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A white-up on "Lachit Baphukan"

The mainland Assam had witnessed the existence of a number of heroic warriors in its land. Among them mention may be made to the name of Lachit Batphukan. One of the greatest warriors and the Commander of the Ahom Army. An individual with intense vigour, intelligence and strong leadership capabilities. The kind of patriotism or the love that he had with his own motherland is simply indescribable.

Lachit Batphukan was born on 24 November, 1622 to Momai Tamuli Botbathua and Kunti Motan. His father was the first Botbathua of the Ahom Kingdom. He served in the Ahom Army as the Commander-in-chief. His father was of a humble nature and was pleased by the King for his hard work and dedication. Due to his abilities and determined personalities, he was assigned a superior



position in the Ahom administration. In such environment, Lachit grew up to become one of the greatest warriors of Assam. Lachit was educated in humanities, military skills and scriptures. Soon after completion of his education he was given the first position of Soladhata Batua, the scarf-bearer of the Ahom King. In due-course he held various positions like Bhotia Batua (in-charge of royal stable), commander of Simulgath Fort and Dola Kaxatia Batua (superintendent of royal household guards) to King Chakradhwaj Singha.

### Battle of Sataighat and the role of Lachit-

The Mughal-Ahom conflict had been going on since 1615. There were various reasons associated with it. However, the situation had worsen in 1663. In 1663, the treaty of



Bhilarajati ghat was signed. Through this, Ahom King Jaydhwaj Singha had to suffered a heavy losses. In due- course of time, he died broken at the defeat of Bengal Subedar Mir Jhumla. Chakradhwaj Singha, his successor vowed to regain the honour of Ahom. And in this time Lachit was appointed as the Commander of the Ahom Army. Lachit dedicatedly restructured and trained his army. In August, 1667, Lachit undertook his downstream expedition on Brahmaputra to reconquered the dominated region of the Mughals. He successfully reconquered the regions one after the other and completed his expedition in November 1667. Due to this heroic achievement, he was presented a gold-plated sword (hengdang) by the Ahom Swargadeo.



The then Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb knowing the defeat of the Mughal sent expeditionary force under Ram Singh from Dhaka. Ram Singh arrived with a massive army of 10,000 troops, 30,000 infantry men, 21 Rajput Chiefs with their contingents, 18,000 cavalries, 2,000 archers and 40 ships. After knowing such superiority of the Mughal, Lachit became worried and wondered how the Ahom Army could withstand such a large Army. Lachit knew very well that there was no chance for the victory of the Ahom in an open field battle. By using his intelligence, he chose Bruwahati with its hilly terrain for the battle. It also provided a chance for them to carry out guerrilla tactics. ~~in such~~ The only way to reach Bruwahati from the east was the Brahmaputra river. In Saraighat, the width of the river was just 1 km which



was ideal for naval defence. Lachit was very well acquainted that Mughal army's weakest point was their navy. He started building a series of mud embankments to make the Mughal Army take the riverine route to the city. After completion of his plan, he wait for the action to take place. Ram Singh knew very well that if Lachit was somehow removed from his position, the strength of the Ahom Army would be easily deteriorated. So, he hatch various conspiracy to overthrow him. But he failed. With all his plans being failed, he made his way to Bruwahati with a naval Flotilla sailing upwade of the Brahmaputra. Seeing the mighty army of the Mughals, the Ahom army lose their will to fight. Some even began to retreat. Coincidentally, on that day Lachit fell ill. But his vigour and patriotism did not



stop him. Lachit's entry on the scene had deep impact on his soldiers. He even threw some of the soldiers who were trying to retreat. He vowed to die for his country by fulfilling his duties. The Ahoms attacked the Mughals from all the sides and thousands of soldiers were killed, its navy was destroyed and they were pushed to the westernmost part of the Ahom Kingdom, the Manas river. With all the attempts of the Mughals failed, the Ahom became victorious.

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### Importance of ?

The Battle of Saraighat created a landmark in the history of Assam. The battle had showed how the mighty Mughal army with their excellence in cavalry, archery, infantry were defeated by the Ahom who were much inferior.



as compared to them. This battle had shooked the well-established foundation of the mighty empire. The battle had showed the capabilities associated with the Ahoms in using the naval in the warfare. This battle had introduced the Ahom in the eye of the world. It provided a chance for the Ahoms to be incorporated in the history of Mughal dynasty as a resistor of its expanding ideols. The battle had finally proved the fact that the intelligence and vigour of the army play a significant role in ~~the~~ winning the battle as compared to mighty weapons and numbers of armies.

### Lachit Barphukan and his heroic deeds

The intelligent and vigorous Commander had played a significant role in bringing a historic success to the Ahoms and to keep the Ahom Kingdom safe from the



dominance of the Mughal. Some of his deeds are -

- i) Resisting the battle on the open field, knowing the superiority of the Mughal Army.
- ii) ~~Choosing~~ Choosing buwahati as a field of battle, which provides opportunities for the Ahoms to carry out guerrilla tactics.
- iii) Building embankments to ~~stop~~ <sup>block</sup> the land route to the city and compelling the Mughals to take the riverine route to the city.
- iv) Recognising the inferiority of the Mughals in its naval sector and using it as a means of defeating them.
- v) Beheading his uncle ~~in~~ <sup>for</sup> failing to complete the building of embankments in the desired time. For he believed that his country is

greater than his family.

### Conclusion

Lachit Barphukan's name in the history of Assam as the greatest warrior of all time will never be vanished. The contribution that he had made ~~for~~<sup>in</sup> strengthening the Ahom Kingdom and its Army and resisting the Mughal dominance will remain as a landmark in the history of Assam. His patriotism, valour, intelligence, abiding by his command and duties will set as an example ~~for~~<sup>to be</sup> the younger generations to be inspired and admired by his ideals and to follow it in their lives.