Chennamma Freedom Park at Kittur – ₹40 crore in next Budget, announces Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar

History, Water, States, Environment & Science · 28 October 2026 · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/10/28



News

At the valedictory of 'Chennammana Kittur Utsav-2026' at Kittur, Belagavi district, on Sunday 25 Oct 2026, Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar announced a 'Chennamma Freedom Park' at Kittur. A government order will be issued at once and ₹40 crore allocated in the next State Budget. The park will present Kittur's history and Rani Chennamma's resistance to British rule through visual displays. He also said the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) will be renamed the 'Kittur Rani Chennamma Road Transport Corporation'. The park was requested by Kittur MLA Babasaheb Patil.

Key facts

Announcement	25 Oct 2026 – Kittur Utsav valedictory, Kittur (Belagavi district)
Announced by	CM D.K. Shivakumar – Karnataka's 25th CM (sworn in 3 June 2026 by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot)
Funding	₹40 crore in next Budget; GO immediately
Renaming	NWKRTC (HQ Hubballi) → Kittur Rani Chennamma RTC
Other projects	₹520-crore Channavrushabhendra irrigation project; ~₹1,000 crore works incl. 100-bed hospital

Kittur war	October 1824 – British collector Thackeray killed

Background

- History: Rani Chennamma was born on 14 Nov 1778 at Kakati in present-day Belagavi district and married Raja Mallasarja, Desai of Kittur. After her husband and son died, she adopted Shivalingappa in 1824. The East India Company refused to accept the adoption and moved to take Kittur. In the first round of war in October 1824, collector and political agent St John Thackeray was killed (largely by her lieutenant Amatur Balappa).
- Captured in the second round, Chennamma was imprisoned at Bailhongal fort and died there on 21 Feb 1829. Her lieutenant Sangolli Rayanna continued a guerrilla war until he was caught and hanged. The refusal to recognise the adoption is seen as a precursor to Lord Dalhousie's 'Doctrine of Lapse' (applied from 1848).
- Memorials: her statue in the Parliament complex was unveiled on 11 Sept 2007 by Pratibha Patil, India's first woman President; a postage stamp was issued on 23 Oct 1977; Coast Guard ship 'Kittur Chennamma' (1983–2011). A ₹200 commemorative coin marked 200 years of the Kittur victory in October 2025.
- Geography: Belagavi (Belgaum) is Karnataka's north-western district bordering Maharashtra and Goa. The 'Suvarna Vidhana Soudha', where the Karnataka Legislature holds its winter session, is in Belagavi.

Tamil Nadu link: in 1780 – 44 years before Chennamma's 1824 war – Rani Velu Nachiyar of Sivaganga fought the British and regained her kingdom; her woman commander Kuyili is remembered for setting the British ammunition store on fire. Velu Nachiyar and Chennamma are pioneers among South India's women freedom fighters.

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