

# Heroic Women in The Freedom Struggle in The History of Karnataka

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## ABSTRACT:

“Women's Capacity in Kannada Nadu”

- Women from Kannada Nadu have demonstrated their capacity.
- They have fought against foreign attacks, demonstrating resilience and determination.

Many women from Kannada are seen in it. Prominent among them are 'Ullalada Rani Abbakka', 'Kittur Chennamma', 'Belavadi Mallamma', 'Keladiya Chennamma', ' etc. All of them have fought for freedom in Karnataka, to save their land and culture till their last breath. Each of them had the same story or purpose. It is the protection of the citizens, the protection of the state, and from there the struggle for the freedom of the country. Women fought bravely and sacrificed their lives for the country as no one was less. All of them are role models for the entire women community. In this background, let us briefly know the achievements of these heroines.

## KEYWORDS:

Ullalada Rani Abbakka, Kittur Chennamma, Belavadi Mallamma, Keladiya Chennamma.

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**ABBAKKA DEVI** was the quiet adventurer queen of the Portuguese – she was called “Abhaya Rani or Fearless Queen”. She is said to have been a fighter who gave terror to the Portuguese, mainly in India. His capital was Puttuz, while his capital was the port town of Ullala (Mangalore). Rani Abbakadevi was one of the first Indian women to fight against the colonialists and is historically regarded as “India's first woman freedom

fighter”. Abakka ruled a kingdom consisting mainly of Hindus and Muslims. She was a Jain and her ruling class consisted of Hindus and Muslims. Hence her army was unique in diversity. The ‘heroic Muslim fishermen’ were her most powerful asset. Because they had gained experience by doing naval battles with the Portuguese.

A valiant woman belonging to the “Chauta” clan who ruled the “Moodubidere” region, a city of temples along the coast of Karnataka. A brave woman who ruled Tulunad in the latter half of the 16th century. Abbakka, who was clever as a child, was encouraged by her father and father-in-law, who taught her archery, horse riding, swordsmanship, etc. Also, she learns war tactics and military skills from her father-in-law. Abbakkani was trained to be a good ruler from a very young age. She was taught about swordsmanship, archery, military strategies, diplomacy and other things needed to make her a successful king, how to fight and fight against enemies. Ulla was a prosperous port then. After the Portuguese conquered Goa, their evil eye naturally fell on the nearby ‘Ullada’. His four years of continuous attempts to conquer Ullala and neighboring towns failed due to Abbakka.

She valiantly fought and thwarted every attack of the enemy. She attacked the forts captured by the Portuguese, their forts and their naval base and defeated them. As the wars intensified, Abbakka allied with the ‘Jam Morin’ of Calicut and other Muslim rulers south of Tulunad. Amidst all this, the Portuguese General ‘Joao Pixoto’ captured Ullalla with his navy. Angered by this, Abbacca gathered 200 of his best warriors and attacked them that night, killing ‘Joao Pixoto’ and his 70 soldiers. She killed as a result; she regained her territory. Deciding to expel the foreigners from her country in the coming days, she joined her 500 Muslim supporters and succeeded in killing the Portuguese ‘Admiral Macarena’s’. Finally, she got back the Mangalore fort from the Portuguese.

Abbakka, who fought in this way, perhaps in the history of Karnataka coast, there is no other brave woman who has shown such bravery. Abbakkadevi was admired not only in Tulunad but all over Kannada for subduing the Portuguese Gees. Because of this Abbacca’s fame and respect

increased. Rani Abbakkadevi, who fought against the Portuguese throughout her life, died fighting in 1570.

### **CHENNAMMAJI, THE HEROIC WOMAN OF KELADI:**

Chennammaji is the most prominent female warrior found in the Keladi family. She ruled the lower kingdom in AD. A heroic woman who ruled from 1671 to 1697. She was passionately patriotic and religious. Her husband (Somashakaranayaka) initially acts efficiently but later falls prey to mischief. Due to this, several problems started coming together in the state. Two main problems had to be faced. It is 1) To protect the kingdom from enemies who would kidnap the kingdom after the death of her husband. 2) The borders of the state were to protect the state from enemies like Sultan of Bijapur. As she was childless, internal opponents of the Nayak family did not agree with her rule

She gave refuge in her kingdom to Maha Rajaram, the second son of Shivaji, who had gone into exile after Aurangzeb's defeat. Many Hindu kings did not give shelter to Aurangzeb. But Chennammaji gives shelter without fearing anything. This is an example of bravery shown by the brave women of Kannada. Here she not only shows mother's love but also immense courage. Finally had to fight with the Mughals. Then she prepares her little kingdom for war and fights. Thus, a fierce battle takes place between the Mughal army and her. She fights till the end without fearing anything. She fought like Durga in this war and killed the enemies. She won the war as a result of fighting bravely in this war.

