



English rendering of PM's address at the inauguration of year-long commemoration of 150 years of the National Song “Vande Mataram”

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Vande Mataram!

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Vande Mataram, these words are a mantra, an energy, a dream, a resolution. Vande Mataram, this one word is the worship of Mother India, the adoration of Maa Bharati. Vande Mataram, this one word takes us into history. It fills our self-confidence, our present, with self-confidence, and gives this new courage to our future that there is no such resolution, no such resolution which cannot be accomplished. There is no such goal that we Indians cannot achieve.

Friends,

This wonderful experience of singing Vande Mataram collectively is truly beyond expression. In so many voices, there is one rhythm, one tone, one emotion, one thrill, one flow, such coherence, such wave, this energy has made the heart pulsate. In this emotionally charged atmosphere, I am continuing my speech. Present on the stage are my cabinet colleague Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Ji, Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena Ji, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Ji, and all other dignitaries, brothers and sisters.

Today, millions of people from all corners of the country are connected with us. I extend my greetings to them with Vande Mataram. Today, 7th November is a very historic day, today we are celebrating the grand festival of the 150th year of Vande Mataram. This auspicious occasion will give us new inspiration and fill crores of countrymen with new energy. To mark this day in history, a special coin and postage stamp on Vande Mataram have also been released. Today, I pay my respectful homage to the great men of our nation, to the children of Maa Bharati, who dedicated their lives to the mantra of Vande Mataram, and extend my heartfelt congratulations to my fellow citizens on this occasion. I also extend my best wishes to all the countrymen on the completion of 150 years of Vande Mataram.

Friends,

Every song, every poem has its own core theme, its own core message. What is the core theme of Vande Mataram? The core theme of Vande Mataram is Bharat, Maa Bharati. The eternal concept of India, the concept that began shaping itself from the very beginning of humanity. One that has read

eras as chapters. The creation of different nations in different eras, the rise of different powers, the development of new civilizations, their journey from nothingness to the peak, and their merging from the peak back into nothingness, the changing history, the changing geography of the world—India has witnessed it all. From this endless journey of man, we have learned and drawn new conclusions from time to time. On their basis we carved and shaped the values and ideals of our civilization. We, our ancestors, our sages, saints, our teachers, gods, our countrymen created our own cultural identity. We have understood the balance between strength and morality. And only then, as a nation, has India emerged as that golden gem that has endured every blow of the past and yet, through it, has attained immortality.

Brothers-sisters,

This concept of India is the ideological power behind it. The awareness of one's independent existence, separate from the fluctuating world, this achievement, and becoming rhythmic, written down, rhythmic, and then, from the depth of the heart, from the essence of experiences, after attaining the infinity of emotions, a composition like Vande Mataram is obtained. And hence, in that period of slavery, Vande Mataram became the proclamation of this resolution, and that proclamation was – of India's independence. The chains of slavery will be broken from the hands of Maa Bharati, and her children will become the makers of their own destiny.

Friends,

Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore once said – “Bankim Chandra's Anandmath is not just a novel, it is a dream of independent India”. You see, the context of Vande Mataram in Anandmath, each line of Vande Mataram, each word of Bankim Babu, each of his sentiments, had its own deep implications, it has its own implications. This song was certainly composed during the period of slavery, but its words never remained confined within the shadow of a few years of slavery. May they be free from the memories of slavery. Therefore, Vande Mataram is relevant in every era, in every period, it has achieved immortality. The first line of Vande Mataram is – “Sujalam Suflaam Malayaj-Sheetalam, Sasyashyalamam Mataram.” That is, salute to our Sujalam Suflaam motherland adorned with the divine blessings of nature.

Friends,

This has been the identity of India for thousands of years. The rivers here, the mountains here, the forests here, the trees here and the fertile soil here, this land always has the power to spew gold. For centuries the world had been hearing stories of India's prosperity. Just a few centuries ago, India accounted for nearly a quarter of global GDP.

