

Editorial of the Day – 10.12.2025

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1. Note of harmony–On the debate on Vande Mataram (TH)

General Studies 1– History

Topic– The Freedom Struggle– Contributions from different parts of the country.

Introduction

Vande Mataram, a timeless tribute envisioning the nation as "Mother India," served as a unifying force during India's freedom struggle. As the nation observes the 150th anniversary of this historic hymn, the focus must remain on its spirit of sacrifice and shared identity. However, recent events have sparked a debate on how best to honor this legacy—whether by reopening old historical wounds or by strengthening modern social cohesion.

The Historical Legacy of Vande Mataram

Origin and Authorship– The song was penned by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. It was published in his novel *Anandamath* in the early 1880s. This year marks the song's 150th anniversary.

Role in the Freedom Struggle– It served as a battle cry that inspired generations of freedom fighters. It successfully united diverse communities against colonial rule, fostering a collective national identity.

Political Adoption (1937)– In 1937, the Indian National Congress (INC) leadership officially adopted the **first two stanzas** of the song for use at its gatherings. This decision was rooted in a strategy of accommodation to respect the sensibilities of all communities while retaining the song's patriotic core.

Constitutional Status– Post-independence, the Constitution of India recognized these stanzas as the **National Song**. It stands equal to the National Anthem in stature, symbolizing nation-building and collective identity.

The Recent Parliamentary Controversy

A parliamentary session intended to commemorate the 150th anniversary devolved into a partisan debate, highlighting contrasting interpretations of history.

The Ruling Party's Argument (BJP)– Argued that the historical decision to limit the song to only two stanzas was an act of appeasement. Claimed that this specific concession contributed to the rise of separatist sentiments, ultimately leading to the Partition of India.

The Opposition's Counter-Argument (INC/Opposition)– Leaders like Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Mallikarjun Kharge contended that the historical context was being misrepresented.

Question of Relevance– They questioned the utility of debating settled historical matters in the present day.

Focus on Governance– Ms. Vadra emphasized that Parliament should prioritize current issues affecting citizens rather than excavating old divisions.

Critical Historical Lessons

To avoid repeating past errors, it is essential to draw the correct lessons from the freedom movement rather than rewriting it.

Unity through Accommodation– The national movement succeeded because it built unity across religious, linguistic, and cultural lines within a shared political space. The adoption of specific stanzas of *Vande Mataram* highlights a tradition of mutual respect, not the imposition of a singular cultural identity.

Shared Heritage– Historical records show that for decades, Hindus and Muslims together chanted **Vande Mataram** during mass mobilizations against the British.

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

Fragility of Unity- While the unity project was remarkable, the eventual Partition exposed its fragility. This underscores the danger of promoting specific identities that overshadow the broader, secular, and constitutional Indian commonness.

Reaffirming National Purpose (Way Forward)

Avoid Weaponizing Symbols- Twisting a symbol of harmony (*Vande Mataram*) into a source of political division serves no constructive purpose for the nation.

Strengthen Constitutional Values- The truest tribute to Mother India is to uphold unity, harmony, and mutual respect.

Future Outlook- India must renew its sense of national purpose by ensuring that the legacy of *Vande Mataram* continues to inspire future generations toward cohesion, not conflict.

Source- <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/note-of-harmony-on-the-debate-on-vande-mataram/article70376936.ece>

2. India's small enterprises hold key to job growth(IE)

General Studies 3- Economy

Topic- Employment- Growth, formalisation, and issues relating to employment

Small Enterprises, Big Jobs- Transforming India's Employment Landscape

Introduction

India's employment challenge extends beyond mere job creation; it is fundamentally about enhancing productivity and growth within the millions of small and unincorporated enterprises. While policy often favors large industries, the true engine for inclusive and broad-based economic growth lies in empowering the unorganized sector to formalize, access credit, and adopt technology.

Current Employment Structure in India

Understanding the composition of the workforce is crucial to diagnosing the employment challenge.

Scale of the Sector- As of 2023-24, over 12 crore workers are employed across 7.3 crore non-agricultural enterprises dominance of Self-Employment (OAEs)

Own Account Enterprises (OAEs)- These are units that *do not* hire paid workers. They constitute 87% of all enterprises.

Nature of Work- This statistic highlights that a significant portion of self-employment in India is driven by necessity (survival) rather than entrepreneurial dynamism.

Role of Hired Worker Enterprises (HWEs)- Although HWEs form a small fraction of total enterprises, they contribute disproportionately to Gross Value Added (GVA). This disparity indicates that enterprises with hired labor are significantly more productive than single-person operations.

The Link Between Growth and Employment

Data suggests a strong correlation between enterprise growth (productivity) and job creation.

Productivity-Employment Elasticity- A 10% increase in GVA (Gross Value Added) among small enterprises correlates with a 4.5% rise in hired workers.

The Transition Opportunity- Since nearly 9 out of 10 enterprises currently hire *no* workers, upgrading even a fraction of OAEs into HWEs can trigger a massive expansion in employment opportunities.

Structural Challenges Faced by Small Enterprises

Despite their potential, small enterprises face three critical hurdles that stifle growth ("The Missing Middle" problem).

Low Formalisation- Many micro-enterprises avoid registration (e.g., Udyam portal) because they perceive the compliance costs to be higher than the potential benefits. Impact- This exclusion prevents them from accessing government schemes and formal market linkages.

Limited Access to Credit

Building Bureaucrats Since 2006

The Credit Gap- Only 10–12% of unincorporated enterprises have access to formal institutional loans.

Productivity Multiplier- Access to credit is transformative. For medium-sized enterprises, formal credit can boost GVA by 72%. For large enterprises, GVA can increase more than threefold.

Poor Technology Adoption- The use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools is low. Gains from tech adoption (digital payments, online marketplaces) are highly pronounced, yet micro-enterprises lag in utilizing basic IT tools which could enhance efficiency.

Policy Implications & Initiatives

To unlock the potential of this sector, policy must shift from "protection" to "promotion of growth."

Ease of Doing Business- Simplify regulatory norms to encourage voluntary formalisation.

Differentiated Credit- Move beyond simple microloans. Providing stage-appropriate credit is vital *Subsistence credit* for tiny units. *Working & Growth capital* for expanding units.

Digital Inclusion Programs- Expansion of digital infrastructure through

1. Digital MSME Scheme
2. ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce)
3. UDYAM Registration
4. DISHA (Digital Saksharta Abhiyan)

Note- These require local handholding and skills training to be effective.

Way Forward- A Roadmap for Transformation

Formalisation Drive- Incentivize the move from informal to formal by reducing compliance burdens and offering tangible benefits for registration.

Graded Credit Expansion- Link credit availability to the maturity stage of the enterprise (Micro $\rightarrow$ Small $\rightarrow$ Medium).

Technology & E-Commerce- Aggressively promote digital tools and platforms with mentorship to help micro-units access wider markets.

Skill Development Integration- Align vocational education with enterprise needs, focusing on-

1. Digital Literacy
2. Financial Management
3. Market Linkages

Integrated Ecosystem Approach- Ensure coordination between the Ministries of MSME, Skill Development, Finance, and IT to create a cohesive support system.

Monitoring & Evaluation- Utilize surveys like ASUSE (Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises) to assess impact and ensure policies are results-oriented.

Conclusion

India's path to creating "Big Jobs" lies in the transformation of its "Small Enterprises." By facilitating the transition of Own Account Enterprises (OAEs) into Hired Worker Enterprises (HWEs) through credit, technology, and formalisation, India can unlock sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Source- <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/indias-small-enterprises-hold-key-to-job-growth-10411882/>