraswati, and Durga. I feel this song embodies the soul of our civilization, the essence of our spiritual practice, and the inspiration for our resolve. I believe that Anandamath and *Vande Mataram* ignited tremendous energy in the freedom movement. When Tagore set it to music, it became the voice of the entire nation—Bharati in Tamil Nadu, revolutionaries in Punjab, all were inspired by it. Despite British restrictions, people continued to sing it, even amidst the bloodshed of the 1906 Barisal movement. This very mantra resonated through the Ghadar Party, the Azad Hind Fauj, and the 1946 naval mutiny. Khudiram, Ashfaqulla, Azad, and Tiruppur Kumaran—all shared the same slogan: *Vande Mataram*.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI: *Vande Mataram* song was the heartbeat of India's anti-colonial struggle. It was written not for political propaganda, but to inspire courage against oppression. The Government is using this moment as a distraction from the real crisis gripping the country. Instead of addressing this burning issue, the Government wants to create an atmosphere where the nationalism

is measured not by service to the people, but by how loudly you chant slogans. BJP was not in the freedom struggle.

SHRI DORJEE TSHERING LEPCHA: As Sikkim celebrates 50 years of becoming a state of India, I find it important to recall that even before 1975, when it was a separate country, *Vande Mataram* was sung there. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay composed this song in 1875–76, and it was later included in his novel *Anandamath*. Written in a blend of Sanskrit and Bengali, this song symbolizes deep reverence and devotion to the motherland. Its musical composition by Rabindranath Tagore in 1896 and its first public performance at the Calcutta Congress session transformed it into an anthem of national consciousness. During the 1905 Bengal Partition movement, *Vande Mataram* united the people and further energized the freedom struggle. Its significance continued even after independence, and on January 24, 1950, the Constituent Assembly recognized it as the national song of the country. For me, this song is an eternal symbol of India's unity, devotion to the motherland, and national pride.

Even though *Jana Gana Mana* is our national anthem, *Vande Mataram* enjoys the same level of respect as the national anthem. This song continues to symbolize national unity, love for the motherland, and patriotism. Even today, when we listen to or sing it, we are reminded of our history, our struggles, and the sacrifices that enable us to live as citizens of a free India. I would like to make a humble request to the Central Government that every government school in the country must organize activities such as essay competitions and quiz competitions related to *Vande Mataram*.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: We need to understand the historical context of *Vande Mataram*. Defending our motherland is indeed our duty, but there is another duty as well — wherever there is injustice or oppression, we shall oppose it. This is the real meaning of *Anand Math*. When Rabindranath Tagore was told that this could lead to controversy, what Rabindranath Tagore said in response is what I would like to share with you. He said, “To me, the spirit of tenderness and devotion expressed in its first portion, the emphasis to give to the beautiful and beneficent aspects of our motherland made a special appeal, so much so that I found no difficulty in dissociating it from the rest of the poem...” And, this was endorsed by Gandhi ji. Gandhi ji said, “It is an anti-imperialist cry. It had never occurred to me that it was a Hindu song or meant only for Hindus.” This was the movement against the partition of Bengal. Now, you are partitioning the minds of this country.

♦ **SHRI MAHARAJA SANAJAOBA LEISHEMBA:** *Vande Mataram* is not a mere song, it is the soul of India. It united people across regions, castes, religions, and languages, and became the symbol of India's quest for freedom. It awakened the spirit of Indians suppressed under colonial rule, and instilled the courage to sacrifice even their lives for the nation. I urge the Government to ensure that future generations are made aware of the history, significance, and emotional depth of this great hymn, so that its value flows through their blood and nerves.

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: During the freedom struggle, *Vande Mataram* rose as the soul's call of every Indian, and even today it echoes naturally within our hearts. I believe that Bharat Mata is a beautiful confluence of many cultures. This is the very existence of Bharat Mata, and this is her true form. People should sing it with the devotion and respect it demands. We must be careful that this song is not treated merely as a formality or a celebration. We should dedicate ourselves to the service of our motherland through concrete actions. We must first stand up against those who are using this sacred song with the intention of disturbing the peace of the country.

