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THE EPITOME OF COURAGE, VALOUR AND SACRIFICE:RANI DURGAVATI

I am sure,many of us don't even know who Rani #Durgavati was 'coz our #History textbooks don't tell us this. Today, let us learn something about this great warrior queen.



Rani Durgavati was a #Gondwana Queen who fought 51 battles, out of them 3 were against Mughals and she never lost. She was an exemplary woman who got married at 18 and was widowed at 24. At 24, she became Queen of a vast kingdom of mainly tribal people and fought 51 gallant wars.



She was a great war tactician & an exemplary young ruler who never lost any battle. She was born on Oct 5th, 1524 in the family of Gurjar Chandela's Rajput ruler Keerat Pal Singh in fort of Kalinjar, Banda, UP. Her family built #Khajuraho temples which are a #UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



She was married to Gondi King Dalpati Shah in 1542. This brought an alliance between the Gonda family & the Chandelas of Bundelkhand so that they could resist the onslaught of Sher Shah Suri who attacked Kalinjar in 1545. Same year Durgavati gave birth to Vir Narayan, her only son.



After the death of her husband in 1548, she reluctantly took up throne on the insistence of her ministers who were aware of her abilities & wanted the Kingdom to remain independent. She was only 24 and took up the reign on behalf of her son who was only 5 by that time.



रामनगर (१६९९ ई. के पश्चात्)

She was a very benevolent Queen, a good Administrator and a valiant fighter. She led her armies of 70000 people with 2500 elephants being a very able horse & elephant rider. Rani was not only good in battle but also in the fields managing the cultivation of around 23000 villages.

neglected no point of courage or capacity, and did great things by dint of her farseeing abilities. She had great contests with Bā Bahādūr and the Mīnas, and was always victorious. She had 20,000 good cavalry with her in her battles, and one thousand famous elephants. The treasures of the Rajahs of that country fell into her hands. She was a good shot with gun and arrow, and continually went a-hunting, and shot animals of the chase with her gun. It was her custom that whenever she heard that a tiger had made his appearance she did not drink water till she had shot him. There are stories current in Hindustan of her feasts and her frays. But she had one great fault, to wit, she, owing to a crowd of flatterers, became proud of her outward success; and did not submit herself at the threshold of the Shāhshāh.

When Āsaf Khān conquered the country of Panna, Durgawati was infatuated with the strength of her army, her courage and warlike abilities, and was not apprehensive of such a neighbour. When Āsaf Khān was near at hand he kept open the gates of friendship and intimacy and sent spies and experienced traders into her country and made investigations about her revenue and her expenditure. When he knew the truth about her abundant collections of treasure, and her hidden stores, the desire of lordship over the country entered his mind, and he longed to embrace the bride of the territories. He began with coquetry and toying, and put out his hand to touch the down and the mole of the beauty (Gondwāna), i.e., he began by attacking and plundering the villages and hamlets on the borders. At length, he in this year by the orders of the Shāhshāh, collected 10,000 cavalry and abundant infantry and girded up the loins of endeavour for the conquest of Gaḍha. Muḥibb 'Alikhān, Muḥammad Murād Khān, Wazīr Khān, Bābāi Qāqshāi, Nāzīr Bahādūr, Āq Muḥammad and a large number of holders of fiefs in that quarter accompanied him in accordance with the royal order. The Rāni was drunken with the wine of negligence and was spending her time in prosperity. Suddenly the news arrived that the victorious royal army had reached Damoh¹ which is one of the important cities of the country. A stone of dispersal fell into the midst of her pride, and her soldiers scattered in order to defend their families. Not

She was victorious against the mighty armies of Surs of Delhi, Baz Bahadur of Malwa, Afghans of Bengal & Akbar. Akbar was so impressed with her battles that he wanted to meet her & wanted her to serve the Mughal Empire but she refused.



