

Why is 'Vande mataram' issue being reopened: Salman Khurshid

Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs Salman Khurshid Thursday criticised the endorsement of a fatwa against the singing of 'Vande mataram' by Muslims, saying some people were trying to create problems by raising the issue again.

'Does this country not have enough problems that some people want to create more problems? I don't know why this issue is being reopened,' he told reporters here.

The clerics' body Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind at its national convention at Deoband this week had endorsed an earlier fatwa issued by Islamic seminary Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband.

Khurshid said the issue was resolved over 50 years ago by treating some stanzas of the song as the national song. He said there was no need to take a fresh look after every 50 years.

'During the independence movement, all national leaders, including leaders of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind Hind sat together and resolved that some stanzas of 'Vande mataram' would be treated as the national song and would be sung voluntarily. Nobody was forced to sing it and this is something which was there in the resolutions of both Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind and the Congress party,' he said.

'People had faith in the song. It inspired people. It was not treated as a song of one particular religion. It was treated as part of India's ethos and part of the independence movement. I don't know why this issue is being raised again,' he said.

'Fifty years ago it was agreed that two stanzas will be sung and that is what we sing today. There are two to three other stanzas that are not sung. Somebody has a problem with them is a hypothetical question because we have taken only two stanzas and this was done by our ancestors, freedom fighters and national leaders, including Muslim leaders,' he said to another query.

He defended Home Minister P. Chidambaram addressing the Jamiat convention saying he could not be blamed for the resolution passed during the meeting after he had left it.

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