

### PM LAUNCHES YEAR-LONG 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF LEGENDARY FREEDOM FIGHTER ALLURI SITARAMA RAJU

#### In News:

- PM Modi recently unveiled a 30-foot bronze statue of revolutionary freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju in Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh (AP).
- This was launched to kick off the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of Alluri Sitarama Raju.
- Noting its confluence with events such as the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav and the 100th anniversary of the **Rampa Rebellion**, the PM referred to AP as the land of warriors.
  - The state has produced great patriots such as Pingali Venkaiah, Kanneganti Hanumanthu, Kandukuri Veeresalingam and Uyyalavada Narasimha Reddy.

#### The great freedom fighters of Andhra Pradesh:

- **Alluri Sitharama Raju:**
  - He is believed to have been born in present-day Andhra Pradesh in 1897-98.
  - At a very young age, Raju channeled the discontent of the hill people in Ganjam, Visakhapatnam and Godavari into a highly effective guerrilla resistance against the British.
  - As the government sought to secure forest lands, colonial rule threatened the tribals' traditional podu (shifting) cultivation.
    - The Forest Act of 1882 prohibited the collection of minor forest products like roots and leaves and tribal people were forced to work for the colonial government.
  - While the tribals were exploited by muttadars (village headmen hired by the colonial government to extract rent), new laws and systems threatened their very way of life.
  - Strong anti-government sentiment, shared by muttadars (dissatisfied with the British curtailment of their powers), erupted into armed resistance - the Rampa or Manyam Rebellion - in August 1922.
    - Several hundred tribals led by Raju attacked several police stations in the Godavari agency.

- The rebellion, which coincided with Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement, lasted until May 1924, when Raju, the charismatic 'Manyam Veerudu' or Hero of the Jungle, was finally apprehended and executed.
- Raju praised Mahatma Gandhi, claimed to be inspired by the Non-Cooperation Movement, and encouraged people to wear khadi and abstain from alcohol.
- At the same time, he claimed that India could only be liberated through the use of force, not nonviolence.
- **Pingali Venkayya:**
  - Pingali Venkayya (2 August 1876 – 4 July 1963) was an Indian freedom fighter.
  - He served as a soldier in the British Army in South Africa during the Anglo Boer war in Africa and met the Mahatma during the war.
  - He was a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi and designed the National Flag (on which the Indian national flag was based).
- This flag was presented to Mahatma Gandhi during the latter's visit to Vijayawada city on 1 April 1921.
- **Kaneganti Hanumanthu:**
  - He was a freedom fighter who rebelled against British Rule.
  - Born in a part of Palnadu in the Guntur District, he was a local peasant of the region.
  - He played a vital role and led the Palnadu rebellion against the tax levied by the British.
  - He was famous for the Pullari satyagraha, against the draconian tax imposed by the British on peasants for grazing their cattle or gathering wood from the forests.
- **Kandukuri Veeresalingam (1848 - 1919):**
  - He was a social reformer and writer from the Madras Presidency, British India.
  - He is considered as the father of the Telugu Renaissance
  - He was one of the early social reformers who encouraged the education of women and the remarriage of widows.
  - He also fought against child marriage and the dowry system.
  - His novel Rajasekhara Charitramu is considered to be the **first** novel in Telugu literature.
  - He is often considered Raja Ram Mohan Roy of Andhra.

• **Uyyalawada**

**Narasimha**

**Reddy:**

- He was a descendant of a disposed polygar family, a powerful feudal class of chieftains who looked after administrative matters in villages across the south.
  - He led the first rebellion in Andhra Pradesh against British rule in 1847, where 5,000 Indian peasants rose up in revolt against the British East India Company in Nandyal district.
  - The revolt took thousands of Company soldiers to suppress, with Reddy's death bringing it to an end.
- 

## **HOTELS, RESTAURANTS BARRED FROM LEVYING SERVICE CHARGE BY DEFAULT**

### **In News:**

- With rising consumer complaints, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has barred hotels and restaurants from levying service charges automatically or by default on food bills.

### **Background:**

- Service charge is used by restaurants/hotels to pay the staff and workers and is not charged for the experience or food served to consumer.
- Consumer Organizations observed that levying service charge is patently arbitrary and constitutes an unfair as well as restrictive trade practice under the Consumer Protection Act.
- Recently, Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs had called a meeting with the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI).
  - It was regarding service charge levied by them on customers.
  - It said that the restaurants are collecting service charges from consumers by default, even though collection of any such charge is voluntary.

### **Consumer Protection Act, 2019:**

1986	VS	2019
No separate regulator.	<b>REGULATOR</b>	Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to be formed.
District: up to Rs. 20 Lac State: Rs. 20 Lac - Rs. 1 Cr National: above Rs. 20 Lac	<b>Pecuniary Jurisdiction</b>	District: up to Rs. 1 Cr State: Rs. 1 Cr - Rs. 10 Cr National: above Rs. 10 Cr
Case could be filed where the defendant resides or works for personal gain.	<b>Territorial Jurisdiction</b>	Case can be filed where the complainant resides or works for personal gain.
No provision. Consumer can approach the civil courts but not consumer courts.	<b>Product Liability</b>	Consumer can also claim compensation for harm caused by the product or service.
No provision.	<b>E-commerce</b>	All rules of direct selling extended to e-commerce.
No legal provision.	<b>Mediation cells</b>	Court can refer settlement through mediation.
Within 30 days, retaining the power to condone the delay.	<b>Appeal to State Commission</b>	Within 45 day, retaining the power to condone the delay.

