



## Vande Mataram Movement in Hyderabad Karnataka 1938-39, India

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### Abstract

*Vande Mataram* the word which inspired the whole part of India during Independence spreads unity among the people and creates awareness of oneness among India though it has variety of religion caste and beliefs. The Present paper focused on Vande Mataram Movement of Hyderabad state in general and Hyderabad Karnataka in Particular during National Movement. Vande Mataram movement was an effective and most popular chanting synonym in the freedom struggle of the Nizam state Hyderabad. The words "Vande" and "Mataram" irritated and disturbed both British and the Nizam to whom it seemed horrible to hear and tolerate. It sounded so patriotic the Government soon issued ban on singing Vande Mataram in Public places. But the patriots not caring the ban sung a song to intensify the movement with a view to paralyze the administration and derecognize the despotic rule of the British and the fanatic views of the Nizam. The freedom fighters sacrificed their pleasure and even their soul by singing the song to get freedom. To secure a democratic set up of government but also preserves the Unity, Solidarity and Integrity of India.

**Keywords:** Freedom movement, vande mataram, students, nationalists.

### Introduction

The famous national song Vande Mataram which occurred in Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's novel "Anand Math" has been one of the perennial sources of inspirations of our National struggle. This song holds the constitutional status of national song considering its immense contribution in India's freedom movement. Vande Mataram was a main mantra of the Swadeshi Andolan. It was at the Varanasi session in 1905 that the Indian National Congress adopted Vande Mataram as National song. The song and the slogan Vande Mataram thus became the war cry of resurgent Indian Nationalism. This poetical line known for sublimity of thought dedicated to the glory of mother nation. Vande Mataram had become an expression of nationalism for the patriots and revolutionaries who launched several movements and agitations against oppressive British rule drawing inspiration from the magic words of the song<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, Vande Mataram had become a symbol of India's freedom struggle. Great Indian Classical musician Pandit Vishnu Digambar Pulsekar played an important role in popularizing Vande Mataram during freedom struggle. He began public recitation of Vande Mataram from Lahore and on chanting it at many places all over the country. His presentation of Vande Mataram was so charged with emotions that thrilled the listeners and arouse feelings of nationality among them and making them feel proud of mother nation. Every Patriot from Kadiram Bose to Bagath Singh, Raj Guru and many more died by chanting the Mantra of Vande Mataram.

The two magic words Vande and Mataram surprisingly turned every Indian against the alien power. They awakened the masses to the national cause. In no time the song became the theme of the National movement. It kindled the Indian spirit by shaking the British power and instilled in the minds of Patriots. A rising spirit of nationalism which enabled them to organize the movement to secure the responsible government and get the state integrated into the Indian Union<sup>2</sup>.

### Vande Mataram Movement in Hyderabad State

Vande Mataram Movement was the most significant movement in the history of Hyderabad freedom struggle. The Nizam Government has forbidden the singing of Vande Mataram all over the state including the educational Institutions and Hostels, and it became a symbol of nationalist agitation. It was used for rousing the nationalistic spirit among the People<sup>3</sup>. The Nationalists of Hyderabad state belonging to Araya Samaj, Hindu Maha Sabha, Praja Mandal, Nizam Karnataka Parishath, Andhra Maha Sabha, and Marati Maha Mandala the civil liberties and student union forget their socio-political labels to launch a united struggle called Vande Mataram in 1938 to fight for the basic civil and political rights of the people<sup>4</sup>.

The origin of this movement in Hyderabad state may be traced in the decision of Nizam Government to conduct special (Religious Discourse) classes viz, Dinyat in all Educational Institutions exclusively for Muslim students. The Non Muslim students were not permitted to sit in the class room during *Dinyat*. The Muslim Pandits and Kazis were appointed to teach the gospel of the Quran to Muslims. Muslim students

were offering prayers (Namaz) in educational institutions and in University Hostels. Besides at the commencement of the classes the students including Hindus and Muslims of Tahatania (Primary School) Phokaniya (High School) were to sing "Do Al Men Riya Sabe" which meant "Let Nizam Live Long", the prayer was in Persian mixed with Urdu language<sup>5</sup>.