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طسح کیسوکلان عمل بر پشنگه

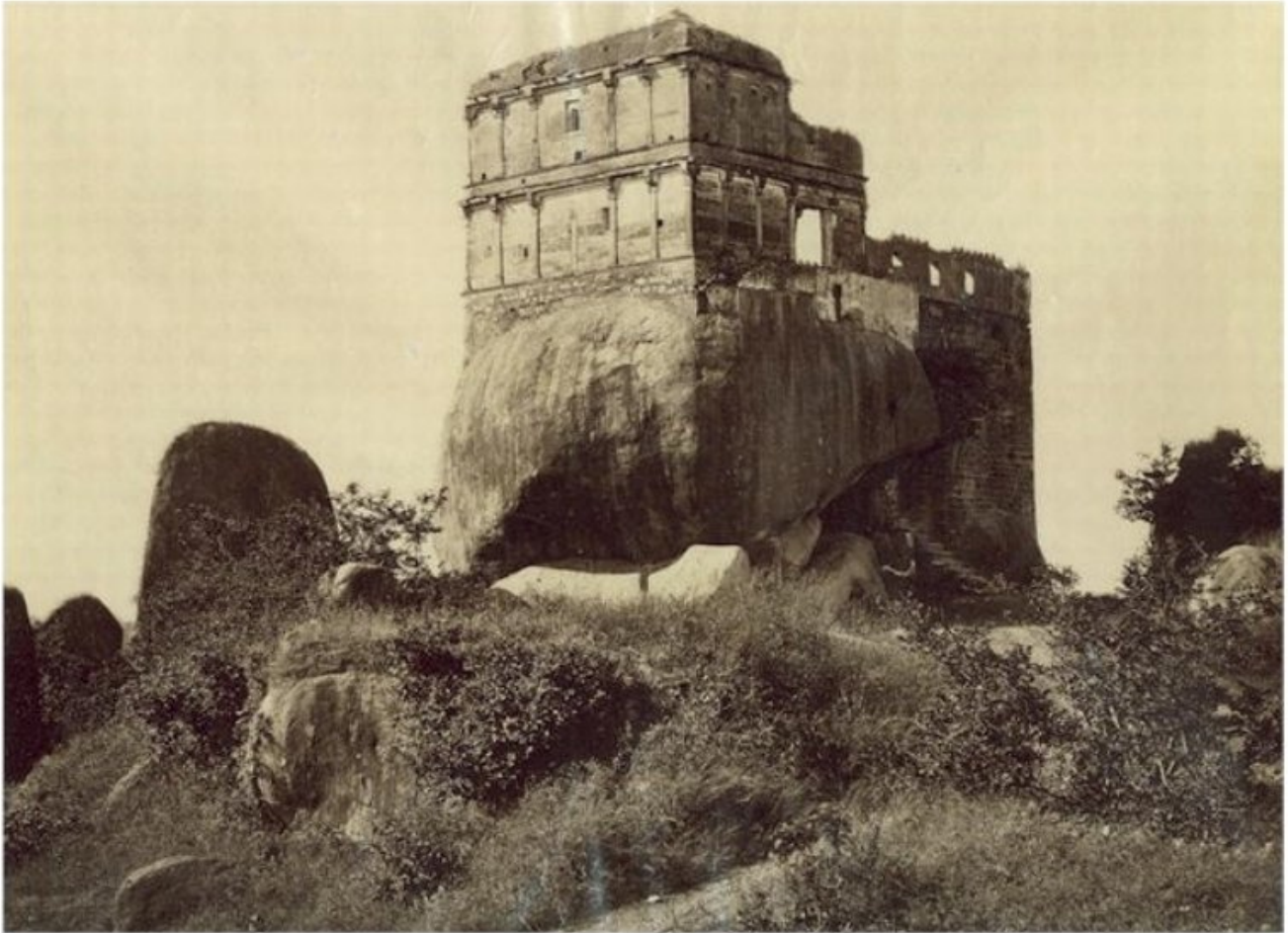
۱۱۷ (۱۵۹۴-۵)

This painting from Akbarname shows Asaf Khan leading the Mughal forces in 1564 against Rani Durgavati, the ruler of the Gond Kingdom of Middle India. The female ruler of Gondwana fell to the Mughal forces after a fiercely contested battle, leading even her enemies to admire her extraordinary bravery.

Akbar became furious & ordered his finest General Asaf Khan to mount an invasion of Gondwana and bring Rani back alive to his court. He sent an additional 6 major commanders as he knew that defeating her wouldn't be an easy task.



Asaf Khan attacked & started to plunder borders of her Kingdom. He sent spies to investigate her revenues & expenditures. Rani's men had pointed out their army was no match to mighty army of Akbar but Durgavati maintained that it was better to die fighting than to surrender & live.