© **SHRI RAVI CHANDRA VADDIRAJU:** I feel immense pride that our national song *Vande Mataram*, which ignited the spirit of India's freedom struggle, has completed 150 historic years. The song was composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay on 7 November 1875 and first appeared in his novel *Anandamath*. It was later published separately in 1882. Over time, it became a lasting symbol of patriotism. The song not only energized the freedom movement across the country

♦ Spoke in Manipuri.

© Spoke in Telugu.

but also had a strong impact in Telangana. Even today, Vande Mataram continues to inspire national pride and unity.

DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE: I believe that Vande Mataram is a timeless gift from Bankim Chandra, a mantra of freedom and national unity. I have seen how opposition to it began in 1937 and how the same political mindset continues even today—one that is uncomfortable with “shakti”, “bhakti,” and the spiritual strength of India. While the British banned it because it ignited the call for independence, some still try to censor it to please a section of society, ignoring the sentiments of the majority who see Bharat as Mother. To me, Vande Mataram is the powerful counter-narrative wherever division or anti-national sparks arise. It united freedom fighters, electrified villages, and still inspires the youth. When I chant it, every nerve feels awakened. I believe it should be sung in every school and college, in all six stanzas, with pride. For me, our resolve for a developed India by 2047 will be fulfilled with the spirit of Vande Mataram.

SHRIMATI MAMTA MOHANTA: I affirm that Vande Mataram is not just a song but the very symbol of Bharat Mata and the spirit of freedom. When I utter these two words, I feel the presence of a Mother—patient like the earth, vast like the sky, deep like the sea, and full of love. For 150 years, this song has connected youth, leaders, and every Indian with culture, sacrifice, and patriotism. Whenever I chant it, the greenery of Simlipal, the Ganga’s purity, the Himalayas, and the farmers’ fields all appear before me as offerings at the feet of Bharat Mata. On its 150th anniversary, I recall that Bankim Chandra composed it in 1875 and it soon became a symbol of national consciousness from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. It echoes our ancient wisdom—“Mata bhumi putro’ham prithivyaah”. Like Lord Rama and our sages who held mother and motherland above heaven, Vande Mataram revives this eternal thought for the modern era.

As the Honorable Home Minister said, the need to discuss '*Vande Mataram*' existed when it was composed, it existed during the freedom movement, it exists today, and it will continue to exist even when a great India is created in 2047, because it is an immortal work that awakens feelings of reverence, devotion, and duty towards Mother India. In this song, Mother India is depicted as the giver of water, fruits, strength, and prosperity, the one who delights the heart with flowers, and is seen as the embodiment of Goddesses Lakshmi, Saraswati, and Durga. As a woman Member of Parliament, I want to proudly say that the women of India have embodied this song the most in their lives, and continue to do so even today. Sir, the land of Odisha also deeply cherishes this sentiment. Let us all together listen to the '*Vande Mataram*' song with respect and pride. *Vande Mataram!*

SHRI MAYANKKUMAR NAYAK: The song '*Vande Mataram*', penned by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, was nothing short of explosives for the British which ignited the veins of every revolutionary right from the Partition of Bengal movement in 1905 to India's independence in 1947. This song does not belong to any religion, caste, or community; it is an ode to the motherland, a prayer to the mother who nourishes us with food and water and ultimately cradles us to sleep in her lap. Under the politics of appeasement, only the first two stanzas of '*Vande Mataram*' were retained, and the remaining verses were censored, deeming them communal. We are the descendants of the Sanyasi Rebellion. Attempts have been made to crush India's cultural consciousness in the name of secularism. But times have changed. As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of '*Vande Mataram*', we have launched this grand campaign, and in doing so, we have also undertaken the task of rectifying that historical mistake. Today, we declare unequivocally that we will sing the complete '*Vande Mataram*', paying homage to our rivers, our mountains, our knowledge, the goddess of learning, and the goddess of power – this is our right and our duty. Today's new India is not ashamed of its culture; rather, it wears it as a mark of pride on its forehead.

