



MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS

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MOMAI KOTA GARH

Encroachment threatens existence of historic Momai Kota Garh

SIVASISH THAKUR

GUWAHATI, Jan 1: A celebrated rampart, which is inalienably linked to the Assamese identity, is decaying for want of attention from the State government. The government's inertia is as shocking as it is ironic, given that it recently observed with much fanfare the 400th birth anniversary of legendary Ahom General Lachit Borphukan whose patriotism and valour is writ large on the rampart known as Momai Kota Garh.

Located mostly on the south bank of the Brahmapu-



tra stretching from Deepor Beel to the river along the Gauhati University's western boundary, the rampart has over the years suffered widespread encroachment

and degradation, with the result that only a small portion lies intact today. This stretch can be seen along the GU bypass of the national highway.

According to historians, the south bank rampart was part of a much larger fortification that was erected on both north and south banks of the Brahmaputra to resist

the invading Mughal army led by Raja Ram Singh. The Ahoms led by Lachit Borphukan handed the Mughals a crushing defeat in Battle of Saraighat which was fought on the waters of the Brahmaputra in 1671 and thwarted their expansionist designs in this part of today's India.

Incidentally, the land of the existing portion of the rampart belongs to Gauhati University but neither the GU authorities nor the government seems much perturbed over the ongoing encroachment.

» SEE PAGE 2

CONTEXT

- The **Momai Kota Garh**, a rampart integral to **Assamese identity** and linked to the **legendary Ahom General Lachit Borphukan**, is deteriorating due to lack of state government attention.



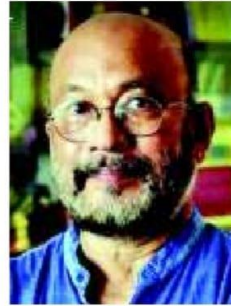
ABOUT

- **Historical Significance:** Momai Kota Garh, a historic rampart in Assam, is associated with the 1671 Battle of Saraighat, where General Lachit Borphukan led Assamese forces to victory over the Mughals.
- **Current Condition:** The rampart, extending from Deepor Beel to the Brahmaputra river is in a state of neglect and degradation, with significant encroachment issues.

- **Government Response:** Despite its **cultural** and **historical importance**, there has been limited action from the government to protect and **restore Momai Kota Garh**.

PRANAB BARUA AWARD FOR 2023

Champak Barbara chosen for Pranab Barua Award



STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 31: Eminent artist Champak Barbara has been chosen for the Pranab Barua Award-2023.

The award, instituted in the memory of the late Pranab Barua, a distinguished artist, recognizes the lifetime achievements of artists and sculptors from across the Northeast.

The award consists of a memento, a citation and Rs 25,000.

Barbara – who also had a long stint with The Assam Tribune Group of Publications from where he retired from service – is among the

most well-known artists of the region. Barbara has been able to carve a niche for himself in the world of art despite not having any formal education in the sphere.

Borbora whose art exhibitions have earned both critical and popular acclaim has been associated with a number of newspapers and magazines such as *The Assam Tribune*, *Dainik Asam*, *Asam Bani*, *Dainik Janambhumi*, *The Sentinel*, *News Star*, *Bishmoy*, *Sutradhar*, *Natun Dainik*, *Purbanchal Prahari*, and *Agradoot*.

His association with The Assam Tribune group was for 25 years during which he was able to earn accolades both as an artist and as a cartoonist.

Eminent artists including Sobha Brahma, Benu Misra, Neel Pawan Baruah, Adya Sarma, Biren Singha, Noni Borpuzari, Pulak Gogoi, Jiten Hazarika, Janak Jhankar Narzary, Kushakanta Deva Goswami, Rabiram Brahma and Trailakya Dutta were previous recipients of the award.

CONTEXT

- **Champak Barbara**, an eminent artist from the Northeast, has been awarded the **prestigious Pranab Barua Award** for 2023.



PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

- This award is instituted in **memory** of the **late Pranab Barua**, a distinguished artist.
- It aims to recognize and honor the **lifetime achievements** of **artists** and **sculptors** from the **Northeast**.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLICATIONS

- Barbara has been associated with multiple newspapers and magazines, including The **Assam Tribune**, **Dainik Asam**, **Asam Bani**, Dainik Janambhumi, The Sentinel, News Star, Bishmoy, Sutradhar, Natun Dainik, Purbanchal Prahari, and Agradoot.

DESERT CYCLONE



CONTEXT

- The UAE Land Forces contingent comprising 45 personnel arrived in India to participate in the **1st edition** of the **India - UAE Joint Military Exercise 'DESERT CYCLONE'**.
- The Exercise is scheduled to be conducted in Mahajan, **Rajasthan** from 2nd to 15th January 2024.



AIM OF THE EXERCISE

- The exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability in sub-conventional operations in desert and semi-desert terrains, signifying the strengthening of bonds of friendship and trust between the two countries.



INDIA-UAE RELATIONS

- India has recently made its **first-ever rupee payment** for the purchase of **crude oil** from the **United Arab Emirates** (UAE).
- Indian Oil Corp (IOC) made a payment to Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) in Indian rupees, following an agreement between the two countries during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the UAE.



- This transaction is significant as it allows **India** to **cut transaction costs** by **eliminating dollar conversions** and boosts its efforts to **settle bilateral trade** in **rupees** instead of **dollars**.
- The **bilateral trade** between India and the UAE was \$84.5 billion in 2022/23, and India is keen to push similar **local currency arrangements** with other countries to **boost exports** amid slowing global trade.