The Students of Osmaniya University was very much influenced by the magnetic personality of Swami Ramand Tirth, the founder of Hyderabad state Congress. His thought provoking lectures delivered on Makhenzi Report and on the evolution of Democracy on the day of Janmastami at Osmaniya University in 1936. It had enkindled the minds of Youth a rousing spirit to fight against the fanatic forces and autocratic rule of Nizam. Therefore the Hindu students sought the permission of the Nizam government to sing Vande Mataram in Schools and Colleges. But Nizam Government disapproves the permission and forbid the singing of Vande Mataram Prayer.

The Movement started as a non-party, Hindu student rose against the banning of Vande Mataram song in Aurangabad Intermediate College Hostel on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1938 and later spread to other parts of the state. When the song was banned in the prayer halls of Osmania University Hostels at Hyderabad on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1938, it gathered momentum. The movement was a sort of revolt against the increasing communal influence partly of the Nizam's Government and of the Ithad-UIOMusalmeen party, and partly against the growing influence of the Indian Muslim League on the University campus<sup>6</sup>. This was a unique agitation which gave training to the students who later became leaders in various walks of life.

The students of Government intermediate college, Aurangabad objected to sing a song of loyalty of the Asafia dynasty of Hyderabad state and they decided to sing the national song Vande Mataram in their College and Hostels in November, 1938. But the song was banned on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1938 by the University authorities both in the college and Hostels. The Hindu students encouraged by G.M.Shroff, a staff member of the Aurangabad College, protested against the ban on the song<sup>7</sup>.

Osmaniya University students sharply reacted to the attitude of the college authorities in Aurangabad and the fall out could be seen in the hostels. There were two prayer halls in Osmaniya University Hostels since the beginning of 1938 one for the Muslims and the other for the Hindus. The Muslim prayer hall was free from any restrictions, whereas the songs sung in the Hindu Prayer hall were subjected to scrutiny by the Government as it suspected that songs like Vande Mataram had political overtones, apart from hurting non-Hindus. The University officials banned the singing of the Vande Mataram song in the prayer hall on 28<sup>th</sup> Novemeber1938. On the same day, students submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor requesting the revocation of the bane order. Contrary to the

expectations of the students the Vice Chancellor reiterated the earlier ban order stating that it was issued by the Executive council, the supreme Executive body in the state<sup>8</sup>.

In the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> November, when the day song was banned, the students went to the prayer hall and sang the song. When students were coming out of the prayer hall of B hostel, the warden and other officials of the University authorities took the signatures of the students who had violated the University order. On 29<sup>th</sup> November the students were literally kept under house arrest, when they were asked not to leave the hostels and not to attend the college until further orders. When the students were asked to leave the hostels on the night of 29<sup>th</sup> November 1938, they formed an Action committee of the Vande Mataram strikers with K. Achyut Reddy as President, P.G.Puranik, Narsing Prasad Jaiswal, D.M.Deshmuk and few others members take necessary action depending on the situation. The committee decided to continue the movements till their demands were met<sup>9</sup>.

Next day the students started agitation against the Nizam Government. Jagannatha Rao Chandriki, Shivamurthy swami, Narayan Kanihal, V.P.Devalgoankar, Sardar Sharagouda Inamadara, Jayateerth Rajpurohit all students of Hyderabad Karnataka and so many from Udgir, Aurangabad, Mahboob Nagar participated in Vande Mataram movement. The Middle School students of Koppal viz. Itigi Virupakshaiah, Kumaraiah, Andanappa Kollur, Veerappa Menasinkai and Bangarsetty offered Satyagraha and courted arrest. There was no single Hindu student left in Gulbarga College<sup>10</sup>. Boycott of the colleges by students continued in many places and even while on arrest, the student sung Vande Matram spiritedly.