SHRIMATI DARSHANA SINGH: '*Vande Mataram*', written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, is not just a song, but the voice of the nation's soul. This song reminds us that this country is not merely a piece of land, but a living mother, whose service is our duty. The Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to celebrate the 150th anniversary of '*Vande Mataram*' for one year, starting from November 7, 2025. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the pride of Bengal, composed the '*Vande Mataram*' song on November 7, 1875. Through all his writings, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee exposed the subservient policies of the British rule and the atrocities committed against Indians. During the

freedom struggle, this song became an inspiration for the people, and its words united them. Many brave freedom fighters protested against the British rule by chanting Vande Mataram. Millions of revolutionaries went to the gallows chanting Vande Mataram for the attainment of *Swaraj* (self-rule). The impact of the '*Vande Mataram*' song was so profound that the British government, fearing its power, banned it. This song has been a symbol of our emotions, our identity, and our struggle. Some people associate this song with controversies, but the truth is that '*Vande Mataram*' is not a song of any one religion or community, but a song of the entire land of India. The song that united the country during the freedom movement was divided, and this policy of appeasement later played a significant role in dividing India into two parts. Let us all together proudly introduce this immortal national song to the new generation.

SHRI MAHENDRA BHATT: *Vande Mataram* is not just a song; it is a sacred mantra, which the youth of this country embraced, singing it even as they faced the gallows. I come from *Devbhoomi* Uttarakhand. I represent the people who understand the meaning of perseverance. For us, this land is not merely a piece of geography, but it is Mother incarnate. When a soldier from the Garhwal or Kumaon Regiment is shot on the border, only two words escape his lips as he takes his last breath – *Jai Hind* or *Vande Mataram*. Today, as we celebrate this song, we must ask ourselves why our national song was cut short. History books written by historians loyal to the rulers will tell you that it was done for religious harmony, but the truth is far more terrifying.

I want to say that *Vande Mataram*, composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, is not merely a song—rather, it is the complete worship of our Motherland. In this hymn, the mother is revered in the forms of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. This song terrified the British because it had the power to unite every Indian. Unfortunately, later the Congress leadership and Pandit Nehru, in pursuit of appeasement politics, labelled those stanzas—where the land is worshipped as a goddess—as controversial. I want to ask: how can praising the power of one's own mother be considered an insult to anyone? In order to please a particular community, and to bow before the communal demands of the Muslim League, Congress committed that original sin. They cut through the soul of this nation. This sent out a message that for political convenience, our culture can be suppressed and the majority community must give up its own identity. In my view, this did not increase unity or harmony—rather, it emboldened separatists and strengthened the two-nation theory. Had firmness been shown at that time, history might have been different today. We forgot those lines in which the mother held a sword in her hand, giving us the message of strength and that is why we gradually lost the will to fight for our integrity. For seventy years we were taught to feel ashamed of our roots. But today times have changed, and we are in a position to accept the full form of *Vande Mataram* with respect, because the present leadership has uprooted the inferiority complex that persisted for seventy years.

SHRI ASHOKRAO SHANKARRAO CHAVAN: It surprises me that the opposition is objecting to this important discussion for electoral reasons. Elections will keep coming and going, but if the 150th anniversary of this great song is not discussed in this House, where else will it be? I come from Marathwada—a land that fought for freedom twice. First against the British, and then against the Nizam, when Sardar Patel liberated the region through Operation Polo. During that struggle, *Vande Mataram* gave us tremendous energy. This song, composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, became the lifeblood of the freedom movement. Recently, on September 7, crores of citizens sang *Vande Mataram* in one voice; it was truly a thrilling and unforgettable moment. The British, terrified by this song, tried to impose a ban on it. Yet our freedom fighters bravely sang it, enduring atrocities. After independence, Pandit Ravi Shankar set it to music, and to this day it remains a symbol of India's unity and integrity. Art, literature, music, drama, devotional songs, and newspapers played an important role in India's freedom struggle. Maharashtra's cultural and saint traditions lit the flame of freedom, equality and reform. The newspapers of Tilak, Gokhale and Dr. Ambedkar raised their voices against injustice and united the people. The 150 years of *Vande Mataram* is not merely the anniversary of a song—it is an occasion to pay tribute to the lakhs of freedom fighters, artists and thinkers who contributed to building independent India through their words, songs and sacrifices.

