

**SPEECH OF THE HON'BLE GOVERNOR FOR THE
INAUGURATION OF YEAR LONG 400 YEAR BIRTH
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF LACHIT BARPHUDAN IN
PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON 25TH
FEBRUARY, 2022**

Namaskar,

Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind ji, Chief Minister of Assam the dynamic Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma ji, different ministers of the state cabinet, dignitaries present here and my dear friends from media. It is my privilege and honour to welcome our President to this beautiful state. We are really grateful to you Sir, for having graced the occasion and consented to inaugurate the year-long 400 year birth anniversary of Vir Lachit Barphukan.

Lachit Barphukan was one of the greatest military leaders of our country and a source of inspiration to all of us. His great victory in the battle of Saraighat over the Mughal Army makes him one of the truly great leaders of medieval India. Dexot Koi Momai Dangor Nohoy (My uncle is not greater than my country). When we speak about Lachit Barphukan these powerful words resonate our minds. Such was the dedication, devotion and

patriotism Lachit Barphukan bore in him. Assam is proud of having a son like him.

Assam was the only State of India which defeated successive attempts by Delhi Sultans and Mughal Emperors, starting from the invasion of Bakhtiar Khilji in early Thirteenth Century to the invasions of the Mughal armies of Aurangzeb, in the late 17th Century. Assam defeated seventeen such invasions. The military leadership and the fighting qualities displayed by the people of Assam contributed to impressive show of Assam to register victories. Of these 17 invasions, there was only one in which the invader achieved some success. This was Mir Jumla's invasion. Mir Jumla was the Mughal Viceroy at Dhaka. In 1662, at the head of a large Mughal Army, he advanced up the Brahmaputra into Assam. There was dissension among the Ahoms and they could not put up any worth while resistance. The Ahom capital at Gargaon fell to the invader and King Jaydhwaja Singha fled to the hills.

The Ahom King was keen to avenge the defeat he had suffered at the hands of the Mughals and Lachit Barphukan proved to be the man of the hour. He was the son of Mumai Tamuli Borbarua. His father arranged for his education in

Humanities, Scriptures and Military skills. As he grew up, he was given positions of responsibility. King Jaydhwaj Singha died soon after the defeat he had suffered at the hands of Mir Jumla. At his death bed, he exhorted his nephew and successor King Chakradhwaj Singha to remove the spear of humiliation from the bosom of the Nation.

The new King was determined to retrieve national honour and started making elaborate preparations for recovering the territory lost to the Mughals. Preparations were complete by 1667 and the King entrusted the command of the expeditionary army to Lachit Barphukan. The Saraighat battle, that fought between the Ahoms and the Mughals can be best described in five distinct phases.

However, without delving in to the details of the battle, I would say what followed are the history. But in that battle the Mughals suffered humiliating defeat in the hands of the Ahoms. The Mughal Commander-in-Chief acknowledging his defeat had a special word of praise for the Ahom soldiers and the Ahom Commander-in-Chief. He wrote, "Every Assamese soldier is expert in rowing boats, in shooting arrows, in digging trenches and in wielding guns and cannons. I have not seen such specimen of

versatility in any other part of India.” About Lachit Barphukan he wrote, “Glory to the King, Glory to the Commander, Glory to the country. One single individual leads all the forces. Even I, Ram Singh, being personally on the spot, have not been able to find any loophole and an opportunity”.

It needs to be mentioned that the former Governor of Assam Lt Gen (Retd.) S K Sinha, with his initiative installed a statue of Lachit Barphukan at the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla, Pune and also instituted a Lachit Barphukan medal for best all round cadet in the NDA. At the Raj Bhavan, Assam too, Lachit Barphukan’s memory is honoured as one of the wings of the Raj Bhavan has been named as Lachit Dwar. Lachit’s commitment to his duty and loyalty should be taken as a source of inspiration. We should feel proud that we have a tradition of making supreme sacrifice against all odds and we are indeed the true heirs of this heritage.

I am happy to share that our government has decided to set up a war memorial at Dadara in Kamrup district as a part of the State government’s rich tributes to the martyrdom of the soldiers of Alaboi battle where the Ahom soldiers put up a brave resistance against the Mughals. I again take the opportunity to

pay deep gratitude to the Hon'ble President who has come all the way to lay the foundation stone of Alaboi battle war memorial. The Hon'ble President is also kind enough to lay foundation of Lachit Barphukan maidam in Jorhat. On behalf of the people of Assam my heartfelt thanks to the President. Sir your presence has really added sanctity to this event.

However, without taking much of your time with a prayer to the Almighty God for all success in our endeavour, I conclude my observation here.

Thank you..

Jai Hind