After defeating Aurangzeb in this way, her fame spread far and wide. In this way she became the protector of the Maratha state. Next, she initiated the protection of Hinduism against the Mughals like the Marathas. Saneka built agraharas during her reign. She built "Chennammagrahara" in her name. In addition to this Jangama built monasteries. She also allowed Christians to build churches. Chennamma's greatness is that she ruled the state with 25-year policy and treated the citizens as her own children. Thus, she is foremost among the heroic women of Kannada. She spent her last days in Gokarna and died there.

**BELAVADI MALLAMMA:** Belavadi Mallamma was a heroic

queen from Bailahongala in Belagavi district of Karnataka. She was the first woman to organize a 'Women's Army' to fight against the Marathas. Around the 17th century, after the death of her husband, she defended her kingdom against the attacks of the Maratha warlord Raghunath Nedkar. Belavadi Mallamma is also credited with being the first queen in Indian history to build and train a women's army in the 17th century.

Belavadi Mallamma Sode was the daughter of Raja 'Madhulinga Nayaka' and godmother of 'Raja Ishaprabhu'. Her other name is Savitribai. Her kingdom was very secure and impregnable. If she went to the battlefield, she would fight with Ranchandi. Once Shivaji's soldiers captured the cows of Belavadi Nadi. Then Mallamma rushes towards them with her army of women soldiers, fights and frees the cows. Usually, she fought the enemy forces gallantly on horseback.

Once there was a war between Shivaji's army and Mallamma's army. Adventurer Mallamma leads the army and becomes a lion's dream for the enemy force. She fell down in battle when Shivaji's soldiers cut off the leg of the horse she was riding. However, she gets up undeterred and continues her struggle. Finally, Shivaji's soldiers arrested her and took her to Shivaji. Then Shivaji killed her

**Kittur Rani Channamma (1778-1829):** The history of Kittur dates back to AD. It starts from 1586. Originally, two brothers named Malla, who came from Bede family in the highlands, joined the Adilshahi army of Bijapur and worked. He is said to have founded the kingdom of Kittoor. Next, after the downfall of the Sultans, the Desais of Kittur began to rule. Kittur Rani Chennamma is another name for independence, love and self-respect. Chennamma is among the brave women of the Kannada nation and belongs to the top ranks of independence and self-respect. She was born on 23-10-1778 at "Kakati", about 6 km north of Belgaum. Father 'Desai Dulappa Gowda of Kakatiya'. Mother 'Padmavati'. Younger wife of Mallasarja (the first was Rudramma), one of the famous Desais of Kittur. The courage, bravery and bravery shown there against the large army of the British for the defense of the independence of his small state have made Chennamma the pinnacle of fame today. Today Kittur is very famous because of Chen-

namma.

The people of this family had to fight against enemies from four directions. A family of small peasants who fought for their survival between the British, the Mughals, the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the Hyderabad of Mysore. Shivalingarudrasarja used to give many kinds of gifts to the British and give them all the help and cooperation. In this background, the British gave a charter to rule Kittur as a dynasty.

But such a wonderful friendship, the British gave a charter to Shivalingarudra Sarjani on the agreement of paying a tribute of Rs 1,70,000 every year, but as time went on, the attitude of the British started to change and they started the process of devouring the kingdom of Kittur. He began to interfere in the affairs of his state. When the sick king took to his bed, she took over all the administrative affairs of the state. In the meantime, it was decided to adopt 'Sivalingappa', the son of Shivalinga Sarja Mastamaradi Gowda, as was customary in the East. He was adopted and crowned as 'Savaimalla Sarjana'. Within a few hours, on 11-09-1824, Shivalingarudra Sarja died.

