Twitter Thread by Vibhu Vashisth



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MAHARAANI TARARANI: THE QUEEN OF MARATHAS

Rani Tarabai was the brave daughter-in-law of Chhatrapati Shivaji and one of the greatest medieval Monarchs India ever had.
She was born in 1675 to one of the bravest commander-in-chiefs of Shivaji's Army named Hambir Rao Mohite.



Maharani Tarabai

Maharani Tarabai was the wife of Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj. She continued the struggle of Swaraj with the help of her Sardars after the death of her husband. She fought for seven years. She kept the Maratha kingdom strong. She used the Guerrilla technique. She singlehandedly took charge of the administration. She encouraged the Sardars to participate in the mission of Swaraj.

Tarabai was just 8yrs old when she was married to Shivaji's younger son, Rajaram. Mughals and Marathas were constantly at war with each other. Shivaji was crowned the ruler of the Independent Maratha Swarajya in 1674 which was established

by him.



Chhatrapati
Rajaram Maharaj

Rajaram Maharaj was the second son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. He was born on 24 February 1670 on Raigad. He became Chhatrapati after the death of Sambhaji Maharaj.

However,the great leader died in 1680&the Maratha Samrajya went into a complete&total chaos.Marathas saw some very tough times ahead. In 1689,when Raigad Fort fell to the Mughal Army of over 15000,Shivaji's first wife Saibai and his elder son Sambhaji were captured&put to death.



Shivaji

Sambhaji's wife and son Shahu were taken prisoners to the Mughal court. During the same battle, Shivaji's second son Rajaram(Tarabai's husband) , who was the heir to the throne now, managed to escape using a disguise. He made his way to the Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.



Mughal General Zulfikar Khan, however, followed them to Gingee laying siege to the Gingee Fort. From 1690-1698,This was the longest siege by a Mughal Army of any Fort which stands testimony to the military and diplomatic credentials of Rani Tarabai.



The Kalyana Mahal Gingee fort in 1890 |

During the siege, it was Rani Tarabai calling the shots in her husband's name who was having health issues. Not only did she held the Fort but she also directed the fight against Mughals.
In another blow to the Marathas, Rajaram passed away due to a lung ailment in 1700.



Tarabai was widowed at 25 &she had already seen&handled a complete chaos to the best of her ability. Instead of grieving, she organised a well-planned &vigorous opposition to Aurangzeb.
In her short 7 yr tenure as a Regent,Tarabai directed the Maratha resistance against Mughals.



She was aided in her efforts by the very loyal and able Generals Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav who have been immortalized in the Maratha Folklore for their Guerrilla Warfare Tactics. The Queen was famous to lead her army and destroy the enemy using Guerrilla Tactics.



She was an indomitable warrior Queen deeply devoted to her Kingdom who not only prevented Maratha confederacy from disintegrating but also played a crucial role in rising it to National power.
Amidst repeated failures in crushing Maratha resistance, Aurangzeb died on 2-Mar-1707.

After the death of Aurangzeb, Mughals faced a power vacuum when they decided to release Shahu, son of Sambhaji(Shivaji's elder son). Their aim was to create a dispute regarding the claim on throne. As the Mughals hoped,

Shahu challenged Tarabai and her son's claim on the throne.

