

LACHIT BORPHUKAN

Originally named as Lachit Deca, Lachit Borphukan, the fierce and invincible Ahom Commander, was born during the early 17th century at Betioni in the Golaghat district of modern Assam. His father, Momai Borbaruah was the 'Governor' of the kingdom and also 'Commander-in-chief' of Ahom army under King Pratap Singha during his reign starting from 1603 to 1639. Lachit received military training from early age and joined the Ahom King Jayadhvaj Singha (1648-1663) as a scarf-bearer. The post 'scarf-bearer, or 'Soladhara Baruah' considered as a part of the incumbent king's personal staff.

Battle of Saraighat

Lachit raised the army and preparations were completed by summer of 1667. His army successfully retook Guwahati from the Mughal forces. Emperor Aurangzeb after being informed of the defeat at Guwahati sent an expeditory force from Dhaka under Ram Singh. Due to the numerical and technological inferiority of the Ahom forces, Lachit resorted to guerrilla tactics which successfully withered away from the Mughal army.

Lachit Borphukan was victorious. The Mughals were forced to retreat from Guwahati. The Mughals were pursued to the Manas river, the Ahom kingdom's western boundary. The Borphukan instructed his men not to attack the retreating Army.

Lachit Borphukan would die in 1672. His remains lie in rest at Lachit Maidam constructed in the same year by King Udayaditya Singha at Hoolungapara 16 km from Jorhat.

This would not be the end of Mughal incursions into Ahom territory as the Mughals would take Guwahati in 1679, retaining it until 1682 when the Ahoms would permanently end the prolonged Ahom-Mughal conflict.

LEGACY OF LACHIT BORPHUKAN

On 24 Nov each year, Lachit Divas is celebrated statewide in Assam to commemorate the heroism of Lachit Borphukan and then victory of the victory of the Assamese army at the battle of Saraighat.

Lachit Divas is celebrated to promote the ideals of Lachit Borphukan- the legendary general of Assam's history.

The best cadet from the National Defense Academy is awarded the Lachit Borphukan gold medal. It was first instituted in 1999 following an announcement by General VP Malik saying the medal would inspire defense personnel to emulate Borphukan's heroism and sacrifices.

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