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 replaced the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, and seeks to widen its scope in addressing consumer concerns.
- The new Act recognises offences such as providing false information regarding the quality or quantity of a good or service, and misleading advertisements.
- It also specifies action to be taken if goods and services are found “dangerous, hazardous or unsafe”.
- The Act came into force in July 2020 and it will empower consumers and help them in protecting their rights through its various notified rules and provisions.

### About Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA):

- The CCPA is a **statutory body** constituted under Section 10 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.
- **Mandate:** To protect the rights of the consumer by cracking down on unfair trade practices, and false and misleading advertisements that are detrimental to the interests of the public and consumers.
- Concerned Ministry: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

## **Powers & Functions of CCPA:**

- To recall goods or withdrawal of services that are “dangerous, hazardous or unsafe”;
- Pass an order for refund the prices of goods or services so recalled to purchasers of such goods or services;
- Discontinuation of practices which are unfair and prejudicial to consumer’s interest;
- Impose penalties on manufacturers/endorsers/publishers of misleading advertisements.

## **Service Charge**

- A service charge is a fee charged to customers for something specific.
  - g., a bank charging a fee for using an ATM that's not part of its network or a vendor charging a fee for making a payment with a credit card.
- It also may be called a customer service fee or maintenance fee.
- Restaurants and hotels generally levy a service charge anywhere between 5 to 15 per cent on the food bill.

## **Nature of Service Charge in Restaurants/Hotels:**

- While the GST is a mandatory component as per law, the service charge is supposed to be optional.
- It is the equivalent of what is known as gratuity around the world, or tip, in casual parlance.
- Most restaurants decide the service charge on their own, and print it at the bottom of the menu with an asterisk.

## **News Summary**

- The guidelines, issued by the CCPA, said there should not be any collection of service charges by any other name.
- Further, the service charge cannot be collected by adding it along with the food bill and levying GST on the total amount.

## **Complaint in case of violation:**

- If any consumer finds that a hotel or restaurant is levying a service charge in violation of the guidelines, he/she can request the concerned establishment to remove it from the bill amount.

- Consumers can also complain to the National Consumer Helpline (NCH), which works as an alternate dispute redressal mechanism at the pre-litigation level, by calling 1915 or through the NCH mobile app.
- They can also file complaints with the Consumer Commission. The complaint can be filed electronically through the **e-Daakhil portal** for its speedy and effective redressal.
- E-Daakhil is an online portal launched by the Indian the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) in 2020.
- It was launched for the facilitation of offline and online complaints relating to the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 by consumers.

## INDIA-RUSSIA DEFENCE COOPERATION

As the war in Ukraine stretches over four months with no end in sight, it has given rise to apprehensions on Russia's ability to adhere to timely deliveries of spares and hardware.

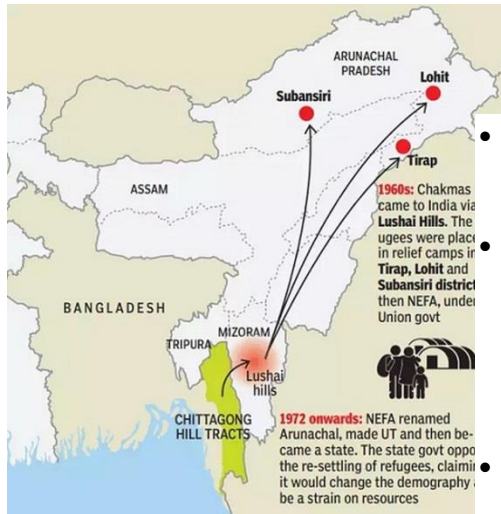


### Status of India-Russia defence cooperation

- The defence trade between India and Russia has crossed \$15 billion since 2018, in the backdrop of some big deals including the \$5.43 billion S-400 long range air defence systems.
- Other major contracts currently under implementation are construction of four additional stealth frigates in Russia and India, licensed production of the Mango Armor-piercing fin-stabilised discarding sabot (APFSDS) rounds for the T-90S tanks as also additional T-90S tanks, AK-203 assault rifles among others.
- However, there is some delay. For instance, the delivery of the second regiment of the S-400 is delayed by a few months as also the operationalisation of the agreement for the manufacture of 6.1 lakh AK-203 rifles at Korwa, Amethi in Uttar Pradesh.
- There are also several big ticket deals currently under negotiation but several of them have been deferred by the Defence Ministry as part of the review of all direct import deals.

## CHAKMA PEOPLE

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the Deputy Commissioner of Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district to submit an action-taken report (ATR) on a complaint alleging harassment and false prosecution of some Chakma villagers.



### About:

- The Chakma people are a tribal group from the eastern-most regions of the Indian subcontinent.
- They are the largest ethnic group in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region of southeastern Bangladesh, and the second-largest in Mizoram, India (Chakma Autonomous District).
- Other places in Northeast India also have significant Chakma populations. Around 60,000 Chakma people live in Arunachal Pradesh, India; a first generation migrated there in 1964 after the Kaptai Dam tragedy. Another 79,000 Chakmas live in Tripura, India, and 20,000-30,000 in Assam, India.