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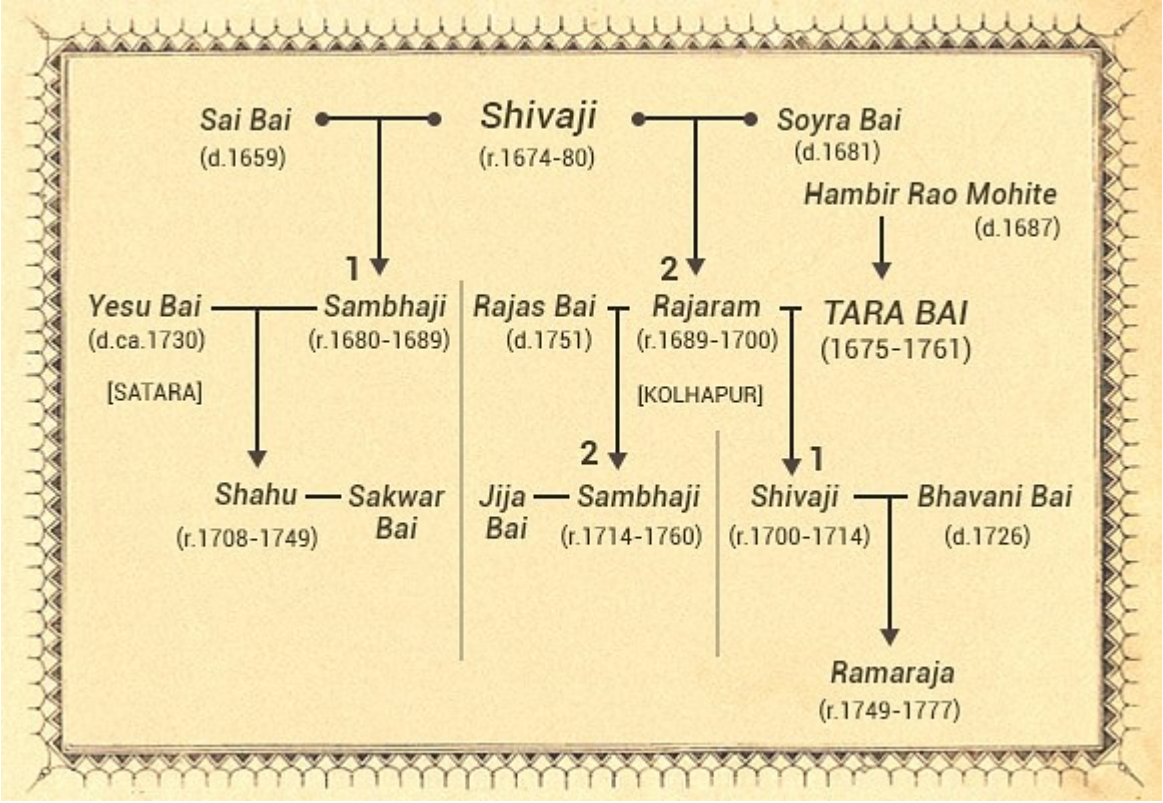
Shahu

Sambhaji Raje Bhosle (1682 – 1749)

The fourth emperor of the Maratha empire created by his grandfather, Shivaji. He was officially the Raja of Satara, more popularly known as Chhattrapati Shahuji. He came out of captivity by the Mughals and survived a civil war to gain the throne in 1701.

Tarabai refused as she sensed a betrayel since Shahu was suddenly released by Mughals without any conditions.Dispute took the form of battle in no time.
Since Shahu had a strong legal claim on the throne,General sent by Tarabai to fight him had a change of heart&he switched sides

Shahu succeeded in his ambitions in 1708 with the help of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath's &new Mughal emperor's resources. But Tarabai wasn't the one to give up easily&she established a rival court in Kolhapur.Retaliating to this Shahu joined hands with Rajaram's second wife Rajsabai.



Shahu wanted Rajasabai's son Sambhaji II to sit on the Kolhapur Throne. Tarabai and her son Shivaji II were thrown into prison where she spent 16 yrs and her son died.Sambhaji II later turned against Shahu and Shahu reconciled his differences with Tarabai and he released her.

Shahu then placed Tarabai under house arrest in Satara Palace&he used to take her advice&consult her in major administrative, military&diplomatic decisions. When Tarabai was 73yr old,Shahu fell seriously ill&there were no direct descendents of Shivaji left to be appointed as heir

Tarabai then revealed a secret to Shahu at his death bed dat she has a grandson whom she kept away safe fearing his assassination,who is now 22yrs old .So Shahu adopted Tarabai's grandson Ramaraj as his heir&died in 1749.With Tarabai's help the young Prince ascended the throne.

Tarabai died at the age of 86 in https://t.co/ybBpB1A0MT her lifetime she witnessed the rise,fall and revival of the Maratha Empire. Had she not taken the reigns of Maratha Empire in her hands in 1701, the History of India could have been very different.



Rani Tarabai, Queen of the Marathas