Twitter Thread by Shiv Ramdas Traing To Rite Buk

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Ok, since Google has done a doodle for his birthday today and some ppl are wondering who he is, gather around children, it is storytime. A story that starts with a secret. Superheroes do exist in real life. Well one did.

Meet Ghulam Mohammad Baksh Butt AKA The Great Gama.

But who was Gama?
One way of answering is to say he was the greatest wrestler that has ever lived, maybe the most formidable unarmed combatant to ever live, but put it this way, an entire armed mob intent on mass murder once fled him in mortal terror. More on that in a bit.

Did I say he was a wrestler? That's not quite right. He was THE wrestler. He specialised in the subcontinental style called pehelwani, which is extremely demanding.

And Gama was extremely good.

How good? Well, he started in 1895 and wrestled all the way till 1952(or 1955, depending on source). In this time he fought basically every wrestler(and many non wrestlers) of note across the world. Reportedly over 5000 fights.

In these 50 years of bouts, Gama lost 0 times.

I'm going to repeat that- in a fighting career of over 50 years in two separate centuries that included him going country to country challenging famous fighters to face him, Gama lost 0 fights

What kind of behemoth of a man does this you ask?

A 5'7" behemoth, actually.

The stories of Gama are so numerous and ridiculous it's like a comic book, only the adventures appear as newspaper articles.

For instance, Gama got his start at age 10, when he entered a strongman tournament being held by a king. And placed in

the top 15.

Now, being 5'7", Gama starts off as someone who isn't taken seriously. All superheroes have obstacles to overcome.
While still a teenager he faces the legendary giant Raheem Bakhsh Sultaniwala for the subcontinental crown. Gama has no chance.

And then Gama is crowned champ

By 1910, Gama has beaten everyone in the subcontinent, and can't even find opponents anymore. So he sails to London .
Again, his height leads to mocking and not being taken seriously. To the point he wasn't getting into tournaments.
Gama decides to start issuing challenges.

Gama's swore to throw any three wrestlers of any weight class within 30 min. Nobody came forward. Promoters thought he was bluffing.
So Gama started issuing challenges to individual famous wrestlers saying he would beat them or "pay them the prize money and leave for home"

This time he found a challenger. The famous American wrestler, Benjamin "Doc" Roller agreed to take on this upstart.

The bout lasted 1 minute 40 seconds before Gama pinned Doc.

Doc, shocked, demanded a rematch. In the rematch Doc went all out and lasted 9 whole minutes.

The next to accept was the legendary Stanislaus Zbyszko. This time the stakes were the John Bull belt and £250.
On 10 Sept 1910 Gama & Zybysko faced off in what became a 2 hr 36 min match.
At the 1 min mark Zybysko was taken down. He remained there for the next 2 hrs 35 min.

A rematch was fixed for Sep 17.

On the appointed day of the rematch, the legendary Stanislaus Zybysko, terror of the ring, feared by so many, no-showed rather than face Gama.

Gama was now a Big Deal. He fought Roller again, and threw him 13 times in 15 minutes.

Now, for a wholly different reason, Gama was now starting to run into his old problem again. Nobody wanted to fight him. At one point he offered to fight 20 men in a row, nobody agreed.

Gama had discovered, as Mike Tyson would almost a century later, that when you are a professional fighter that other professional fighters are physically terrified of it can be both a blessing and a curse.

Finally, nothing left to prove, Gama left the West to return home.

While he sails, it's worth taking a moment to ask- what made him so great?

Well, for one, he was ridiculously strong. Superhero strong. On one ocassion he lifted a 1200 kg stone in a feat so famous

the STONE is in a museum

https://t.co/mU2tRFWtsJ

And then there was his regimen

Gama used to do five thousand squats and three thousand pushups everyday. Part of his training regimen was later adopted by Bruce Lee.

His daily diet? It included 10 liters of milk, six desi chickens, & a pound and a half of crushed almond paste made into a tonic drink.

Anyway, Gama gets back and after another famous series of bouts against his old adversary, keeps going all the way until the 1950s or so, though it gets harder and harder to find people willing to fight him.Except one special challenger . Zybysko.

Yes, Stanislaus is back.

42. The answer to Life, the Universe and Everything, well at least according to Douglas Adams.

It is also how many seconds Zybysko lasted. After this Gama found it increasingly hard to find opponents. So he turned his attention to one closer to home.

The British Empire

Gama now began campaigning for things like free rail travel for poor Indians. He challenged the British govt of India that he would stop a moving train with his bare hands if they'd make rail travel free on a 11 km stretch.

The govt refused.

Fast forward to 1947. The British are leaving, Partition is happening. Religious riots and murder mobs all over the country. Both countries.
Now, Gama was a muslim, living in Lahore, in what was now Pakistan. Seeing what was happening, he vowed to help the minority Hindus nearby

So Gama, now an old man, took a few wrestlers from his school and went to a Hindu neighbourhood, even as an armed mob descended on it.

Gama placed himself before the mob.

This is where things went from scary to legendary

The mob asks Gama to move. Gama points out he was about to ask them the same thing. The mob asks if he thinks he can fight them all. Gama asks if they think they can all fight him.

There is an impasse for a moment. And then it happened

A leader comes at Gama. Gama slaps him.

Depending on which account you believe, this either:
a) broke his jaw
b) knocked him unconscious
c) killed him outright

All accounts agree he went flying. Gama smiled at the mob and asked who was next.

Then the mob fled. Yes, I know.

So if you're wondering what sort of man gets a Google Doodle for his birthday 144 years after the fact just for being a WRESTLER, well now you know.

This sort of man. Superman.

And his name is Gama.