

Mangal Pandey, the harbinger of revolution

Mangal Pandey was a young Brahmin soldier in the 34th battalion. He was a member of the revolutionary party. It was decided by the British officers that the 19th battalion was to have a trial run of the newly acquired cartridges, that had the coating of cows' / pigs' fat, at Barakpur near Kolkata. Before inserting the cartridges in the guns, the casing had to be removed with one's teeth and thus the fat would have to come in contact with the soldier's mouth. Therefore, the soldiers not only refused to use those cartridges but they revolted against such an experiment.

On that day, the British officers did not react as they were outnumbered but they decided to call in for reinforcements and have British soldiers from Burma (Mynamar) come in and disarm the soldiers of that battalion, humiliate them and throw them out. The above plan was to be put into effect in Barakpur. Mangal Pandey was enraged at the idea of the humiliation of his brethren. Mangal Pandey was a young man who revered his Dharma more than his own life. He was virtuous and his bearing and appearance was radiant. An electrifying desire for freedom was invoked within him and it surged through his veins. His very sword seemed to become impatient to be released from its sheath. How can the sword of 'Kshatraveers' remain in its sheath when faced with gross injustice?

The leap into the parade ground

A plan was made by Shrimant Nanasahab Peshave to start a revolutionary war against the British regime at various places on 31st May. But Mangal Pandey could not bear the idea of the utter humiliation that his own people from the 19th battalion would be put through. He thought that on that very day, his battalion should revolt and he loaded his gun. The day was Sunday, 29th March 1857. He leapt into the parade ground and started inspiring the Indian soldiers to fight against the injustice. He appealed to them to wake up and attack. He said to the soldiers, "Now do not back off O brothers, attack! Remember your pledge to Dharma. Come on, let's destroy the enemy for our freedom !!"

Sargent Major Hudson ordered to catch hold of him but not a single soldier moved. In fact, Hudson was hit with a bullet fired by Mangal Pandey. On seeing this, Lieutenant Baugh came towards Pandey riding on his horse but the bullet coming out of Mangal Pandey's gun went through the horse and the horse collapsed along with the Lieutenant. Before Mangal Pandey could re-load his gun, Baugh took out



his gun but Mangal Pandey was not scared. He took out his sword. Baugh fired at him but Mangal Pandey dodged and overpowered Baugh with his sword. Hudson and Baugh ran away towards their home.

In the meantime, a soldier named Shaikh Paltu went towards Mangal Pandey. Mangal Pandey thought that he must have been coming to help since he belonged to the same battalion; but instead he caught hold of Pandey from behind. Pandey man-

aged to shake him off when the Indian soldiers started pelting stones and throwing boots at Shaikh. He also ran away fearing for his life.

In a short while, Colonel Wheeler reached there and he ordered the soldiers to catch Pandey. The soldiers however, firmly told the Colonel that they would not touch the virtuous Brahmin. Watchful of the stance taken by the soldiers and seeing the blood of the British officers, the Colonel too ran towards his bungalow. Afterwards, General Hyeres came with many European soldiers; but by that time, it was noon and Mangal Pandey was tired. As he realized that he would now be caught by the British, he turned the gun towards his chest and fired. He collapsed on the ground and lost consciousness; only after which the British could catch him. Injured, Pandey was taken to the military hospital.

Within a week, he was tried in the Military Court. This radiant young 'Kshatraveer', who revered his Dharma more than his life, was asked to give the names of others who were a part of his plan; but Mangal Pandey did not disclose a single name. He was sentenced to death. This harbinger of revolution who sacrificed his life to prevent the insult of his brethren, created so much of admiration among the people that it became difficult to get a hangman for his execution in the whole of Barakpur. Finally 4 persons from Kolkata were brought in for the dirty job.

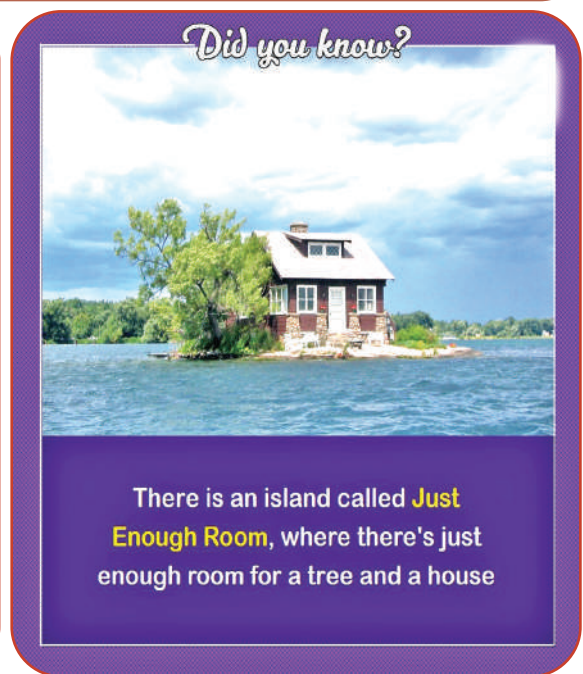
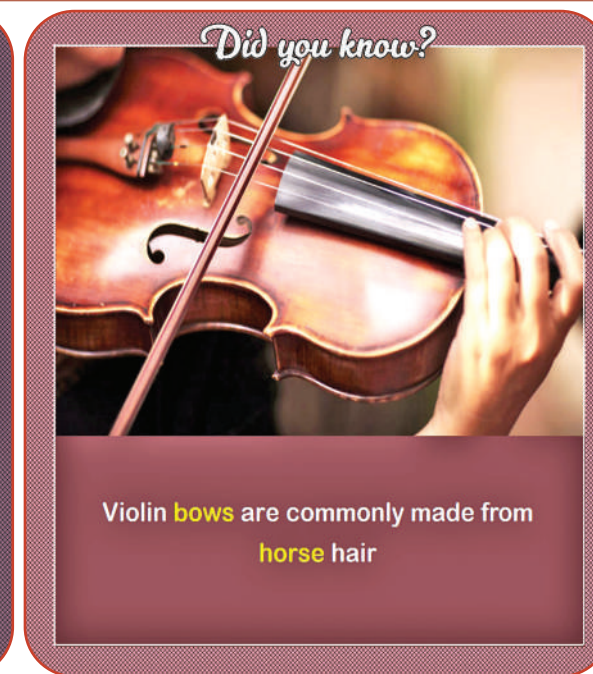
The leader of the contingent of which Mangal Pandey was a soldier, was killed by the British. The battalions 19 and 34 were disarmed and withdrawn. This, however, had a reverse effect on the soldiers; instead of getting scared, hundreds of soldiers tore their uniforms that were a sign of bondage and they took a dip in the holy Ganges for cleansing them off their sin of carrying the chains of bondage.

