

= Battle of Jajau =

The Battle of Jajau was fought between the two Mughal princes and brothers Bahadur Shah I and Muhammad Azam Shah on 20 June 1707 . In 1707 , their father Aurangzeb died without having declared a successor ; instead leaving a will in which he instructed his sons to divide the kingdom between themselves . Their failure to reach a satisfactory agreement led to a military conflict . After Azam Shah and his three sons were killed in the Battle of Jajau , Bahadur Shah was crowned as the Mughal emperor on 19 June 1707 at the age of 63 .

= = Background and preparations = =

After a 49 @-@ year reign , the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707 without officially declaring a crown prince . He left a will advising his sons to divide the empire between themselves .

At the time of Aurangzeb 's death , his eldest son , Bahadur Shah I , was stationed at Jamrud , 12 miles west of Peshawar . His second son , Muhammad Azam Shah , was stationed at Ahmednagar , east of Bombay . With the distance between Jamrud and Agra being 715 miles and the distance between Ahmednagar and Agra being 700 miles , whoever reached the capital city of Agra first would capture the Mughal throne .

Even before Aurangzeb died , Bahadur Shah I had made preparations for a battle for the Mughal throne . With the help of Munim Khan , the naib subahdar of Lahore , he gathered troops from local rulers in Beas and Satluj . He had built bridges and improved the roads between Lahore and Peshawar . He was also successful in persuading Rao Budh Singh (the king of Bundi) and Bijai Singh of Kachhwa to send their soldiers to him .

With his children , Khujista Akhtar and Rafi @-@ ush @-@ Shan , Bahadur Shah reached Lahore and declared himself the Mughal ruler on 3 May 1707 . After taking 28 lakh rupees , he left the city on 5 May 1707 . By 1 June , he reached Delhi . Reaching the city , he visited the Nizamuddin Dargah and the shrine of Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki . From the Red Fort , he took 30 lakh rupees , and on 3 June , he resumed his journey . By 12 June , he had reached Agra and camped in Poyah Ghat on the outskirts of the city . Baqi Khan Qul , commandant of the Agra Fort , surrendered the fort to Munim Khan , who subsequently sealed the treasury .

Bahadur Shah sent a letter to Azam Shah asking him to be content with Southern India , the part of India which had been willed to him by their father Aurangzeb . He also wrote that , if he was not happy with his part , then he was ready to give him the territories of Gujarat and Ajmer . He added that , if Azam Shah was not satisfied with this offer , he would have to use the " sword to decide " the monarch of the kingdom . In his reply , Azam wrote :

My share is from the floor to the roof of the house . Yours is from the roof to the firmament .

= = Conflict = =

Realising that a battle could not be avoided , Bahadur Shah I marched towards Agra , having decided to fight a battle at Dholpur (34 miles from the city) . Under his command , prince Azim @-@ ush @-@ Shan was dispatched with 80 @,@ 000 horsemen , with 11 crore rupees that he had collected from Bengal , where he was the governor . He was ordered to capture the forts in Chambal (one mile from Dholpur) .

As soon as Azam Shah heard that Bahadur Shah I had started preparing for a march towards Agra , he left the fort of Gwalior in charge of the wazir , Asad Khan . He crossed the Chambal at the Kamthra crossing and made for Dholpur . He made his son , Bidar Bakht , the commander of the vanguard of the troops . Leading 25 @,@ 000 horsemen , he was accompanied by his brother , Mirza Wala @-@ Jah , and other Rajput chiefs . When they neared Dholpur , Azam Shah made Bakht the commander of a further 65 @,@ 000 horsemen and 40 @,@ 000 infantry . The army was divided into four branches commanded by Bidar Bakht , Azam Shah himself , and his sons Ali Tabar and Wala Jah . Though the army did not have " large cannons " and " mortars " , it possessed camel @-@ guns and elephant @-@ guns . Azam Shah was of the opinion that " an artillery fight was a

stripling 's pastime and the only real weapon was the sword " .