But brothers and sisters,

When Bankim Babu composed Vande Mataram, India had gone far away from its golden era. Foreign invaders, their attacks, plundering, exploitative policies of the British, at that time our country was groaning in the clutches of poverty and hunger. Even then, in those dire circumstances, when there was pain, destruction, and grief all around, and everything seemed to be sinking, Bankim Babu called for a prosperous India. Because, he believed that no matter how difficult the situation, India could revive its golden era. And so, he called out, Vande Mataram.

Friends,

This first line completely dismantled the propaganda used by the British during the period of slavery to justify their rule by portraying India as inferior and backward. Therefore, Vande Mataram not only became the anthem of independence, but Vande Mataram also presented that 'Sujlam Sufalam dream' of what an independent India would be like before crores of countrymen.

Friends,

Today also gives us an opportunity to know the extraordinary journey of Vande Mataram and its impact. When Bankim Babu published "Vande Mataram" in Bangadarshan in 1875, some people thought that it was just a song. But, in no time, Vande Mataram became the voice of India's freedom struggle and of millions of people. A voice that was on the lips of every revolutionary, a voice that expressed the sentiments of every Indian. You see, there would hardly be any chapter of the freedom struggle with which Vande Mataram was not associated in some way or the other. In 1896, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore sang Vande Mataram at the Calcutta session. The partition of Bengal took place in 1905. This was a dangerous experiment by the British to divide the country. However, Vande Mataram stood as a rock against those plans. There was only one voice on the streets protesting against the partition of Bengal: Vande Mataram.

Friends,

Even when bullets were fired on the protesters at the Barisal convention, the same mantra, the same words, were on their lips: Vande Mataram! Freedom fighters like Veer Savarkar, who were working for independence while living outside India, whenever they met each other, they were greeted with Vande Mataram. Many revolutionaries even chanted Vande Mataram while standing on the gallows. There were so many such incidents, so many dates in history, such a big country, different provinces and regions, people speaking different languages, their movements, but the slogan, the resolution, the song that was on every tongue, the song that was in every voice, was - Vande Mataram.

So, brothers-sisters,

In 1927, Mahatma Gandhi said, "Vande Mataram presents before us a picture of the whole of India, which is indivisible." Sri Aurobindo called Vande Mataram more than a song, it was a mantra. He said – This is a mantra which awakens self-confidence. The Indian flag designed by Bhikaiji Cama also had "Vande Mataram" written in the middle.

Friends,

Our national flag has undergone many changes over time, but from then until today, whenever the national flag is hoisted, we spontaneously exclaim: Bharat Mata ki Jai! Vande Mataram! That is why, today when we are celebrating 150 years of that national anthem, this is our tribute to the great heroes of the country. And this is also a respectful salute to those lakhs of martyrs who, while chanting Vande Mataram, kept hanging on the gallows, who kept bearing the lashes while chanting Vande Mataram, who remained steadfast on the blocks of ice while chanting Vande Mataram.

Friends,

Today, we 140 crore countrymen pay tribute to all such known, nameless and unknown people who lived and died for the nation. Those who sacrificed their lives for the country while chanting "Vande Mataram," whose names were never recorded in the pages of history.

Friends,

Our Vedas have taught us – "माता भूमिः, पुत्रोऽहं पृथिव्याः"॥ That is, this earth is our mother, this country is our mother. We are its children. Since Vedic times, the people of India have envisioned the nation in this form and worshipped it in this form. It was from this Vedic thought that Vande Mataram infused new consciousness into the freedom struggle.

Friends,

Those who consider the nation a geopolitical entity may find the idea of considering the nation as a mother puzzling. But India is different. In India, a mother is both a mother and a nurturer. If a child faces any trouble, she can also be a destroyer. Therefore, Vande Mataram says, अबला केन मा एत बले। बहुबल-धारिणीं नमामि तारिणीं रिपुदल-वारिणीं मातरम्॥ Vande Mataram, meaning Mother India, who possesses immense power, can help us overcome troubles and also destroy our enemies. This idea of considering the nation as mother and the mother as the embodiment of power, one of its effects was that our freedom struggle became a resolution for the participation of all, men and women. We were once again able to dream of an India where women's power would be at the forefront of nation-building.