TRIBUTES TO SAVITRIBAI PHULE AND RANI VELU NACHIYAR

 **Narendra Modi** 
@narendramodi · [Follow](#) 

Tributes to Savitribai Phule and Rani Velu Nachiyar on their Jayanti. Both of them inspired society with their compassion and courage. Their contribution towards our nation is invaluable. Here is how we paid tributes to them during the recent #MannKiBaat.


सावित्रीबाई फुले एवं
रानी वेलु नाचियार
के व्यक्तित्व
प्रकाश स्तम्भ
की तरह हैं

Watch on X
मन्न की बात
31 दिसंबर 2023

7:50 AM · Jan 3, 2024 

CONTEXT

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid tributes to **Savitribai Phule** and **Rani Velu Nachiyar** on their Jayanti.
- He further said that both inspired society with their compassion and courage and their contribution towards our nation is invaluable.

SAVITRIBAI PHULE

- **Savitribai Phule** was a **prominent figure** in Indian history, known for her contributions to **education** and **social reform**.
- She was **one** of the **first female teachers** in **India** and a pioneer of women's rights.
- Born on January 3, 1831, in the state of Maharashtra, she played a vital role in promoting education for girls and in **addressing gender** and **caste discrimination**.



CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDIAN SOCIETY

- **Pioneering women's education:**
 - She founded the **first school** for **girls** in **Pune** in 1848, breaking social norms and paving the way for women's education in India.
 - She went on to establish 17 more schools for girls.

Indian social reformer and poet **Savitribai Jyotirao Phule** was born on Jan 3, 1831

Empowered Woman


9 years old when she was **married** to 13-year-old Jyotirao Phule in 1840

The couple founded the first women's school at Bhide Wadai in Pune in 1848

They also opened a care center called '**Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha**' for pregnant rape victims

Two books of her poems were published posthumously, **Kavya Phule** (1934) and **Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar** (1982)

The University of Pune was renamed as **Savitribai Phule Pune University** last year in her honour



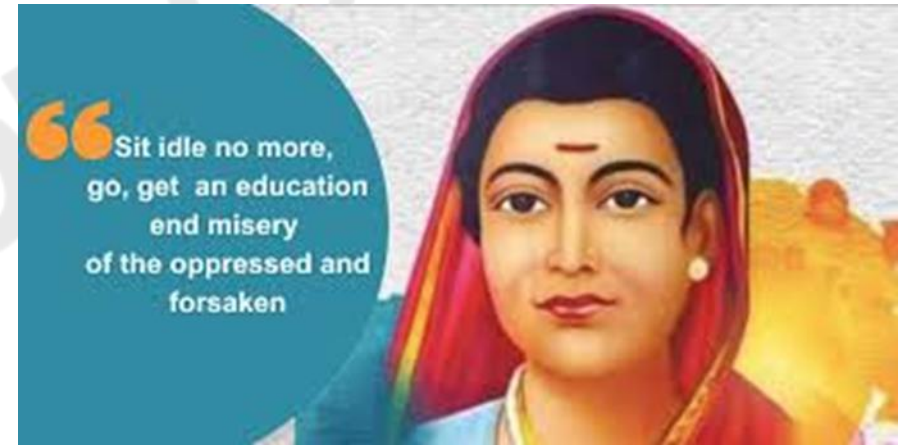
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➤ **Fighting against caste discrimination:**

- Along with her husband, **Jyotirao Phule**, **Savitribai Phule** worked to **abolish discrimination** and unfair treatment of people on the basis of **caste** and **gender**.
- They established institutions and trusts that aided women's education and empowerment.

➤ **Poetic contributions:**

- Savitribai Phule was also a poet and writer, contributing significantly to Marathi literature.
- She wrote **powerful poems** that **highlighted** the **issues** of **gender** and **caste discrimination**.



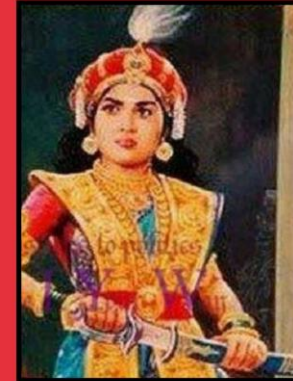
RANI VELU NACHIYAR

- Rani Velu Nachiyar was the **first queen** to **fight** against the **British colonial power** in India.
- She was born in 1730 in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu, India and was **trained** in many **methods** of **combat**, including war match weapons usage, martial arts like Valari, Silambam, horse riding, and archery.
- She was a scholar in many languages and was proficient in languages like French, English, and Urdu.



IMPACT OF RANI VELU NACHIYAR'S REIGN ON THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

- Rani Velu Nachiyar's reign had a significant impact on the Indian independence movement.
- She was the first queen to fight against the British colonial power in India, challenging the mighty British Empire.



VELU NACHIYAR

**THE TAMIL QUEEN WHO
FOUGHT AWAY THE BRITISH**

#INDIANWOMENINHISTORY

- Historians have noted that her **revolt** against the **English empire** occurred **85 years** before the more **well-known Rani of Jhansi's** challenge to the colonial power.
- Her **courageous resistance** and military efforts against the British, along with her alliance with other leaders such as Gopala Nayaker and **Hyder Ali**, marked her as a pivotal figure in the **early opposition** to **British rule**.

By the Officers,
For the Officers

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