On 17 June , Azam Shah and his battalion reached Mania near Dholpur . After this intelligence reached him , Bahadur Shah I reached Jajau and camped four miles from the city on 18 June . Taking advice from astrologers , he decided to strike on 20 June .

To collect water , on 20 June , Bidar Bakht and his men headed towards Jajau without knowing that Bahadur Shah was camped there . He came across a village where he found a flowing stream of water . To inform Azam Shah , he sent his messenger , Iradat Khan , to him with the message . When he returned , he informed Bidar Bakht that he had seen Bahadur Shah 's advance tents . Khan Alam Dakhvini and Munavvar Khan , who were in charge of the central wing of the troops , were dispatched to attack the tents . Azim @-@ ush @-@ Shan 's 500 elephants failed to mount a resistance against the invading forces . The attackers looted the tents and then set them on fire .

Unable to put up a strong fight , Azim @-@ ush @-@ Shan wrote to Bahadur Shah for reinforcements . He responded by sending Munim Khan , Jahandar Shah . Meanwhile , Zulfiqar Khan , who was in charge of the left wing of Azam Shah 's army , advised him to wait until the next day to start a full @-@ fledged battle . However , Shah paid no heed . Seeing 50 @,@ 000 horsemen approaching , Iradat Khan informed Azam Shah about their advance . In reply , he said that he was " coming to his son " .

Bidar Bakht found it difficult to mobilise all of his men to fight since they were " scattered to plunder camp " . The attacking force started raining arrows on them and discharging rockets at them . Khan Alam Dakhini charged Bahadur Shah 's army with three hundred soldiers . He threw a spear towards Azim @-@ ush @-@ Shan seated in the howdah of the elephant . It missed him and instead hit his attendant , Jalal Khan . Dakhini was killed by an arrow as he attempted to jump on the prince 's howdah . Jalal Khan boarded a separate elephant , and after he inflicted an injury on Munavvar Khan , Munavvar Khan 's soldiers fled . This exposed the wing of Prince Wala @-@ Jah . Seeing this , Amanullah Khan , who was in charge of a separate wing , hastened to render assistance . But his elephant was set on fire , and his troops fled , thinking that their leader was dead . This made Wala @-@ Jah retreat from the battle .

After this confrontation , Bahadur Shah 's Rajput chiefs attacked Zulfiqar Khan . Though Khan 's army was successful in repelling them , he was wounded in the leg . As Azim @-@ ush @-@ Shan 's entire army charged Khan , he fled the battle . Khan was followed by Jai Singh Kchwa , who fled from Bidar Bakht 's left wing . Even after the death of most of his commanders and soldiers and his two sons , Bidar Bakht and Ali Tabar , Azam Shah himself charged the enemy on his elephant . Court historian Kamraj , in Ibratnama , wrote that he was wounded " several times by arrows , but he paid no heed to the wounds " . He was ultimately killed by a musket ball which struck him on his forehead .

As soon as Bahadur Shah came to know about his brother 's death , he sent men to retrieve the corpse . They were attacked by Wala @-@ Jah , but Wala @-@ Jah fainted and died . Around 8 o 'clock in the evening , Bahadur Shah 's aide , Rustam Dil Khan , mounted the dead prince 's elephant , beheaded the prince , and made his way to Bahadur Shah . However , instead of praises , he received reproaches for his action . His elephant was followed by two other elephants ; the first one contained the dead body of Ali Tabar , the other one carried the dead princes ' women , who were assured protection by Bahadur Shah .

= = Aftermath = =

The Ibratnama estimates that 12 @,@ 000 horsemen of Azam Shah lay dead on the battlefield . It further estimates that at least 10 @,@ 000 infantry soldiers from both sides were dead . Khan Zaman and Khan Alam Dakhini 's bodies were sent to Gwalior for burial . Ram Singh Hada and Rao Dalpat Bundela 's bodies were sent to Nurabad for cremation . Azam Shah and his three dead sons were buried at Humayun 's Tomb in Delhi .