

Rajmata Jijau



Jijabai was born on 12 January 1598 and a daughter of Lakhoji Jadhav in present-day Buldhana district of Maharashtra State. she was wed at an early age to Shahaji Bhosale, a nobleman and military commander under the Adil Shahi sultans of Bijapur in present-day Karnataka.

She wholeheartedly supported her husband's cause. Shahaji had tried to establish a Maratha state on the ruins of the erstwhile Nizamshahi sultanate. However he was defeated by the combined forces of the Mughals and Adilshahi. Shahaji became a sardar in Adilshaha's army. He settled in Karnataka and got married again. As per the treaty he was forced to move south. In order to continue the struggle, he deputed her as queen regent.

The elder son Sambhaji remained with their father. Shivaji left Bangalore along with his mother, a council of ministers and chosen military commanders. When they arrived in Pune it was full of jungles and wild beasts. She encouraged cultivators to settle. She renovated the kasaba ganapati temple. A Red sandstone palace of moderate size known as Lal mahal was also built. She has given a number of decisions in legal and administrative matter known as majhars.

Jijabai was a very pious and intelligent person with great vision for independent Hindu kingdom. She inspired Shivaji by telling stories from Ramayan , Mahabharat. Inspired by her, Shivaji took Oath of Independence (SWARAJYA) in fort temple of lord Raireswar in 1645 when he was 17. In Shivaji,s impeccable , spotless character and courage Jijabai,s contribution is enormous.

Jijabai's elder son Sambhaji was killed while on a military expedition in Karnataka by Afzal Khan. When Shahaji died, Jijabai tried to commit sati - committing suicide by burning oneself in the husband's pyre, but Shivaji stopped her from doing so by his request. Jijabai is widely credited with raising Shivaji in a manner that led to his future greatness. She died soon after coronation of Shivaji.