



General Lachit Borphukan of Ahom Kingdom

Why in News?

The 400th birth anniversary of Assam's legendary war hero Lachit Borphukan will be celebrated in the New Delhi from 23rd to 25th November, 2022

Who was Lachit Borphukan?

- Born on 24th November, 1622, **Borphukan was known for his leadership in the Battle of Saraighat**, 1671 in which an attempt by Mughal forces to capture Assam was thwarted.
 - The battle of Saraighat was fought on the banks of the Brahmaputra in Guwahati in 1671.
 - It is considered as one of the greatest naval battles on a river which resulted in the victory of Ahoms over the Mughals.
- He was the **inspiration behind strengthening India's naval force** and revitalising inland water transport and creating infrastructure associated with it due to his great naval strategies.
- The **Lachit Borphukan gold medal is awarded to the best cadet from the National Defence Academy**.
 - The medal was instituted in 1999 to inspire defence personnel to emulate Borphukan's heroism and sacrifices.
- He died on 25th April, 1672.

What do we Know about Ahom Kingdom?

- **About:**
 - Established in 1228 in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, the Ahom kingdom retained its sovereignty for 600 years.
 - **The kingdom was founded by Chaolung Sukapha**, a 13th century ruler.
 - The Ahoms ruled the land till the province was annexed to British India in 1826 with **the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo**.
 - Renowned for their bravery, the Ahoms didn't even fall to the might of the powerful Mughal Empire.
- **Political Setup:**
 - Ahoms created a new state by suppressing the older political system of the bhuiyans (landlords).
 - The Ahom state depended upon forced labour. Those forced to work for the state were called **paiks**.
- **Society:**
 - Ahom society was divided into clans or khels. A khel often controlled several villages.
 - Ahoms worshipped their own tribal gods, yet they accepted the Hindu religion and the Assamese language.
 - However, the Ahom kings did not completely give up their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism.
 - Intermarriage with local also increased assimilation processes of Ahoms in Assamese culture.
- **Art and Culture:**
 - Poets and scholars were given land grants and theatre was encouraged.
 - Important works of Sanskrit were translated into the local language.

- Historical works, known as buranjis, were also written, first in the Ahom language and then in Assamese.

▪ **Military Strategy:**

- The Ahom king was the supreme commander of the state as well as the Military.
- The **Ahom king himself led the state forces** in the time of wars. The Paiks were the main army of the state.
 - There were two types of Paiks i.e., serving and nonserving. The non-serving Paiks constituted a standing militia which could be mobilized at a short notice by the kheldar (an expert military organizer).
- The **full contingent of the Ahom Army consisted of infantry, navy, artillery, elephantry, cavalry and spies**. The main war weapons consisted of bows and arrows, swords, Javelins discus, guns, match-locks and cannons.
- The Ahoms sent spies to the enemy's camp to study the strength and the war strategies of the enemies before leading an expedition.
- The **Ahom soldiers were experts in guerilla fighting**. Sometimes they allowed the enemies to enter the country, then cut off their communications and attack them in front and rear
- **Few important forts:** Chamdhara, Saraighat, Simlagarh, Kaliabar, Kajali and Pandu.
- They also **learnt the technique of constructing boat bridges in the Brahmaputra**.
- Above all, the **mutual understanding among the civil and military wings**, and unity among the nobles always worked as strong weapons of the Ahoms.

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/general-lachit-borphukan-of-ahom-kingdom-1>