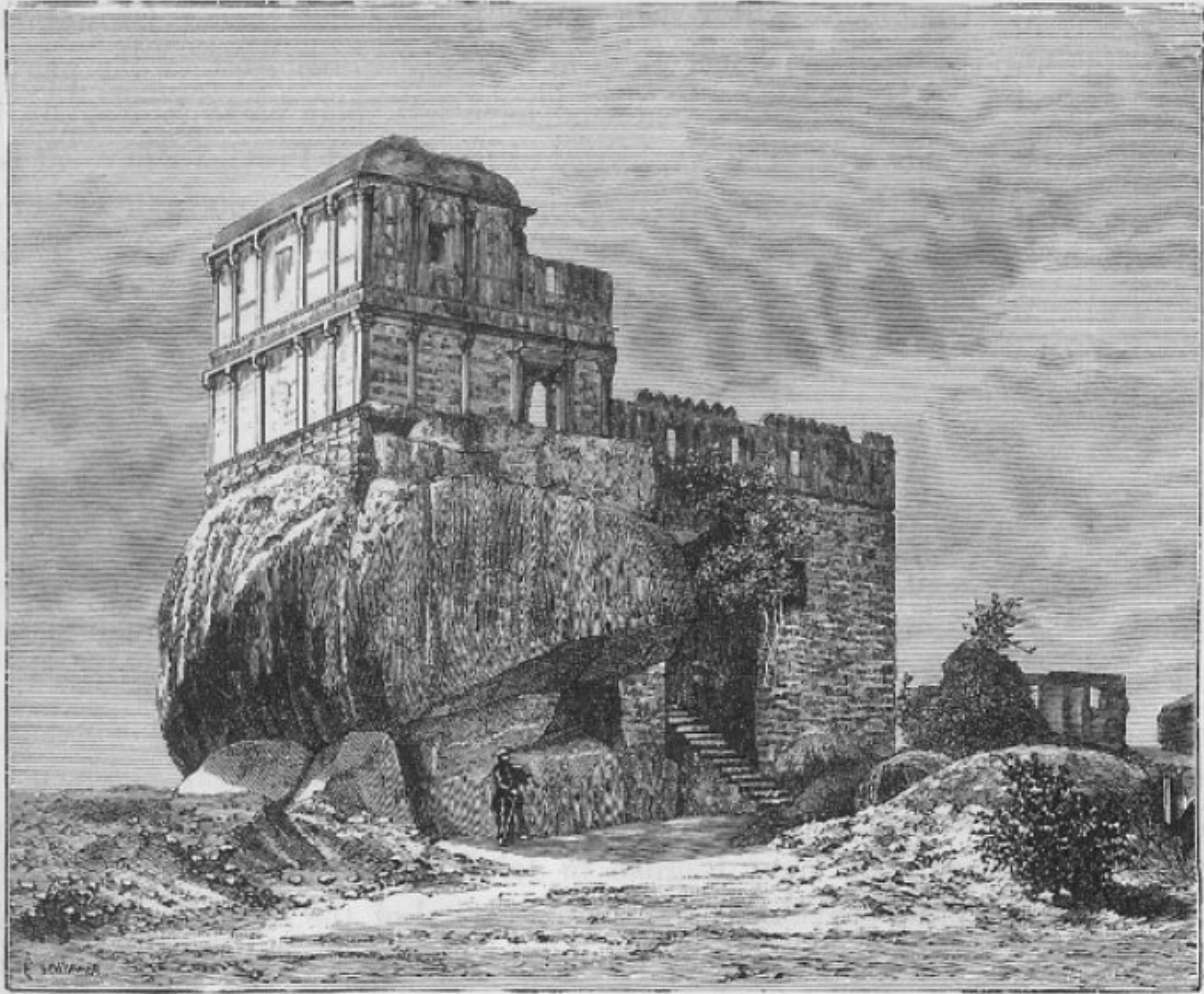
Madan Mahal, the palace of Rani Durgawati in Jabalpur. The architecturally well-designed rooms in front of the main structure probably lodged the military troops of the rulers who stayed here. The maintenance and protection of this historic monument has been undertaken by Archaeological Survey of India. This is an 1865 photograph by G.W. Laurie.

#Durgavati had heard that Akbar's army was at Damoh so she decided to move to Narai Nala with steep hills on sides and rivers Gaur & Narmada with only a narrow passage of entry to the area as she thought it would be difficult for Akbar's army to enter.



It was an unequal battle with their modern weapons & trained soldiers against her untrained few soldiers. When the Mughal army arrived, she fought hard battle in which her Faujdar Arjun Das died, so she decided to lead herself.

FIG. 116.—JABALPUR—THE MADAN MAHAL.



Ruins of the Madan Mahal Fort at Jabalpur...Used as a Watch Tower by Rani Durgawati. The fort is an excellent piece of architecture. Judicious use of natural rocks and basaltic stones renders strength to the structure. This portrait is from India(1884) - Earth and Inhabitants.

As enemy entered the valley, soldiers attacked & many were killed but Rani was victorious in this battle. She had successfully chased the Mughal army out.

Two years later, Asad Khan decided to attack again. Rani wanted to attack on same night but her Generals were not in agreement.