Offering of blood to the Sun of Freedom !

On 8th April, Mangal Pandey was taken to the gallows with soldiers keeping a vigil on him. He climbed the gallows fearlessly and once again declared that he would not disclose any name when the scaffolding was removed from under his feet to hang him. Thus, Mangal Pandey became the first revolutionary to offer his blood at the feet of his motherland in the battle of 1857. The impact of his name was so great that the British started calling all soldiers in this freedom battle by the name of 'Pandey'.

Many patriots were inspired by his sacrifice for his country and Dharma to sacrifice their own lives for the freedom of their countrymen.

THE FACT CORNER



BRAIN TEASERS

- Which word does NOT belong with the others?
A. parsley B. basil
C. dill D. mayonnaise
 - Which word does NOT belong with the others?
A. tulip B. rose
C. bud D. daisy
 - Which word does NOT belong with the others?
A. guitar B. flute
C. violin D. cello
 - Which word does NOT belong with the others?
A. heading B. body
C. letter D. closing
 - Which word does NOT belong with the others?
A. tape B. twine
C. cord D. yarn
 - Odometer is to mileage as compass is to
A. speed B. hiking
C. needle D. direction
 - Marathon is to race as hibernation is to
A. winter B. bear
C. dream D. sleep
- SOLUTION:**
1. Mayonnaise.
 2. Bud.
 3. Flute
 4. Letter
 5. Tape
 6. direction
 7. sleep

English Proverbs and Meanings

- You are never too old to learn.**
You can always learn something new, no matter how old you are.
- You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.**
You can offer somebody an opportunity to do something but you can't force them to do it.
- You can't teach an old dog new tricks.**
A person who is used to doing things a certain way cannot change.
- Young idler, an old beggar.**
If you don't work, you won't have any money when you're old.
- What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve over.**
If a person doesn't know about something, it cannot hurt them.
- Who makes himself a sheep will be eaten by the wolves.**
Possible interpretation: an easily influenced person can be misled.
- Two wrongs don't make a right.**
It is wrong to harm someone because they have harmed you.

Cinnamon Shortbread Bars



Ingredients:
3/4 cup butter; 3/4 cup powdered sugar
1 1/2 cup flour; 1 tsp cinnamon powder
Nutmella or peanut butter

Method
In a food processor or mixie add butter and sugar. Cream them together till the butter is light.
Note: It is essential for the butter to be at room temperature. Add the cinnamon and give it a whiz. Now add the flour gradually and keep mixing it at intervals. Do not add all the flour at once.
Once the dough is ready, scrape it all out in a plate with your hands press it together to make the dough compact. In a baking dish lay a butter paper and grease it with a drop of oil. Place the dough and spread it with a wooden spatula, equally on all sides. Now cut the dough with a knife: 3 times vertically.
With a fork make marks on the bars twice or thrice. Bake at 170-180 degrees C for 20 minutes or till the short bread is golden brown. Take out of the oven, let it cool completely. Cut the shortbread over the lines again, separate to make individual bars. Spread some nutella or peanut butter if you want.

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Oat Bran Muffins



Ingredients:
1/2 cup dark brown sugar
1 1/2 cups oat bran
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup chilled applesauce
4 tablespoons vegetable oil

Method
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (205 degrees C). Line or grease 12 muffin cups.
Blend together brown sugar, oat bran, flour, baking powder, soda, and salt. Add chilled applesauce, and vegetable oil. Mix until well-blended. Spoon batter into muffin cups. Let stand 10 minutes.
Bake at 400 degrees F (205 degrees C) for 15 minutes or until golden brown.
TIP: Add 1 cup plumped raisins, with a little bit of raisin water (approximately 2 tablespoons). Or, before baking, sprinkle mixture of sugar and cinnamon over the tops of the muffins.