



Birth Anniversary of Mangal Pandey

Why in News?

The **Prime Minister** paid tribute to the great freedom fighter [Mangal Pandey](#) on his **198th birth anniversary on 19th July 2025**.

Key Points

About Mangal Pandey

- **Early Life and Background:**
 - **Born on July 19, 1827**, in **Nagwa village** of Ballia district (present-day Uttar Pradesh), Mangal Pandey hailed from a **Bhumihar Brahmin** family.
 - He **joined the East India Company's army** at age 22, serving in the **6th Company of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry**.
- **Role in Revolt of 1857:**
 - He refused to use the newly introduced **Enfield Pattern 1853 rifle-musket**, as it was **believed** that its **cartridges were greased with beef and pork fat**. It offended both **Hindu and Muslim sepoys**, who had to **bite them open** to load the weapon.
 - On **29 March 1857**, he fired the first shot of rebellion at the Sergeant Major of his regiment in **Barrackpore**, near Kolkata.
 - This act of defiance triggered the historic [Revolt of 1857](#), often referred to as the **Sepoy Mutiny** or the **First War of Indian Independence**.
 - The uprising ultimately led to the **end of the East India Company's rule** in India, with the British Crown taking direct control through **Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858** and the enactment of the [Government of India Act, 1858](#), which appointed a **Viceroy in place of the Governor-General**.
 - [Lord Canning](#) became the first Viceroy under this new system.
 - He was subsequently overpowered and **hanged on 8 April 1857**, by order of a **Court Martial at Lal Bagan, Barrackpore**.
 - After Pandey's execution, the **7th Awadh Regiment** revolted and faced suppression. His **regiment was disbanded**, similar to the 19th Infantry at **Behrampore**, for displaying dissent.
 - The rebellion **spread across army cantonments**—in **Ambala, Lucknow, and Meerut**.
 - On **10 May 1857**, sepoys in **Meerut** launched the uprising that escalated into a nationwide revolt.
 - They marched to **Delhi**, urging the aged **Bahadur Shah II** to become their **symbolic emperor**. After persuasion, he accepted and was declared **Shah-en-shah-i-Hindustan**.
 - He was the last Mughal emperor, **exiled to Rangoon** after the failure of the revolt.
 - The **Red Fort** was seized on **19 September 1857**, and he **remained in captivity until he died in 1862**.
- **Significance:** Mangal Pandey's defiance in Barrackpore was not an isolated incident but a culmination of **widespread resentment, religious grievances, and economic**

exploitation under British rule. His legacy as the **trigger** of the **First War of Indian Independence** continues to be remembered as a symbol of **national resistance** and **patriotic sacrifice**.



About Socio-Political Context of Awadh

- Mangal Pandey belonged to **Awadh**, a key region for Company recruitment. **75,000 sepoys** from Awadh were part of the British army, and **almost every agricultural family** had a representative serving.
- The **annexation of Awadh** in 1856 by **Lord Dalhousie** on the grounds of **misgovernance** (not under the **Doctrine of Lapse**) and the **land revenue settlements** caused deep resentment.
 - **The Doctrine of Lapse** was introduced by **Lord Dalhousie** (Governor-General, 1848–56). It denied **adopted heirs the right to inherit kingdoms**, leading to the **annexation** of states like **Satara (1848)**, **Punjab (1849)**, **Jhansi**, and **Nagpur (1854)**.
- **Confiscation of taluqdars' lands** and harsh revenue systems led to **14,000 petitions** from sepoys protesting their economic hardships. Pandey's rebellion thus became symbolic of this **cumulative peasant-military discontent**.

About Other Prominent Leaders of the 1857 Revolt

- **Nana Sahib (Kanpur)**: Adopted son of **Peshwa Baji Rao II**; denied pension rights by the British. Took leadership in Kanpur; fled to **Nepal in 1859**, where he likely died.
- **Begum Hazrat Mahal (Lucknow)**: Widow of **Nawab Wajid Ali Shah**; led the revolt from Lucknow. Crowned her son **Birjis Qadr** as king. Lived in **exile in Nepal** until her death in 1879.
- **Veer Kuwar Singh (Bihar)**: **80-year-old zamindar** from Bhojpur; led guerrilla warfare. Retook **Jagdishpur** in 1858 before succumbing to injuries.
- **Rani Laxmibai (Jhansi)**: Denied succession under the **Doctrine of Lapse**. Fought British forces under **General Hugh Rose** in 1858.
- **Khan Bahadur Khan (Bareilly)**: Led a prolonged resistance in Bareilly at age **82**; fought **Sir Colin Campbell**.

- **Maulvi Liaqat Ali (Allahabad):** Controlled Allahabad briefly; operated from **Khusro Bagh**. Arrested in **1872** and deported to **Andaman Islands**.

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