

Rani Chennamma

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Why in news?

The Kittur Rani Chennamma Utsav, a 3 days festival to honor the bravery of Rani Chennamma, began in Kittur, Karnataka recently.

- **Birth** - She was born to a **Lingayat family** on October 23, 1778 in Kagati, Belagavi district of Karnataka.
- She was trained from a young age in horse riding, sword fighting, and military strategy.
- She was married off to **Raja Mallasarja** of Kittur.
- **Ascension to throne** - Her husband was died in 1816, her young son, **Shivalingarudra**, ascended the throne.
- In 1924, Shivalingarudra died, leaving Kittur with a vacant throne.
- Then, she adopted **Shivalingappa** and declared him as the heir to the throne, and took on responsibilities as a queen-regent.
- **Clash with British** - The British rejected Shivalingappa as the legitimate heir and subsequently introduced **Doctrine of Lapse**.
- Under the doctrine, any princely state without a natural heir would collapse and would be annexed by the British.
- **Kittur revolt, 1824** -
 - With Chennamma refusing to surrender to British, **John Thackery**, the British official at Dharwad, launched an attack on Kittur in October 1824.
 - In this first battle British forces lost heavily, whereas, this victory was short-lived.
 - On December 3, 1824, the British army, under **Col Deacon**, again attacked the Kittur Fort and captured it and she was taken hostage.
 - She would remain in prison till **1829** and died of ill health at **Bailhongal Fort**, Karnataka in 21st February 1829.
- She was the **1st Indian ruler** to lead an armed rebellion against the British East India Company.

- **Legacy** - She has long been featured in folklore and lavanis (folk theatre), which project her as a guardian and a protector and continues to inspire generations of Indian women to stand up for justice and equality.

Reference

1. [Indian Express | Kittur Rani Chennamma Utsav](#)
2. [PIB | Rani Chennamma](#)

