



## **HISTORIC VERDICT OF SUPREME COURT ON THE NATIONAL ANTHEM: SHOULD INDIANS DEVELOP A CULTURE OF PATRIOTISM**

A PIL was filed by one Shayam Narayan Chaoskey in SC after a wheelchair bound man who could not stand and sing the national anthem in Cinema was assaulted by a couple in Panaji, Goa, considering it an insult to the National Anthem. It was sought in the PIL what amounts to an insult to National Anthem?

SC gave the ruling on November 30, 2016 that National Anthem should be played in cinema halls before screening of the movie. This means everyone should stand up to respect the National Anthem which is also stated under article 51A. While giving such a verdict, SC also prohibits any dramatisation of the National Anthem. The Supreme Court order directing cinema halls to play the national anthem before screening to "instill committed patriotism and nationalism" has received mixed reactions from legal experts with a few terming it as "judiciary's over-enthusiasm" and others saying playing it and respecting it won't cause any harm.

Several other questions do also arise with this ruling of SC. Why are Cinema Halls being targeted only while there are other public places like temples, community halls, parties, functions etc. where mass gathering take place without the national anthem. Why is the need to show patriotism and nationalism in cinema halls or for that matter anywhere at large? Why is judiciary intervening and dictating the nationalistic virtues to be followed unlike before? Is the government responsible for this intervention as Attorney General of India who is appointed by government in power, has welcomed the verdict? Why is it needed by the person who is in no mood to imbibe nationalistic feelings and only wants some relaxation & rejuvenation in the Cinema Halls? These questions still remain unanswered.

However, those who are in favour ask the same questions but with different Intent. Why is 3 mins of respect in cinema halls becoming such an uncomfortable reckoning? Why nationalistic and patriotic feelings should not be promoted when India is doing the surgical strikes across the borders and losing soldiers frequently? Why shouldn't it be Cinema hall because it is a place of unity in diversity where everybody comes leaving his identities at home? Is it not the Ideals of National Anthem which are followed in the country and makes it a beautiful and peaceful place to sit and enjoy the movie unlike Middle East turmoil, so why shouldn't it be played in Cinema halls. There have been varied reactions from layman as well as prominent people in Indian society over this verdict. It is disheartening to know that some media articles are also misinterpreting the judgement by writing extensively on "why should we sing National Anthem"? The judgement is not about singing or performing on National Anthem, it is just the symbol of showing respect and bringing patriotism at a time when India is growing fastest economically and facing the heat from neighbours for infiltration and terrorism. Standing for 3 minutes won't do any harm mentally or physically.

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