

Rani Lakshmibai

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About Rani Lakshmibai:

- Rani Lakshmibai, **one of the warriors of India's struggle for Independence**, was born as Manikarnika Tambe in Varanasi.
- Lakshmibai got married to Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, the Maharaja of Jhansi and **got the name of Rani Lakshmibai**.
- Then Lakshmibai and Gangadhar Rao adopted Rao's cousin's son, Anand Rao, who was later renamed as Damodar. Soon after they adopted Anand, Maharaja died due to an illness.
- The East India Company took advantage of the Maharaja's death and applied the **Doctrine of Lapse**.

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 under the direct or indirect (as a vassal) 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.** This challenged the Indian ruler's long-held authority to appoint an heir of their choice.
- So, due to the Doctrine of Lapse, Britishers did not accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir. **The plan of the Britishers was to annex Jhansi.** They seized the state jewels, granted her an annual pension of Rs 60,000 and asked her to leave the fort forever.

Source : Indian Express

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