The Government adopted repressive measures to check the movement. Policemen were posted to the University Hostel Campus and all the connected roads leading to the University. The University officials gave notice to the strikers that by December 13, 1938 they should apologise and resume classes, otherwise their names would be struck off from the admission rolls. As students refused to comply with the orders, the names of 350 students of the Osmaniya University College were struck off the rolls on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1938. On the same day, 70 students from City College, and 120 students from Mahaboobnagar high School were removed from the respective institution. About 1200 students were removed from the schools and colleges throughout the state for participating in Vande Mataram strike. The Government also stopped the payment of scholarships and fee concessions. Further, the Government had declared on 10<sup>th</sup> December that the Vande Mataram song would not be allowed to be sung in any of the Government institutions and also threatened the striking students of dire consequences regarding services and employment opportunities<sup>11</sup>.

The Educational officials prohibited the students from delivering speeches or contributing articles without previous

approval of the authorities. Nawab Mehdi Yar Jung, Education Minister of the state told a student delegation not to demand for Vande Mataram song. Sir Akbar Hyderi the prime Minister of Hyderabad state was sympathetic at the beginning and tried for compromise with the striking students. But owing to the increasing influence of communal forces on the Government, the Prime Minister hardens his views towards the striking students. Within a short period the movement became a statewide phenomenon. It received the blessings of national Leaders like Gandhi, Subash Chandra Bose, and Nehru etc.<sup>12</sup> but the state Government was adamant not to re-admit the expelled students. Therefore expelled students planned to go to other neighboring Universities, but Madras and Mysore Universities refused to grant admission to the expelled students of Osmaniya University on ground that their medium of instruction differed.

At the same time Nagpur University Vice Chancellor T.J.Kedar came forward to give an opportunity to seek admission, and he asked them to apply individually for consideration of their cases. Consequently, in January 1939, Nagpur University and its affiliated colleges admitted all the expelled students of Osmaniya University, whoever had applied. The whole staff of the university did not mind to forego their summer vacation and held classes for the students. The University of Jabalpur also granted admission to the students who participated in Vande Mataram Movement<sup>13</sup>.

The stay of the students at Nagpur and Jabalpur extended those opportunities to meet many political leaders of National level like Pandit Nehru, Narendra Deve, M.N.Rao, V.D.Savrkar and Subash Chandra Bose and they were impressed by their contacts and speeches. They decided to fight to the last against the Nizam to secure the basic civil and political liberties and also to liberate the Hyderabad state.

During Satyagraha movement, Satygrahis irrespective of their political agitation sung Vande Mataram song. It is very important to note that one gentleman Ramachandra Rao was so fearless that he could not care the torture given to him by the Moghalai(Nizam) police and sung Vande Mataram in Jail. At every lash he was shouting Vande Mataram till he became unconscious. He was beaten with chadi, 36 times and blood was pouring out of his body. Yet he was uttering the hymn of freedom Vande Mataram. That's way this man popularly known as "Vande Mataram Ramchandra Rao"<sup>14</sup>.

This movement influenced everywhere especially in Hyderabad Karnataka. The word Vande Mataram was used as initial or common adjective by the patriots while calling the names of freedom fighters. During the accession movement, the people started to greet each other on their first sight with the word "Vande Mataram" instead of saying "Good Morning" or "Namaskar". Finally the Nizam agreed to restore the civil liberties to the people. As a result of this movement, the Nizam Government agreed to constitute the Reform committee

under the Chairmanship of Diwan Bahadur Arvamadu Ayyangar in November 1939 to introduce the constitutional reforms leading to the establishment of popular government in the state on limited franchise<sup>15</sup>.

## Conclusion

The Vande Mataram movement was a unique even in the history of student's movement in India and it cracked the citadel of the Nizam Kingdom. It has profound impact on the minds of the whole generation of young men of the days. This movement enkindled a strong flame of patriotism and defiance against the tyranny and communalism of the Nizam. Almost all the leaders of Hyderabad irrespective of their affiliation to the political parties till 1975 owe their intimation into the political field to Vande Mataram movement. They spread over different places of the Nizam state and worked with dedication and spirit of sacrifice in arousing the sense of national patriotism among the uneducated and rural folk. They were the messengers of the freedom.

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