SHRI RAJENDRA GEHLOT: Uttering “Vande Mataram” in this House itself is a moment of great pride for me. Vande Mataram is not just two words; it is the eternal mantra of devotion to the Motherland, our self-respect and cultural consciousness. When Bankim Chandra Ji wrote it, he voiced the awakened soul of India. During the freedom struggle, lakhs of revolutionaries faced British atrocities with the chant of Vande Mataram. I also want to say that for many years Congress propagated the falsehood that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh had no connection with the freedom struggle. Whereas the truth is that Dr. Hedgewar, from his early youth, opposed British rule with the slogan Vande Mataram and even went to jail in several movements. Even today, every Shakha of the Sangh begins its prayer with the worship of the Motherland. Even after independence, Vande Mataram remained a mantra for the protection of democracy. During the 1975 Emergency, when civil rights were crushed, the youth adopted Vande Mataram as the symbol of resistance. I myself was part of that movement. Vande Mataram not only freed us from British rule but also freed us from the tyranny of the Emergency. Today our brave soldiers sacrifice their lives at the border while chanting Vande Mataram. The resolve of a Developed India too is inspired by this very spirit. When we say Vande Mataram, it is not just uttering words—it is offering heartfelt salutations to our Motherland.

SHRIMATI MAYA NAROLIYA: I am grateful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji, whose inspiration led to the nationwide celebration of Vande Mataram. This is not merely a song but an eternal mantra of our cultural consciousness and patriotism. The hymn composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay emerged from Anandamath and became the soul of the independence movement. On the land of Madhya Pradesh too, during the difficult periods of the Swadeshi Movement and Satyagraha, this song gave strength to the people. The British repeatedly banned its public singing, yet Indians fearlessly continued to sing it and Vande Mataram became a symbol of cultural resistance. Today, the country is witnessing a cultural renaissance—restoration of temples, revival of pilgrimage traditions, and reawakening of civilisational memories—all of which represent the living spirit of Vande Mataram. Across the nation, the 150-year celebration is being marked through mass singing and cultural programmes. Government schemes also reflect the commitment towards the welfare and prosperity of Bharat Mata. It is unfortunate that some political forces have viewed this song through a narrow lens, while Vande Mataram is the unified identity of our civilisation. Vande Mataram embodies loyalty, sacrifice and national duty—values we wish to pass on to the coming generations.

SHRI TEJVEER SINGH: *Vande Mataram* ignited the flame of freedom in India's soul. It is a mantra that not only accelerated but also gave direction to the freedom movement. *Vande Mataram* is the outpouring of our consciousness. It is the pulse of our soil. It is the heartbeat of our culture and the identity of our existence. It reminds us that we are not just citizens of one country, but the sons of Mother India. When the British oppressed Indians and raising our voices became a crime, when even lathicharge, bullets and jails could not deter Indians, our revolutionaries cried out: *Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!* The British government banned it. They knew that there is no place for fear in the echoes of *Vande Mataram*. *Vande Mataram* is the legacy of our culture. In this song, Mother India is portrayed not just as a land but as compassion, truth, knowledge, prosperity, nature and culture. Today, India stands in the world with renewed confidence. *Vande Mataram* reminds us that the path of progress is meaningful only when its purpose is to serve the motherland. This mantra teaches us that progress should not be at the cost of values. Development should not be at the cost of wisdom. Modernity may prevail, but the connection with the motherland should be deepened. We must remind our young generation that *Vande Mataram* is not just an old slogan, but the purpose of life, the vow of the nation, and the inspiration for the future. To make India a world leader by 2047, every youth, every student and every citizen needs to imbibe the spirit behind this mantra. With this song, we reaffirm our resolve that we will remain dedicated to the unity, integrity and progress of our motherland. We will always remain loyal to our Constitution, our democracy, and our duties. *Vande Mataram* is not just a mantra, but the music of our soul.

DR. MEDHA VISHRAM KULKARNI: This discussion will help the countrymen understand who played their part in the country's interest and who didn't. It's been repeatedly said that Congress participated in the freedom struggle at that time. People like Bhagat Singh, Rajguru,

Sukhdev, and Madanlal Dhingra all accepted the death sentence smilingly chanting *Vande Mataram*. Starting with Bhagat Singh no revolutionary was a member of the Congress. Bhagat Singh and others were armed revolutionaries. They had a separate organization. Swatantrya Veer Savarkar was different. He wrote "Motherland, O Motherland! Every particle of me is dedicated to you." Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote this song not in two separate parts but in one. He wrote this song sitting in front of Goddess Durga. This six-stanza song was written all at once. They will say that it describes Durga. It must be a description of Durga, because it was written sitting in front of Durga. We see Mother India in Goddess Durga. I want to say that to eradicate this anti-national mentality, it should be recited in every school and every college.

