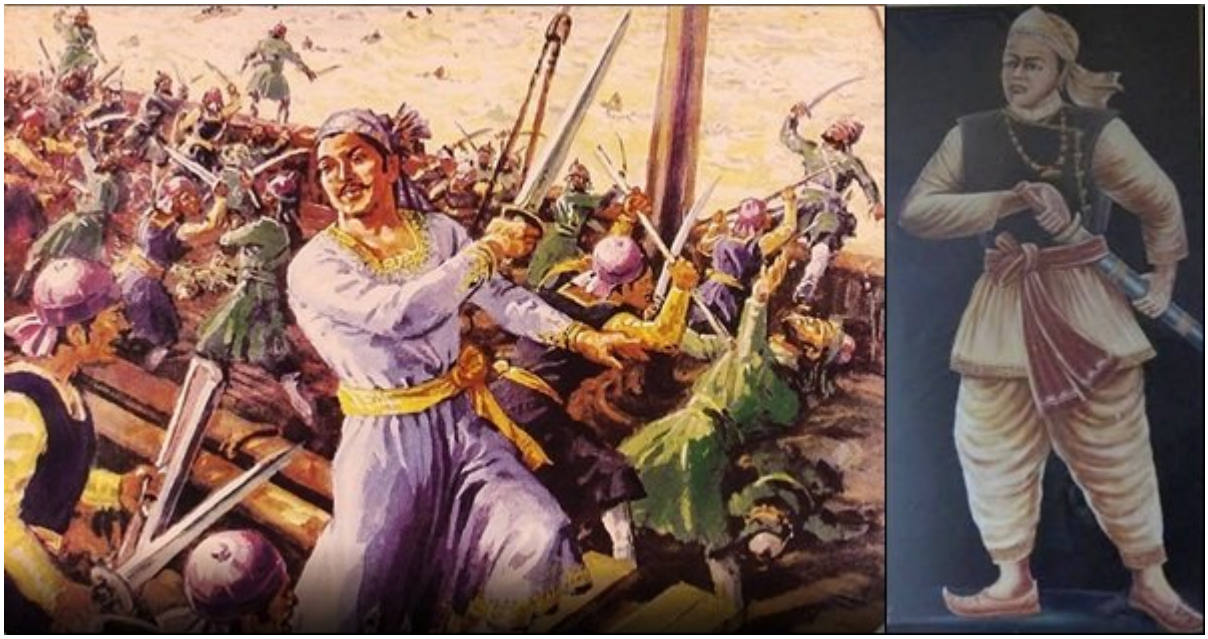
Twitter Thread by Vibhu Vashisth

Vibhu Vashisth
@VIBHU_Tweet

LACHIT BORPHUKAN : AN UNSUNG WARRIOR OF THE AHOM KINGDOM & THE GREAT BATTLE OF SARAIGHAT

Originally named as Lachit Deca, Lachit Borphukan, the fierce and invincible Ahom Commander, was born during the early 17th century at Betioni in the Golaghat district of modern Assam.



His father, Momai Tamuli Borbarua was the ‘Governor’ of the kingdom and also ‘Commander-in-Chief’ of Ahom army under King Pratap Singha during his reign starting from 1603 to 1639. Lachit received military training from an early age and joined the Ahom King Jayadhvaj Singha...



...(1648-1663) as a scarf-bearer. The post ‘scarf-bearer’ or ‘Soladhara Barua’ is considered as a part of the incumbent king’s personal staff. Owing to his military training Lechit was appointed "Ghora Barua", Supdt. of the Royal horses. When Chakradhwaj Singha became king..



..of Ahom dynasty in 1663,he appointed him Suptd. of The Royal Guards &finally he was appointed as Borphukan by the king.Then onwards,he was known as Lachit Borphukan.Borphukan used to be top councillor in Ahom Kingdom. This position was embedded with executive & judicial powers.