After his death, Channamma took over the governance of the entire organization. Gurusiddappa, Himmatasingha, Sangollirayanna, Narasingha Rao, Guruputra Muntava who were loyal to her without losing heart even in such a difficult situation as her helper or support and worked hard for the prosperity of the state. This was strongly opposed by the then British collector "Thackeray". He implements the law of "adopted children have no right (adopted sons have no state)" which existed throughout the country, even in Kittur institution. A letter was written to Thackeray on 10-7-1824 regarding the adoption of Shivalingappa. Shivalingarudra's Arogya Samadha forgot to send the letter. Finally, the same letter was delivered by Sardar Mallappashetty and Mallappa on 12-09-1824.

Thackeray noticed the difference in date in this letter and visited Kittur himself on 13-09-184 to know the truth about this letter. After examining this, Thackeray speculated that the Kittur family might have done this to save the Kittur kingdom. This one reason was enough for him to start a fight with Kittur. Thackeray made a false report about the adoption to

“Chaplin” who was the Commissioner in the Deccan and “Elphinstone” who was the Governor in Bombay. The treasury was sealed until this report came.

He thus appoints his brothers Mallappashetti and Haveri Venkatarao to run the administration temporarily until further orders from the Company Government. But this is strongly opposed by Chennamma and others. Chennamma asks Brishar that you have nothing to do with the adoption issue. That’s when Thackeray, the Kenda Mandal, gets involved in Kittur’s internal affairs. Then the freedom-loving, self-respecting Chennamma preaches the mantra of unity to her subjects, “If we are united, we will live, if we are united, we will die.” She cheers.

Meanwhile, Chennamma initially writes to ‘Thackeray’, Monrovia, and even Chaplin for negotiations to avert a possible British attack on Kittoor. She sends it to her lawyers ‘Lingabhatta and Rachappa’ to the East India Company. In addition, she also wrote a letter seeking the help of Kolhapur and other neighboring states of her foresight. Knowing the background of this attack, Chennamma called her officers and Sardars and held a meeting to apprise them of the situation and ordered Kittur Saina to be fully prepared. This gave new vigor to the soldiers and the excited crowd picked up swords and proclaimed “Long Live Kittur” “Long live Rani Channamma”. At this time when Thackeray’s army attacked, Chennamma’s sine advanced with lightning speed and crushed the British army. She was supported by the surrounding camps and the army of the Maharaja of Kolhapur. He had a strong army of 7000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, 1000 camels, 50 elephants, and trained artillery.

The traitors Mallappa and Venkatarao first beheaded Thackeray and made him attack Kittur. As a result, Thackeray came to Kittoor on 21-10-1824. Then he ordered his army to attack on the third day i.e. 23rd. Accordingly his soldiers prepare to attack the fort. Similarly, Chennamma’s army stormed in with lightning speed and crushed the British army. Chennamma took the sword and led the horse, inspiring and cheering the soldiers. She imprisoned many British officers and soldiers. Thousands of Kittoor warriors attacked Thackeray’s army led by Sardar Gurusiddappa. The British

arrested 40 people. After this victory, Chennamma was again coronated on 27-10-1824 by enthronement of Shivlinga. On this day, the modern Karnataka government celebrates this victory festival under the name of “Kittur Utsav” every year.

Devastated by this defeat, ‘Chaplin’ this time gathered around 25,000 soldiers from Madras, Belgaum, Satara, Bombay, Mysore etc. and attacked Kittur under the command of “Colonel Dickon Son”. Parliament sought an alliance with the British to prevent a bloody war. The British promised to stop the war by releasing their captives. After finally achieving the task, he broke his promise and attacked Kittoor. A large British army could not face it. Also, some traitors helped the British. Mallappa and Kan-nur Veerappa are prominent among them.

Even so Chennamma continued her struggle against the British. But due to the strong British army, Sardar Gurusiddappa was captured on 4th December. On December 5, Chennamma is imprisoned along with her daughters-in-law Veeramma and Janaki. Finally, on December 12, Chennamma and Veeramma were called to Bailahongala and kept under arrest. Along with him, Sangolli Rayanna will also be arrested. During her imprisonment, Chennamma spent most of her time in worship and spiritual pursuits. Chennamma, who remained a prisoner here for about 4 years, died on 02-02-1829. Then in May 1830, adopted son Shivalingappa and 400 others migrated to the British. In July 1830, Veeramma died in prison. On 26 January 1831, Sangollirayanna was hanged at Nandagad.

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