Friends,

Vande Mataram, apart from being an anthem of freedom, also inspires us on how to protect this freedom, the lines of the complete original song of Bankim Babu are - Tvam Hi Durga Dashaprahana-Dharini Kamla Kamal-Dal-Viharini Vani Vidyadayini, Namami Tvam Namami Kamalam Amlaan Atulam Sujalaan Suflaam Mataram, Vande Mataram! That is, Mother India is Saraswati, the giver of knowledge, Lakshmi is the giver of prosperity, and Durga is the one who holds the weapons and scriptures. We have to build such a nation, which is at the top in knowledge, science and technology, which is at the top of prosperity with the power of knowledge and science, and which is also self-reliant for national security.

Friends,

In the past years, the world has been seeing the rise of this form of India. We made unprecedented progress in the field of science and technology. We emerged as the fifth largest economy in the world. And, when the enemy dared to attack India's security and honour through terrorism, the whole world saw that if the new India is the embodiment of Kamala and Vimala for the service of humanity, then it also knows how to become 'दश प्रहरण-धारिणी दुर्गा' ('Dash Praharan-Dharini Durga') for the destruction of terrorism.

Friends,

There's another topic related to Vande Mataram that's equally important to discuss. The spirit of Vande Mataram illuminated the entire nation during the freedom struggle. But unfortunately, in 1937, crucial verses of Vande Mataram, a part of its soul, were severed. Vande Mataram was broken, it was torn into pieces. This division of Vande Mataram also sowed the seeds of division of the country. This great mantra of nation building, why was this injustice done to it? This is crucial for today's generation to understand, because that same divisive thinking remains a challenge for the country even today.

Friends,

We have to make this century the century of India. This power is in India; this power is in the 140-crore people of India. We must believe in ourselves to achieve this. On this journey of resolutions, we will encounter those who try to mislead us; those with negative thinking will try to create doubts in our minds. Then we must recall the incident from Anand Math. In Anand Math, when Santaan Bhavananda sings Vande Mataram, another character argues. He asks what will you be able to do alone? Then we get inspiration from Vande Mataram. How can a mother who has so many crores of sons and daughters, crores of hands, be weak? Today Mother India has 140 crore children. He has 280 crore arms. More than 60 percent of these are young. We have the biggest demographic advantage in the world. This power belongs to this country; this power belongs to Maa Bharati. What is it that is impossible for us today? What can stop us from fulfilling the original dream of Vande Mataram?

Friends,

Today, with the success of the vision of self-reliant India, the resolve of Make in India, and our steps moving towards the goal of a developed India in 2047, when the country achieves new achievements in such unprecedented times, then every citizen says- Vande Mataram! Today, when India becomes the first country to reach the South Pole of the Moon, when the sound of New India is heard in the far corners of space, then every citizen says- Vande Mataram! Today, when we see our daughters reaching the pinnacle of everything from space technology to sports, today when we see our daughters flying fighter jets, then the slogan of every Indian filled with pride is – Vande Mataram!

Friends,

Today marks 11 years since One Rank One Pension was implemented for our army personnel. When our forces crush the evil designs of the enemy, when the backbone of terrorism, Naxalism, Maoist terror is broken, then our security forces are inspired by only one mantra, and that mantra is – Vande Mataram!

Friends,

This spirit of worshipping Mother India will take us to the goal of a developed India. I am confident that the mantra of Vande Mataram will continuously empower and inspire millions of Maa Bharati's children on this Amrit Yatra of ours. Once again, I heartily congratulate all my countrymen on the completion of 150 years of Vande Mataram. And thank you very much to all of you who are connected with me from across the country, stand with me and say with full strength, with your hands raised –

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Thank you very much!

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