Rani Lakshmibai – Queen of Jhansi

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | History*

Why in News?

Recently, on the death anniversary of Rani Lakshmibai (June 18), she was remembered for her enduring historical legacy.

Rani Lakshmibai	
Birth Name	Manikarnika Tambe
Born	19 November 1828, Varanasi
Trained in	Martial arts, swordsmanship, horsemanship, and fencing.
Married	Maharaja Gangadhar Rao Newalkar of Jhansi in 1842 at the age of 14
Adopted son	Damodar Rao
Died in	18 June 1858, Gwalior (age 29)
Burial	Phoolbagh Maidan, Gwalior

- **Doctrine of Lapse and Annexation of Jhansi** – It held that if a ruler of a princely state under British suzerainty died without a natural male heir, the state would "lapse" and be annexed, adopted heirs not recognized.
- It was introduced by Lord Dalhousie.
- Jhansi was annexed after ***Gangadhar Rao's death*** when Damodar Rao's claim was rejected, motivating Rani Lakshmibai to lead resistance against the East India Company.
- **Role in Revolt of 1857** – She reorganised her forces and fought the colonialists, despite her vigorous attempt at fighting the British, she lost the battle and her life in Revolt of 1857.

Revolt of 1857 started at May 10th 1857 and officially ended in July 08th 1859.

Nationalists' Recognition

- Oral traditions and folklore transformed her into *India's greatest heroine.*
- **Rabindranath Tagore –** *Jhansir Rani* (1877) was among the earliest literary works.
- **Subhadra Kumari Chauhan –** An iconic poem *Jhansi ki Rani (1930)* immortalised her valour.
- *Vrindavan Lal Verma's novel (1946)* and *Mahasweta Devi's Jhansi Rani (1956)* further canonised her legacy.
- **Prachi Deshpande** – Observed that her as idealised *Indian womanhood* in nationalist writings.
- **INA Connection** – Subhas Chandra Bose named the women's regiment of the Indian National Army (INA) as the *Rani of Jhansi Regiment,* cementing her place as a freedom struggle icon.

Reference

Indian express | Rani Lakshmibai

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