DR BHIM SINGH: '*Vande Mataram*' is not just two words, but the call of the soul of our civilization. It is a war cry. When our freedom fighters chanted it, the hearts of the British trembled, their legs trembled. This war cry ultimately overthrew British rule. '*Vande Mataram*' awakened the spirit of *Swadeshi*, inspired patriots, and energized revolutionaries. Whether it was the soldier guarding the border, the farmer who feeds our nation, the youth who embody the future of India or our hard-working laborers, we are all children of the same Mother India. '*Vande Mataram*' is a mantra that reminds us of this. Unfortunately, even such a sacred mantra was opposed. "*Vande Mataram*" was also fractionized. It was fractionized to appease the opposition of communal elements. On the centenary of *Vande Mataram*, the UPA government issued a circular requiring that it be recited in schools. Following protests, the then government withdrew the order. This was appeasement.

DR. KAVITA PATIDAR: For me, *Vande Mataram* is not just a song; it is a sacred mantra that breathes life into dormant consciousness. I believe this song ignited a roar of love for the motherland and inner strength among Indians. The three forms of Mother Bharati described by Bankim Chandra ji in *Anand Math*—Jagatdhatri, Kali, and Durga—symbolize our glorious past, our struggles, and our prosperous future. I wish to say that although the Opposition showed us the dream of the prosperous and powerful form of Mother Durga, it was realized only under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The question raised in the song—"O Mother, with so much power, who dares call you weak?"—reminds me how we were considered weak for decades and were dependent on other nations for our defence. But today, under the leadership of Modi ji, India has become self-reliant. Symbols like BrahMos, Tejas, and Vikrant assure me that the arms of Mother Durga have truly become powerful. Today, India does not stand before the world as a pleading nation but speaks with confidence and dignity. That is why I consider *Vande Mataram* not merely a song, but a living force—something I feel deeply and live wholeheartedly.

SHRI MOKARIYA RAMBHAI: For me, *Vande Mataram* holds a deeply special place in our nation's history. I recall that Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya composed it in 1875 to awaken national pride and ignite a revolutionary spirit among Indians under British rule. First published in *Banga Darshan* and later included in *Anand Math*, the song and the novel became powerful symbols of patriotism and the freedom struggle. I feel proud remembering how Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore first sang *Vande Mataram* at an Indian National Congress session, and how Sarala Devi Choudhary later transformed it into a political slogan in 1905. Madam Bhikaji Cama's act of hoisting a tricolour flag inscribed with *Vande Mataram* in Berlin in 1907 further strengthened its global significance. To me, this song is far more than a composition—it represents our national resolve and the dream of freedom that inspired generations. I appreciate the decision taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet in 2025 to celebrate its 150th anniversary, ensuring that India's youth truly understand its essence. I sincerely urge that *Vande Mataram* be made mandatory in schools, colleges, and madrasas so future generations stay connected to its legacy. Its message—"Mother, salutations to you"—united the country during colonial rule and remains a symbol of our independence struggle. Sadly, I must note that earlier governments did little to preserve this heritage. For me, *Vande Mataram* continues to be a source of unity, pride, and inspiration, just as it was during the critical moments of our history.

⁶ Spoke in Gujarati.

SHRIMATI SEEMA DWIVEDI: Today is a profoundly sacred day for me, as we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of *Vande Mataram*. I bow to Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay ji, who, through this song, united the entire nation beyond the identities of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian, binding us together simply as “Indians.” This four-stanza song describes the power, prosperity, and knowledge of our motherland, and I firmly believe that these very qualities are guiding India toward becoming a developed nation today. When I recall the atrocities faced by those who sang *Vande Mataram* during the freedom struggle—their homes burned, they were dragged through the streets, subjected to brutal torture—my eyes fill with tears. Yet they never hesitated to sing for Mother India. That is why it pains me when some people today hesitate to say *Vande Mataram*. Through this august House, I wish to say that *Vande Mataram* is our identity, our honour, and our self-respect. Therefore, I appeal that the singing of *Vande Mataram* be made mandatory in every institution—from the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to Gram Panchayats. This privilege did not come to us easily; our brave freedom fighters endured immense suffering to preserve it.

Discussion not concluded.

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Secretary-General.

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