



Rani Lakshmibai

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister of India visited Jhansi on the eve of [Rani Lakshmibai's](#) birth anniversary.

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Who was Rani Lakshmibai?

▪ About:

- Rani Lakshmibai is also known as **Jhansi Ki Rani**.
- She was the **queen of the Maratha-ruled princely state of Jhansi**.
- She was one of the **leading figures of the [Indian Revolt of 1857](#)**.
- She's seen as a **symbol of resistance to British rule in India**.

▪ Early Life:

- She was born on **19th November 1828** in **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**.
- She was originally named **Manikarnika**.
- While pursuing studies, she also took formal **training in martial arts**, which included **horse riding, shooting and fencing**.
- **Manu's companions** included **Nana Sahib** (the adopted son of the Peshwa) and **Tatya Tope**.

▪ Manu as Jhansi Ki Rani:

- At the age of 14, Manu **got married to the Maharaja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao Newalkar**, whose first wife had passed away before having a child and who was trying to have an heir to succeed him at the throne.
 - Hence, **Manikarnika became Laxmibai, Rani of Jhansi**.
- Rani Lakshmibai gave **birth to a son in who died** after just three months of birth. The couple later **adopted a son, Damodar Rao**, from Gangadhar Rao's extended family.

▪ Role in Struggle for Independence:

- Rani Lakshmibai was **one of the brave warriors of India's struggle for Independence**.

- In 1853, when the Maharaja of Jhansi died, **Lord Dalhousie refused to acknowledge the (adopted) child** and applied the **Doctrine of Lapse**, and **annexed the state**.
- Rani Lakshmibai **fought bravely against the British** so as to save her empire from annexation.
- She **died fighting on the battlefield on 17th June 1858**.
- When the **Indian National Army** started its first female unit (in 1943), it was **named after the valiant queen of Jhansi**.

What was the Doctrine of Lapse?

- It was an **annexation policy** followed widely by **Lord Dalhousie** when he was **India's Governor-General** from **1848 to 1856**.
- According to this, any princely state that was under the direct or indirect control of the East India Company where the ruler did not have a **legal male heir** would be annexed by the company.
 - As per this, **any adopted son of the Indian ruler could not be proclaimed** as heir to the kingdom.
- By applying the doctrine of lapse, Dalhousie annexed the States of:
 - Satara (1848 A.D.),
 - Jaitpur, and Sambalpur (1849 A.D.),
 - Baghat (1850 A.D.),
 - Udaipur (1852 A.D.),
 - **Jhansi (1853 A.D.), and**
 - Nagpur (1854 A.D.)

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