



Ambassador's remarks
Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Vande Mataram

[Paramaribo, 11 November 2025]

Namskar, Subh Sandhya

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we come together in solemn pride and joyous celebration to commemorate the 150th anniversary of India's National Song, Vande Mataram, which translates to "Mother, I Bow to Thee." This timeless composition has stirred the hearts of freedom fighters, inspired generations of nation builders, and continued to stand as a radiant emblem of India's national identity and collective spirit.

Vande Mataram was penned by the Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and first published in the literary journal *Bangadarshan* on 7 November 1875. It later found its place in his novel *Anandamath*, published in 1882. The song's journey from literature to national consciousness was further elevated when Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore set it to music and sang it at the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress.

From the late nineteenth century onward, *Vande Mataram* emerged as the rallying cry of rising Indian nationalism. It became the soul of the Swadeshi and anti-partition movements, a unifying metaphor for India's struggle for independence. From the bustling streets of Bengal to the heart of Bombay and the plains of Punjab, its refrain echoed as a symbol of resistance, resilience, and hope.

At the Varanasi session of the Indian National Congress in 1905, *Vande Mataram* was formally adopted for all-India occasions. In 1907, Madam Bhikaji Cama unfurled a tricolour flag bearing *Vande Mataram* in Berlin, marking the song's first international assertion. In 1909, as Madan Lal Dhingra faced the gallows in England, his final words were "*Bande Mataram*"—a testament to its power and sanctity.

Attempts by colonial powers to suppress its rendition only magnified its significance. It became more than a song—it became a moral force, transcending caste, creed, and language, binding the people of India in a shared dream of freedom. And on 24 January 1950, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing the Constituent Assembly, affirmed that *Vande Mataram*, owing to its profound role in the freedom movement, should be honored equally alongside the National Anthem, *Jana Gana Mana*.

Today, while inaugurating the year-long commemoration, our Hon'ble Prime Minister underscored 'Vande Mataram' as a Mantra of energy, dream, and devotion to Mother India. He also released a Commemorative Stamp and Coin on the occasion besides launching the portal – "vandemataram150.in", where citizens can upload their videos of singing the national song. Let us continue to sing *Vande Mataram* not only with our voices, but with our emotion, and our unwavering commitment to the motherland.

Jai Hind Jai BharatVande Mataram.