

Lachit Borphukan

"My Uncle is not greater than my country". This statement is known by the people of every corner of Assam. It was given by the chief commander of the Kingdom "Lachit Barphunkon". He was born on 24 Nov. 1622 in a Tai Ahom family in Charaideo. The name of his father and mother is Momai Tamuli Borbarua and Kunti Moran. His father was the Commander in Chief in the Ahom Kingdom. He was known for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat.

The Ahom Kingdom was repeatedly upon by Turkish and Afghan rulers of the assailed Delhi Sultanate and later the Mughal Empire. The Mughal-Ahom conflict first begun in 1615 and continued afterwards. It was in his backdrop Lachit grew up in. By the time of Lachit Borphukan's appointment as commander, the Mughals had occupied Guwahati and had forced the Ahoms to sign the humiliating peace treaty of Ghilajharighat in 1663 which imposed harsh conditions on the Ahom Kingdom. King Chakradhwaj Singha resolved to rid the entire region from Mughal occupation that would be carried out by Lachit Borphukan's.

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 in Guwahati sent an expeditionary force from Dhaka under Ram Singh.

Knowing fully well that Ahom forces would easily be defeated if their commander was removed, Ram Singh resorted to subterfuge. An arrow carrying a letter by Ram Singh was fired into the Ahom camp, it later reached Chakradhwaj Singha. The letter stated that Lachit had been paid 1 lakh rupees to evacuate Guwahati. Having exhausted all avenues Ram Singh made his way to Guwahati with a naval flotilla sailing up the Brahmaputra river in 1671. He came upon an Ahom flotilla led by Lachit Borphukan himself near Saraighat. Once again outnumbered and outgunned in open space, the Ahom soldiers began to lose their will to fight. Some began to retreat and seeing this Lachit beckoned a boat himself to rally his troops, offered to be taken to safety by one of his troops, Lachit furiously threw some of them into the water bodily despite being severely ill, loudly proclaimed that he would "die fulfilling his duty to his king and country, even if it meant he had to do it by himself. Inspired, Lachit's soldiers rallied and a desperate battle ensued on the river Brahmaputra.

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's instructed his men not to attack the retreating army.

The Great Hero of Assam died 25th April 1672 about a year after the victory at Saraighat due to natural causes. On 24th November is celebrated in each year as Lachit Divas in Assam with the history of a heroic like Lachit Borphukan, the Assam is always rich. Lachit Borphukan's Valour is a source of ideal and inspiration for the entire nation.

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