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76th Independence Day, 2022

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Lachit Borphukan

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Class :- IX  
Session :- 2022-23

## Lachit Borphukan

Lachit Borphukan was an army general from Assam, India. He is remembered for his extraordinary victory against the Mughal army of Aurangzeb headed by Ram Singh in the Battle of Saraighat in 1669.

In India, the Ahoms in Assam were the only rulers who defeated the Mughals seventeen times. Lachit Borphukan was one of the greatest commanders of Assam. Under his leadership the Ahoms won the Battle of Saraighat. In his last and decisive battle, inspite of his illness, he inspired a dispirited Ahom naval force to fight against the Mughals.

Lachit Borphukan was born on 24 November 1612 to Momai Tamuli Borbarua and Kunti Moran. His father was the first Borbarua (governor of Upper Assam and commander-in-chief of the Ahoms Army) under Pratap Singha. Lachit Borphukan was educated in humanities, scriptures and military skills. Before being appointed as the Supreme - Commander of the army, held various posts of eminence such as Superintendent of the Royal Horses or Gihota Barua, Commander of the strategic Simulgarh Fort and Superintendent of the Royal Household Guards or Dolakasheria Barua assisting the Ahom King. The King Chakradhwaj Singha appointed Lachit as the commander in chief of the Ahom army.

(2)

Lachit efficiently disposed his responsibilities and transformed it into strong and powerful army by the summer of 1667. In the Battle of Saraighat, when the Mughal army attacked in Saraighat, while looking at the huge Mughal fleet, the Assamese army lost their determination and will. Even though Lachit was very seriously ill he told his army to retreat if they wanted to and made it clear that he wouldn't do so. This gave a huge moral boost to the Assamese army.

There are a number of incidents displaying Lachit's patriotism and devotion towards his motherland. One such incident is based on this quote by Lachit Borphukan. During the preparation for the Battle of Saraighat, he ordered a 'Gar' (an earthen wall) to be built for fortification within one night. He employed his maternal uncle as the supervisor. Late at night when Lachit came for inspection, he found that work was not progressing satisfactorily. When asked for an explanation, his uncle cited that the workers were tired. He became so furious at this negligence of duty that he beheaded his uncle on the spot saying :-

"Dexotkoi momai dangor nohoi", which means "My uncle is not greater than my country". This incident awakened everyone and the 'gar' was completed within that night. This episode is still cited in Assam as the ultimate example of his sincerity and patriotism.

(3)

This great hero of Assam died about a year after the victory at Saraighat due to natural causes. His mortal remains lie in rest at the Lachit Maidan built in 1672 by Swargadeo Udayaditya Singha at Hoolungapara, about 16kms from Jorhat.

It is worth mentioning that, on 24 November each year, Lachit Divas is celebrated statewide in Assam to commemorate the heroism of Lachit Borphukan and the victory of the Assamese army at the Battle of Saraighat.

The best cadet from the National Defence 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 defence personnel to emulate Borphukan's heroism and sacrifices.

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