


### A BRIEF LIFE SKETCH OF LACHIT BORPHUKAN

Lachit Borphukan was the greatest General of the Ahom Kingdom. He was born in Charaideo to a Ahom family on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1622, Lachit Borphukan was the youngest son of Nageshwari Aideo and Momai Tamuli Borbarua, the first Borbarua of Upper Assam and Commander-in-Chief of the Ahom army under King Pratap Singha, but before taking the role of the Supreme Commander of the army Lachit Borphukan held various post of eminence such as Superintendent of the Royal Horses or Ghora Barua, Commander of the Strategic Simulgarh Fort, and Superintendent of the Royal Household Guards or Dolaksharia Barua. He was also made the scarf bearer also known as Soladhara Barua of the Ahom King which is a position equivalent to a private secretaryship. Under the Ahom King Chakradhwaj he was finally appointed as the Commander-in Chief of the Ahom army. Lachit has an impeccable trait of patriotism and discipline, he was also an intelligent and sharp General, his shrewd leadership ability has given many decisive victories for the Ahom's and his famous victory against the Mughal in the battle of Saraighat of 1671 is etched in the annals of Ahom's history as one of the greatest and thwarted the Mughal dream of expanding its Empire in Assam. He defeated the large cavalcade of Mughal army led by the Kachwaha Raja, Ram Sing I, the battle of Saraighat was fought on the bank of the river Brahmaputra in present day Guwahati. Combined with his military prowess and cleverness he was able to tricked the mighty Mughal's army. Comprehending the might, strength, bravery and battle skill of the Ahom soldiers Lachit was also offered a bribe of 1 Lakh to abandon his army, the Mughals knew that they would not stand a chance against the Ahom army if it was led by Borphukan and this was also proven in the battle. At one point in time the Ahom army was breaking down morally and almost retreating from the battle when Lachit was grievously

injured, on seeing the Ahoms army abandoning their position Lachit made a clarion call "if you want to go back you are free, but I even in spite of my hurt, I will fight until my last breath". This valorous statement and determination of Lachit is quite enough to spark the next level of valour, spirit and strength among the Ahom soldiers to fight against the mighty Mughal which eventually led to the Ahom victory. During this battle he also rose to fame for his patriotic deeds by beheading his own maternal uncle, stating that "my uncle is not greater than my Country"(dextot koi momaidangornohoy). In the midst of the battle of Saraighat, he had ordered his soldier to construct an embankment along the Brahmaputra river to defend itself from the advancing Mughal army under the supervision of his uncle which was meant to be completed overnight, but the negligence of his uncle has slowed down the pace of the work which irks Lachit and he instantaneously asked his uncle for explanation in which his uncle replied that he was tired so he fall asleep and that did not convinced Lachit which prompt him to kill his uncle and eventually the work get done by the night itself.

The euphoria over the decisive Ahom victory against the Mughal did not last long for Lachit as he fall sick and deteriorated his health after the end of the battle and eventually died from his ailment within a year on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1672 in Jorhat, his maidaam was constructed in the same year by King Udayaditya Singha at Hoolungapara 16 km from Jorhat. To this day the valour, courage and patriotism of Lachit has great influence among the Assamese youth, he is being epitomised as the symbol of truth and patriotism. In commemoration of his bravery and heroism every year on 24<sup>th</sup> November is celebrated as Lachit Divas to promote the ideals of Lachit Borphukan. Also the extraordinary courage and leadership of Lachit's is honoured by the National Defence Academy (NDA) which awards a gold medal in his name every year since 1999 to the best cadet. A bust of Lachit also stands at the NDA's entrance.

  
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