

When did National Anthems Originate?

Today every country of the world has her own national anthem. National anthems are sung or played on special occasions by almost all the countries of the world. They are patriotic songs sung as a mark of honor to the countries concerned. These are sung to inspire patriotic feelings in people.

There is no authentic record as to how and when national anthems originated. It is believed that the 'Kim Gao' song sung in Japan in the ninth century was the first national anthem of the world. 'God save the Queen' was considered as the national anthem of Britain in 1825, although it had been popular as a patriotic song and used on the occasions of royal ceremonies since the mid 18th century.

The national anthem of the United States of America was written during 1814. Francis Scott Key, an American lawyer, was aboard one of the British ships that attacked 'Fort McHenry'. All through the night, Key watched the attack. When at dawn he saw the American flag still flying over the fort, he was overwhelmed by patriotic feelings. He immediately wrote a line on an envelope which later formed part of the national anthem of America.

Japan and Jordan have the shortest national anthems in the world—each of four lines only.