

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 <u>Doctrine of Lapse</u>.
- 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 1^{st} 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. <u>Indian Express | Kittur Rani Chennamma Utsav</u>
- 2. PIB | Rani Chennamma

