

LACHIT BORPHUKAN

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Gender- female

Lachit Borphukan was born on November 24, 1622, to Momai Tamuli Borbarua and Kunti Moran. His father was the commander-in-chief of the Ahom army. The Ahom empire was located in the Brahmaputra region in eastern India. It was founded in 1228. The kingdom was constantly attacked by Turkic and Afghan kings of the Delhi Sultanate and, subsequently, the Mughal Empire. Lachit Borphukan is most remembered for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat, which foiled a lengthy assault by Mughal forces led by Ransingh I to take over the Ahom kingdom.

The Mughal-Ahom battle began in 1615 and has since continued. Lachit grew up against this backdrop. Lachit was assigned the job of working as the Soladhara Barua (scarf-bearer), a modern-day equivalent of a private secretary to the Ahom King, after finishing his education in humanities and military techniques. Before being named commander of the Ahom Army, he held other significant roles such as Superintendent of the Stable of Royal Horses and Superintendent of the Royal Household Guards.

The Mughals had captured Guwahati by the time Lachit Borphukan was appointed commander and had compelled the Ahoms to sign the humiliating peace Treaty of Ghilajharighat in 1663, which set harsh terms on the Ahom kingdom. Lachit Borphukan would carry out King Chakradhwaj Singha's wish to free the entire territory from Mughal control. Lachit mustered an army, and preparations were accomplished by the summer of 1667. His troops successfully retook Guwahati from Mughal forces. After learning of the loss at Guwahati, Emperor Aurangzeb (born on November 3, 1618) dispatched an invading army from Dhaka led by Ram Singh. Due to the numerical and technological inferiority of the Ahom forces, Lachit resorted to guerilla tactics, effectively driving away the Mughal army.

Ram Singh used deception knowing full well that Ahom soldiers would be easily destroyed if their commander was gone. Ram Singh launched an arrow into the Ahom Camp, bearing a note. It eventually made its way to Chakradhwaj Singha. According to the letter, Lachit was given one lakh rupees to flee Guwahati. The king was furious that his commander was reportedly in discussions

with the enemy, but his prime minister Atan Buragohain told him that this was a ruse by the Mughals to force Chakradwaj Singh to replace the commander who had effectively battled the Mughals so far. After exhausting all possibilities, Ram Singh sailed to Guwahati in 1671 with a naval armada along the Brahmaputra River. Near Saraighat, he came into an Ahom flotilla headed by Lachit Borphukan himself. The Ahom warriors began to lose their desire to fight after being outnumbered and outgunned once more in wide space. Some began to withdraw. When Lachit saw this, he boarded a boat to gather his forces. Decritically ill, Lachit fiercely tossed some of his warriors into the river, screaming loudly that he would "die completing his duty to his king and nation, even if it meant he had to do it by himself." Lachit's warriors were inspired, and a terrible struggle ensued on the Brahmaputra.

Lachit Borphukan triumphed. The Mughals were compelled to flee Guwahati. The Mughals were chased until the Manas River, the western limit of the Ahom empire. Borphukan directed his troops not to assault the withdrawing army.

Lachit Borphukan passed away in 1672. His ashes are interred at the Lachit Maidaam, built the same year by King Udayaditya Singha in Hoolungapara, 16 kilometers from Jorhat.

This would not be the end of Mughal invasions into Ahom territory, as the Mughals would conquer Guwahati in 1679 and hold it until 1682 when the Ahoms would finish the long-running Ahom-Mughal struggle.