Sculpture depicting Ahom people participating in the war against Mughal Army

Assam was facing incessant Islamic invasion since Jan1662, when Mughal General Mir Jumla II attacked Ahom capital Gargaon. He never defeated Ahom king Jayadhwaja Singha as king retreated to hill &continued Guerrilla warfare.Prolonged fight &prospect of stalemate disturbed Jumla.



Frustrated Jumla was forced to sign a humiliating treaty with Ahom king which was the most humiliating thing for the Mughals to do. But a small portion of Ahom kingdom was lost and it's sovereignty was challenged.King Jayadhwaja died in 1663 but he wanted to avenge his kingdom..

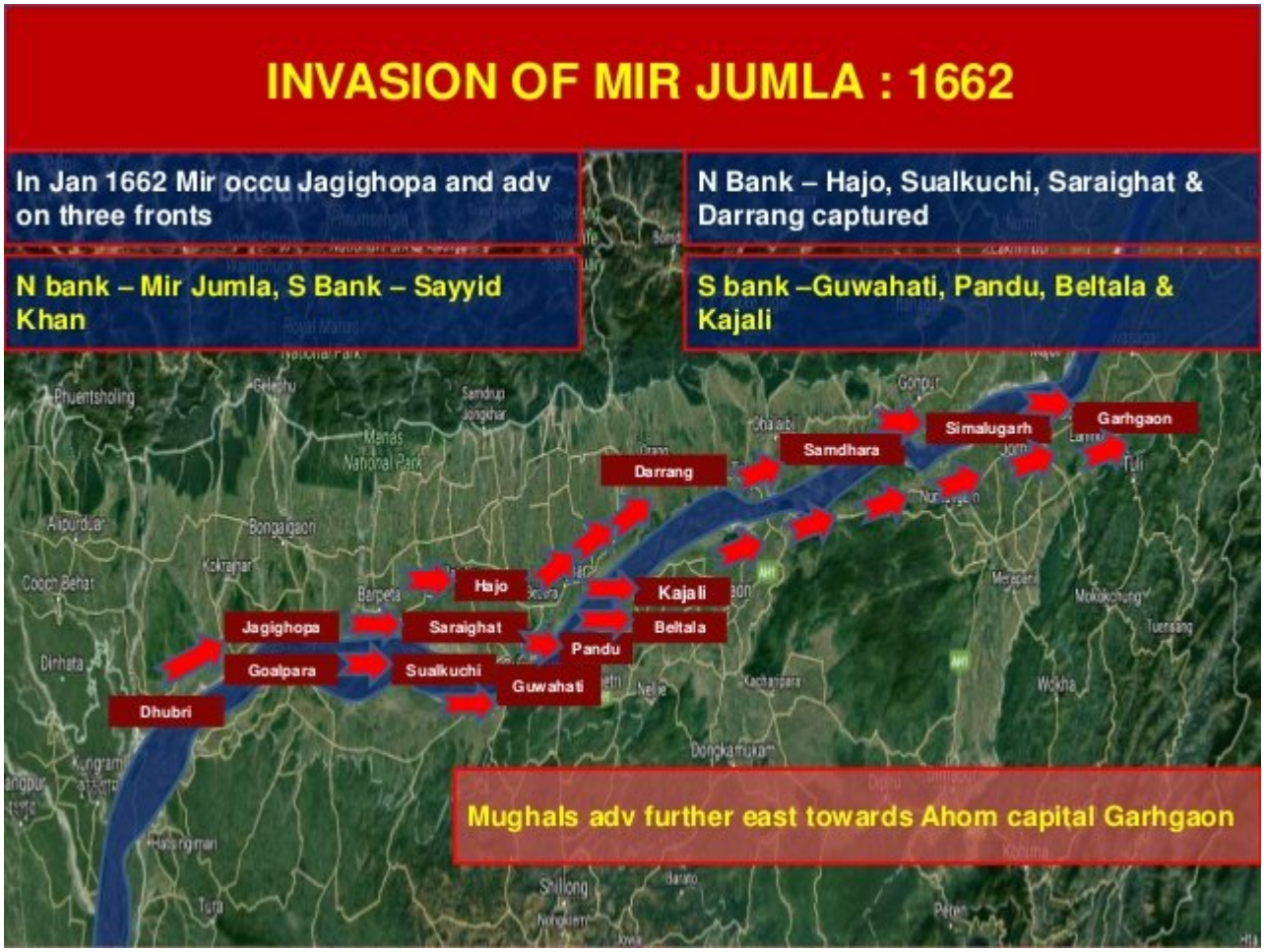


War Memorial of Battle of Saraighat depicting preparations of the war

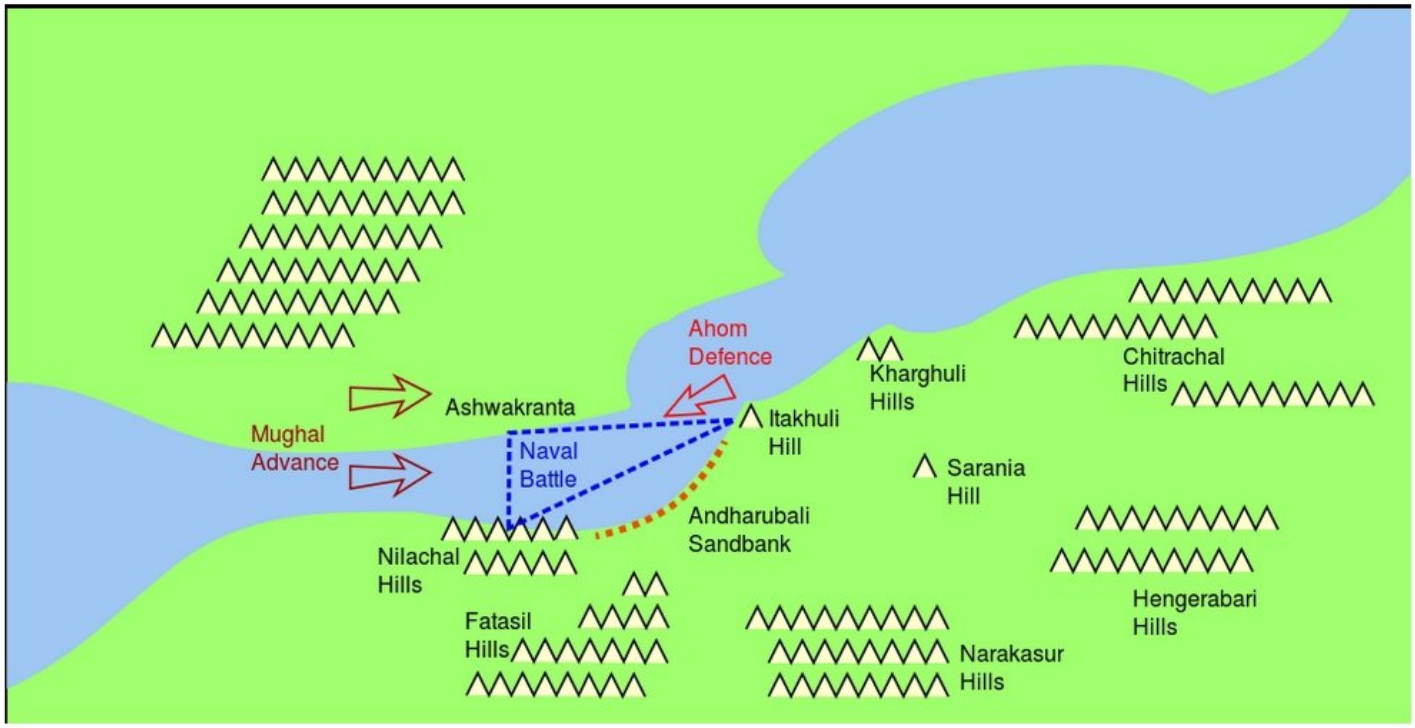
..and so, he asked his successor Chakradhwaja on the death bed to avenge the Mughal attack on Ahom Kingdom. In Aug 1667, Chakradhwaja appointed Lachit Borphukan as the commander-in-chief of Ahoms. Lachit started operation against the invading Mughal Army to reclaim Guwahati.



