150th Anniversary of “Vande Mataram”

Victor Growth

1. Context and Background

- The **Government of Maharashtra** has launched a **year-long celebration** to mark the **150th anniversary of the national song ‘Vande Mataram’**.
- The celebration is titled **“Sardh Shatabdi Mahotsav”**, meaning **150th Year Festival**.
- The event was inaugurated at **Mantralaya’s Trimurti Courtyard, Mumbai**, by **Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis**.
- The initiative commemorates the **historic and emotional legacy** of ‘Vande Mataram’, which played a vital role in **India’s freedom struggle**.

---

2. Historical Significance of “Vande Mataram”

- Written by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** in **1875**, originally in **Sanskrit and Bengali**.
- It first appeared in his novel **“Anandamath” (1882)**, which depicted India as a **divine mother figure**.
- The song’s refrain — *“Mother, I bow to thee”* — symbolised **patriotism and devotion to the motherland**.
- It inspired countless **freedom fighters** including **Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, and Lala Lajpat Rai**.
- The **first two stanzas** of the song were later adopted as **India’s National Song**.

---

3. About the Sardh Shatabdi Mahotsav

- **Purpose:** To celebrate 150 years of ‘Vande Mataram’ and rekindle patriotic spirit among citizens.
- **Duration:** The celebration is **year-long**, featuring cultural, educational, and social programs.
- **Theme:** *Patriotism, Unity, and Cultural Pride.*

4. Key Organisers and Leadership

- **Chief Minister:** Devendra Fadnavis — inaugurated the festival.
- **Lead Ministry:** Department of Skill Development, Entrepreneurship & Innovation — headed by **Mangalprabhat Lodha**, who conceptualised the event.
- **Coordination:** Department of Cultural Affairs, led by **Ashish Shelar**, managing statewide activities.

5. Major Activities and Highlights

1. **Group Rendition of ‘Vande Mataram’**
    - Hundreds of participants performed a collective singing at Mantralaya, marking the launch event.
2. **Educational Participation**
    - The government issued a circular encouraging **schools, colleges, government offices, and civic bodies** to organise group singing across the state.
3. **Cultural and Literary Events**
    - **Essay writing, debate competitions, exhibitions, and stage performances** based on the song’s legacy.
4. **Public Engagement and Awareness**
    - **Social media campaigns** and creative outreach programs to engage the youth digitally.
    - Aim: To make patriotism resonate in the **digital era**.

6. National Dimension

- The initiative aligns with the **broader national vision** under **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, promoting **“Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat”**.
- Similar commemorations are expected in other states to **honour India’s cultural and patriotic symbols**.

7. Exam-Oriented Key Facts

Fact	Details

Victor Growth

Fact	Details
Song	Vande Mataram
Author	Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
Year Written	1875
Language	Sanskrit and Bengali
First Published In	*Anandamath* (1882)
Occasion	150th Anniversary (Sardh Shatabdi Mahotsav)
State Leading Celebration	Maharashtra
Chief Minister	Devendra Fadnavis
Venue of Launch	Trimurti Courtyard, Mantralaya, Mumbai
Concept by	Mangalprabhat Lodha
Cultural Affairs Head	Ashish Shelar

Victor Growth

---

8. Broader Significance for UPSC

(a) Cultural Importance:

- Reflects how patriotic songs and literature **fostered nationalism** during the colonial era.
- Demonstrates the **power of cultural symbols** in uniting the nation.

(b) Governance and Society:

- Example of a **state-led initiative promoting civic nationalism** and **youth participation**.
- Shows how governments use **heritage-based soft power** to strengthen national unity.

(c) Ethical Dimension:

- Connects with UPSC Ethics topics like **emotional integration, national pride, and cultural heritage**.

---

9. Possible UPSC Prelims Questions

1. *Who wrote the national song “Vande Mataram”?*
    - (A) Rabindranath Tagore
    - (B) Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay
    - (C) Subramania Bharati
    - (D) Sri Aurobindo

2. *The 150th anniversary of “Vande Mataram” is being celebrated by which state government?*
    - (A) West Bengal
    - (B) Maharashtra
    - (C) Tamil Nadu
    - (D) Gujarat
3. *In which novel did “Vande Mataram” first appear?*
    - (A) Anandamath
    - (B) Devi Chaudhurani
    - (C) Rajmohan’s Wife
    - (D) Kapalkundala

Victor Growth

---

10. Conclusion

The **Sardh Shatabdi Mahotsav** of *Vande Mataram* is not just a commemoration, but a **renewal of India’s patriotic consciousness**.
By blending tradition with modern engagement, Maharashtra’s initiative exemplifies how **cultural heritage can inspire unity and national pride even in the 21st century**.

Facebook

Instagram

Youtube