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Title: Ahom Kingdom [1228-1826]: Chaolung Sukaphaa | Paik System | Ahom-Mughal Conflicts

Meta Description: Who was the first king of the Ahom Kingdom? What made up the administration and economy of the Ahom Kingdom? Read on to find out. Download Ahom Kingdom PDF notes for free. For USPC 2021 preparation, follow BYJU'S

Ahom Kingdom

The Ahom Kingdom was a late medieval kingdom established in 1228 in the Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.

It is famous for its multi-ethnic makeup and for retaining its sovereignty for 600 years fighting at one point fighting the Mughal Empire to successfully preserve its independence.

The information from this article will be useful for candidates appearing for the Civil Services Examination this year.

History of the Ahom Kingdom

The foundations of the Ahom Kingdom were laid when the first Ahom king, Chaolung Sukaphaa came from Mong Mao, a kingdom located on the easternmost reach of the Indian subcontinent.

He entered the Brahmaputra valley by crossing the Patkai mountain range. Along with him came his three queens, two sons and a retinue of nobles and officials and soldiers. He reached modern-day Namrup on 2 December 1228 and settled in the area on the south bank of the Burhidihing river, the Dikhau river in the south and Patkai mountains in the east.

Making his capital at Charaideo, he befriended the local tribes consisting of the Barahi and the Marans peoples. The technology Sukaphaa and his people had brought with them was shared with the local people of the region. This technology was the wet rice cultivation with an increased agricultural output of the region. Gradually, the Ahom way of life and polity absorbed other people of the region such as the Barahi, increasing the Ahom numbers significantly. For his position Assamese history, the honorific Chaolung is associated with him. (*Chao* means great, while *Lung* means great). Sukaphaa would pass away in 1268 having laid the groundwork of a strong sovereign kingdom.

The process of assimilation continued until the 16th century when the Ahom kingdom expanded enough to bring other ethnicities into its fold which made the kingdom multi-ethnic and inclusive in its outlook. The Ahom Kingdom came under regular attacks from the Turkic and Afghan rulers

of Bengal but it successfully resisted its advances and even expanded westwards to include territory around the Karatoya river.

The Ahom Kingdom would see its first major engagement against an imperial power in the form of the Mughal Empire in 1615. The Ahom capital of Garhgaon was occupied by the Mughals in 1662, but they were dislodged in subsequent engagements. Finally, during the battle of Saraighat in 1671 the Ahoms under Lachit Borphukan managed to repel a major Mughal invasion and in the process extended their boundaries westward up to the Manas River. Mughal presence in the region would be permanently ended by 1682

Later the last set of Ahom rulers, the Tungkhungia kings, towards the end of the 17th century, would come to power. Their rule was marked by advancements in arts and construction but also by internal conflicts which shook the foundations of the kingdom. The later part of their rule was marked by the Moamoria rebellion whose rebels were put down by British soldiers. But it failed to end the conflict. The kingdom was further weakened by internal strife, depopulation due to emigration and invasion by Burmese Tribes. In the end following the Treaty of Yandabo in 1826, the Ahom kingdom fell under the control of the British Empire.

The economy of the Ahom Kingdom

The economy of the Ahom Kingdom was based around the Paik system. In this system, able-bodied adult males referred to as paiks, were obligated to provide service to the state and form its militia in return for land.

Coinage was first introduced in the 16th century by Suklenmung although the Paik system was still in effect. During Ahom expansion into Mughal areas, the revenue systems it came across were adapted into its fold accordingly.

Administration of the Ahom Kingdom

The administrative makeup of the Ahom Kingdoms consisted of the following:

1. **Swargadeo:** The kingdom was ruled by a king called *Swargadeo* who had to be from the same lineage as that of the first king Sukaphaa. Succession was generally primogeniture in nature but another descendant of Sukaphaa could be elected to the throne great *Gohains* should the situation called for it.
2. **Royal officers:** Two royal offices were added under the reign of Pratapa Singha, the Borbaru and Borphukan. The Borbaru was a military and judicial head while the Borphukan was a military commander who acted as a Viceroy of sorts to the Swargadeo's territories in the west. The most famous of the latter was Lachit Borphukan

3. **Patra Mantris:** Five positions of importance constituted the Council of Ministers otherwise known as Patra Mantris. They advised the king on important matters of the state.
4. **Paik Officials:** Every common subject was a paik, and four paiks formed a got. At any time of the year, one of the paiks in the got rendered direct service to the king, as the others in his got tended to his fields.