By Nov 1667,Lachit managed to evict the last of the Mughals from Assam. Mughal emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir was enraged after the humiliating defeat and in Jan 1668 sent a strong contingent of Mughal Army under Raja Ram Singh Kachwaha of Amber to defeat Lachit Borphukan &his army.



Ram Singh was supported by a massive 71000 Mughal troops including infantry, cavalry, gunners and what not. On the other hand, Lachit Borphukan was fighting the battle with a few 1000 soldiers.



The Battle of Saraighat, March 1671

BATTLE OF SARAIGHAT

Historic battle of Saraighat of 1671 was the culmination of many small fights between two rival armies of Ahoms &Mughals. Mughal troops started fighting under Ram Singh since Feb 1669. Even though the Mughals had a huge Army, Lachit never felt demoralized.



Lachit led the fight from the front and inflicted a crushing defeat to the Mughals at all fronts. He gave a befitting reply to the Mughals at every war resulting in complete stalemate.Aurangzeb asked Ram Singh to sign a friendly treaty for time being.

LACHIT BORPHUKAN

Born on 24 nov 1622 to Momai Tamuli Borbarua

Educated in humanities, mil tactics & holy scriptures

Held various other imp appts before appt as Ahom Army Gen

Ardent patriot

Clever diplomat and great mil ldr with unusual grit, will power, stamina and depth of judgement

Strengthened the Ahom Army



"If you (the soldiers) want to flee, flee. The king has given me a task here and I will do it well. Let the Mughals take me away. You rep to the king that his Gen fought well fwg his orders."

The final battle of Saraighat started in 1671, was fought in the Brahmputra River.On the day of battle, Lachit was very ill. Despite that, he displayed tremendous valour, extraordinary bravery and leadership. Such an action by an ailing yet forceful Lachit motivated his troops.



They fought the battle with intense zeal &courage.The mighty Mughal Army suffered heavy losses at the hands of Lachit's army. Termed as the greatest naval battle ever fought in the river, after which Mughals never bothered the Ahom Kingdom.