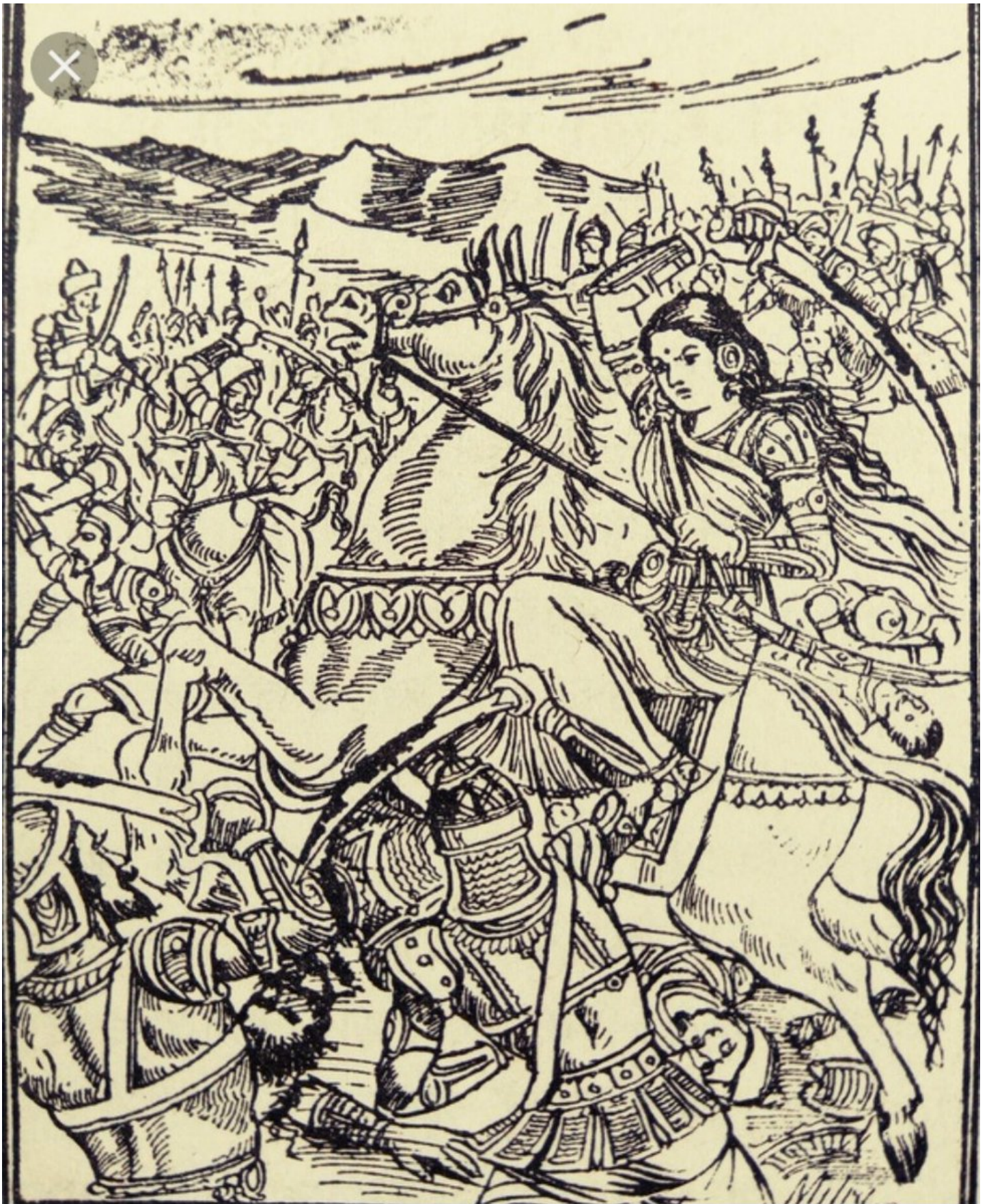


Defeat of Baz Bahadur

By morning, Rani rode out on her elephant Sarman to join the battle with her son Vir Narayan who was able to move Mughal army back 3 times before being injured & at the request of Rani was moved out to a safe place in Chauragarh. Rani continued to fight but was hit by two arrows.



Although, she pulled the arrows out but she knew that she won't be able to continue & asked her Mahawat to kill her but he refused to do so. At this point, she took the dagger herself and pierced her heart with it rather than surrendering to Akbar's army.



Jabalpur University of #MadhyaPradesh has been renamed in her honour as Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyala. There is also a stamp in her honour and a train named Durgavati Express from Jabalpur to #Jammu Tawi.



Over 500 yrs ago, Rani #Durgawati showed how a young woman had the courage to fight against the might of #Akbar & many other invaders as many as 51 times and at the same time be generous & kind to the people of her Kingdom.

She is a rare example of determination, bravery & valour.

