

Rani Lakshmi Bai - Rani Of Jhansi [NCERT Notes: Modern Indian History For UPSC]

This article talks about Rani Laxmibai – The Rani of Jhansi. She was an epitome of courage and bravery. She was born in a Maratha family and she was an important name in the struggle for Independence against the Britishers.

This is an important topic for the UPSC IAS aspirants. These NCERT notes will also be useful for other competitive exams like banking PO, SSC, state civil services exams and so on. Candidates can also download the notes PDF from the link provided below.

Rani Lakshmi Bai Biography

Rani Laxmibai also called the Rani of Jhansi was a pivotal figure in the Indian Revolt of 1857. She is also regarded as one of the greatest freedom fighters of India.

Rani Lakshmibai was born on 19 November 1828 in the town of Varanasi. She was named Manikarnika Tambe and was nicknamed Manu. Her father was Moropant Tambe and her mother Bhagirathi Sapre (Bhagirathi Bai) who hailed from modern-day Maharashtra. At four years old her mother passed away. Her father was the Commander of War under Peshwa Baji Rao II of Bithorr District. She was educated at home, able to read and write, and was more independent in her childhood than others of her age; her studies included shooting, horsemanship, fencing which was in contrast to the cultural expectations for women in Indian society at the time.

- At the age of 14, she was married to the Maharaja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao in 1842.
- After her marriage, she was called Laxmibai.
- Her son Damodar Rao was born in 1851. But he died after four months.
- Gangadhar Rao died in 1853. Before he died, he had adopted his cousin's son Anand Rao, who was renamed, Damodar Rao.



Rani Lakshmi Bai Contributions in Indian Freedom Struggle

Rani Lakshmi Bai was known for her outstanding bravery who was an important name in the Freedom Struggle against the British. This section highlights her major activities carried out against the British Government to fulfil the dream of Free India.

10 Points about Rani Lakhmi Bai Role in the 1857 Revolt

- Lord Dalhousie sought to annex Jhansi when the Maharaja died applying the Doctrine of a lapse since the king did not have any natural heir.
- As per this, the Rani was granted an annual pension and asked to leave the fort of Jhansi.
- The Revolt of 1857 had broken out in Meerut and the Rani was ruling over Jhansi as regent for her minor son.
- British forces under the command of Sir Hugh Rose arrived at Jhansi fort with the intention of capturing it in 1858. He demanded that the city surrender to him or else it would be destroyed.
- Rani Laxmibai refused and proclaimed, ***“We fight for independence. In the words of Lord Krishna, we will if we are victorious, enjoy the fruits of victory, if defeated and killed on the field of battle, we shall surely earn eternal glory and salvation.”***
- For two weeks the battle went on where the Rani led her army of men and women valiantly against the British. Despite courageous fighting, Jhansi lost the battle.
- The Rani, tying her infant son on her back, escaped to Kalpi on horseback.
- Along with Tatya Tope and other rebel soldiers, the Rani captured the fort of Gwalior.
- Afterwards, she proceeded to Morar, Gwalior to fight the British.
- Rani Laxmibai died while fighting in Gwalior on 18th June 1858, aged 29. She was dressed as a soldier when she died.

Legacy

- Sir Hugh Rose has commented, ***“Remarkable for her beauty, cleverness and perseverance, she had been the most dangerous of all the rebel leaders. The best and bravest of all.”***
- Rani Laxmibai became a symbol of resistance against British rule for later nationalists in India.
- She will always be remembered as a great martyr who laid down her life for the cause of freedom. She is a symbol of courage, heroism and woman power.