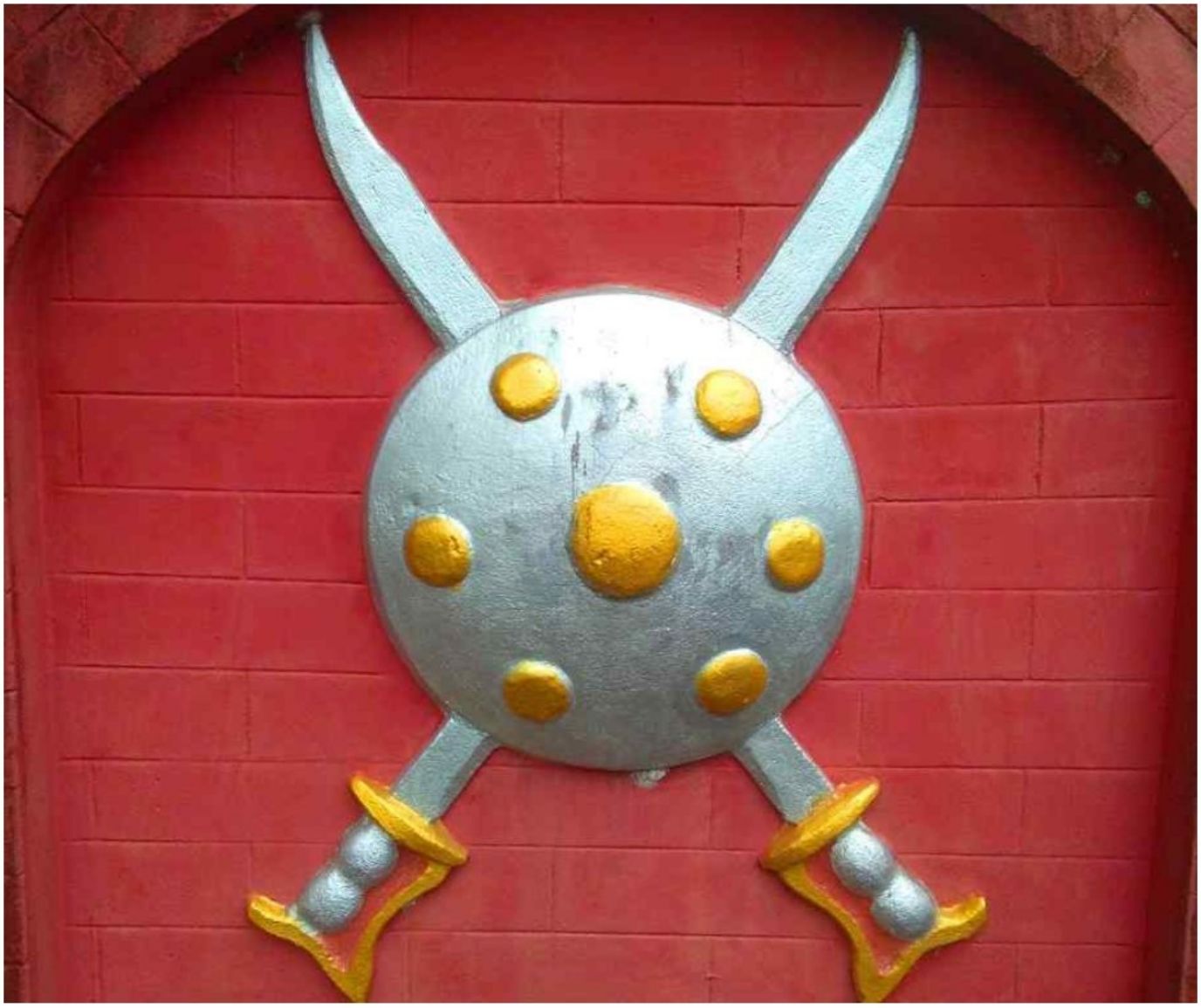


Mughal General Ram Singh was in awe of his adversary.Paying tribute to Lachit, he said," Glory to the Commander.Even I wasn't able to find any loophole in his strategy &war plan." Such was the heroic character of Lachit who re-established Ahom flag above Royal palace of Guwahati



Curiosity: A Symbol of Old Ahom War Weapon, Called 'Bortup'

In April 1672, a year after the decisive battle of Saraighat, Lachit died. He has been a hero & an inspiration for generations of Assamese. Lachit Borphukan is an example of bravery, courage and statesmanship.
The Battle of Saraighat was very crucial in the History of India.



Curiosity: Ahom War Weapon, Called 'Hengdang'

As a result of this battle, the Eastern part of India was able to preserve its temples, cultures, traditions and it's overall identity.Many development works and restoration of temple were done by later kings of Ahom dynasty.

The **Battle of Saraighat** was the last **battle** in the last major attempt by the Mughals to extend their empire into Assam. Though the Mughals managed to regain Guwahati briefly after a later Borphukan deserted it, the Ahoms wrested control in the **Battle** of Itakhuli in 1682 and maintained it till the end of their rule.

It's unfortunate for us that we do not know the role played by Lachit in changing the course of Indian History. The name Lachit Borphukan is famous in Assam but outside it, people hardly know about him. The same is the case with the Battle of Saraighat.



Most of us don't know about the great naval war that was fought in Brahmaputra.We should make more efforts to know the rich &grt history of India.There r many heroic stories of many unsung heroes who laid their lives for this grt nation.The least we can do is remember them.

■■

