

Rani Velu Nachiyar

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | History

Why in News?

Prime Minister pays tribute to Rani Velu Nachiyar on her birth anniversary.

- Rani Velu Nachiyar was the **1st queen to fight against the British** colonial power in India.
- **Birth** - She was born on 3rd January 1730, as the only child of Raja Chellamuthu Vijayaragunatha Sethupathy and Rani Sakandhimuthal of the Ramnad kingdom.
- **Training** - She was trained in war match weapons usage, martial arts like Valari, Silambam (fighting using a stick), horse riding and archery.
- **Skills** - She was a scholar in many languages, and she had proficiency with languages like French, English and Urdu.
- **Marriage & Conflict** - She married Muthuvaduganathaperiya Udaiyathevar, king of Sivagangai, who was killed by British soldiers and the Nawab of Arcot's son.
- **Exile** - She escaped with her daughter, Vellachi, and lived under the protection of **Palayakaarar Kopaala Naayakkar** in Dindigul for 8 years.
- **Alliance** - At Dindigul, she met **Haider Ali of Mysore**, won his support, and he admired her intellect and Urdu skills.
- **Return to Power** - In 1780, with allied forces, she attacked Sivaganga Fort, reclaimed her kingdom.
- She gave administrative powers to the Marudhu Brothers.
- **Title** - She is known by Tamils as Veeramangai (brave woman).
- **Succession** - Vellachi, Velu Nachiyar's daughter, succeeded her to the throne and ruled from 1790 to 1793.
- She died on 25th December 1796 in Sivagangai.
- **Legacy**
 - **Udaiyaal Unit** - She established one of the **first all-women army units**, named after her adoptive daughter Udaiyaal.
 - She constructed a mosque and church to honour Haider Ali's support and maintained ties with Tipu Sultan.
 - She was honoured with a postage stamp (2008), a memorial statue in Sivagangai (2014), and an annual celebration of her birth anniversary on January 3.

Quick Fact

- She was Velu Nachiyar's trusted ***military commander***.
- **Historic Act** - On Vijayadashami, Kuyuli drenched herself in ghee, entered the British armoury, and set herself ablaze—destroying all weapons stored inside.
- **Legacy** - She is remembered as ***India's first suicide bomber*** in the context of resistance against colonial rule.

References

1. [PIB | PM pays tribute to Rani Velu Nachiyar on her birth anniversary](#)
2. [Indian Culture | Velu Nachiyar](#)
3. [FII | Velu Nachiyar](#)

