

Mughal war of succession (1707)

After the death of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, his three sons Bahadur Shah I, Muhammad Azam Shah and Muhammad Kam Bakhsh were involved in a war of succession. Though Azam Shah declared himself as the successor, he was defeated in a battle by Bahadur Shah. Meanwhile, Kam Bakhsh had marched to Bijapur and established his own empire. Failing to negotiate, his forces and Shah's army clashed; and subsequently Kam Bakhsh was killed during the military confrontation.

- Prince Muzzam at Jamrud and his sons Prince Jahandar Shah with his, second son Prince Azim-ush-Shan at Bengal, Prince Rafi-ush-Shan at Malakand Fort, Prince Jahan Shah at Agra Fort, Muzzam Rule (Kabul Subah, Bengal Subah, and Malakand Fort)

Consort - Nizam Bai (daughter Of Raja of Amber)

- Prince Azam Shah at Ahmednagar His sons Prince Bidar Bakht at At Gujarat, Prince Jawan Bakht At Gujarat, Prince Sikandar Along his father Prince Wala Jah at Belapur Fort in Deccan Subah, Azam Rule (Gujarat, and Mirza Part of Deccan)

Consort - Sabana Begum (daughter of Persian Ruler)

- Prince Kam Bakhsh At Bijapur with his All sons And Support by Aurangzeb queen consort Diwani Begum

Consort - Jamilat Begum (daughter of Sulan Nazir Mirza Of Bihar)

- Prince Musa Khawja at Lahore with his Brothers, Prince Umar Mirza at Badakhshan, Prince Sultan Muzzam at Deccan Half Part, Prince Akbar and Prince Nasir with his father Aurangzeb,

Khawja (Multan, Orisha, Mathura, Badakhshan, Berar, Half Deccan, Kanthkot Fort) Consort - Najib begum (Daughter Of Wali ahd Azam shah)

- Prince Hasim Mirza at Khandesh With his Only Brother Imam and Support By Nadira Begum the chief consort Of Mughal Empire (Khandesh)

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Conflict between Azam Shah and Bahadur Shah

Mughal emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707 after a 49-year reign 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 in present-day Pakistan). His second son, Muhammad Azam Shah, was stationed at Ahmednagar in present-day India. With the distance between Jamrud and Agra being 715 miles, and between Ahmednagar and Agra being 700 miles, Khafi Khan writes that whoever would reach the capital city of Agra first would capture the Mughal throne.^[1]

After failing to negotiate to divide the kingdom,^[2] Azam Shah and Bahadur Shah were involved in an armed conflict at Jajau, near Agra (current day Uttar Pradesh, India). In the battle that followed, Azam Shah and his three sons were killed by Bahadur Shah's army on 20 June 1707.^[3] Azam Shah and other royals who died were subsequently buried in Humayun's Tomb, Delhi.^[3]

Conflict between Bahadur Shah and Kam Bakhsh

Shah's half-brother, Muhammad Kam Bakhsh, marched to Bijapur in March 1707 with his soldiers. When the news of Aurangzeb's death spread through the city, the city's monarch, King Sayyid Niyaz Khan surrendered the fort to him without a fight. Ascending the throne, Kam Bakhsh made Ahsan Khan, who served in the army as the bakshi (general of the armed forces), and made his advisor Taqarrub Khan as chief minister^[4] and gave himself the title of Padshah Kam Bakhsh-i-Dinpanah (Emperor Kam Bakhsh, Protector of Faith). He then conquered Kulbaga and Wakinkhera.^[5]

Taqarrub Khan made a conspiracy to eliminate Ahsan Khan, alleging that meetings of Ahsan Khan, Saif Khan (Kam Bakhsh's archery teacher), Arsan Khan, Ahmad Khan, Nasir Khan and Rustam Dil Khan (all of them Kam Bakhsh's former teachers and members of the then court) to discuss public business were a conspiracy to assassinate Kam Bakhsh "while on his way to the Friday prayer at the great mosque".^[6] After informing Kam Bakhsh of the matter, he invited Rustam Dil Khan for dinner; arrested en route, Rustam Dil Khan was killed by being crushed under the feet of an elephant. Saif Khan's hands were amputated, and Arshad Khan's tongue was cut off.^[7] Ahsan Khan ignored warnings by close friends that Kam Bakhsh would arrest him, but he was imprisoned and his property seized.^[7] In April 1708, Shah's envoy Maktabar Khan came to Kam Bakhsh's court. When Taqarrub Khan told Kam Bakhsh that Maktabar Khan intended to dethrone him,^[8] Kam Bakhsh invited the envoy and his entourage to a feast and executed them.^[8]

In May 1708, Shah wrote a letter to Kam Bakhsh which he hoped would "be a warning" against proclaiming himself an independent sovereign and began a journey to the Tomb of Aurangzeb to pay his respects to his father.^[8] Kam Bakhsh thanked him in a letter, "without either explaining or justifying [his actions]"^[9]

When Shah reached Hyderabad on 28 June 1708, he learned that Kam Bakhsh had attacked Machhlibandar to seize over three million rupees' worth of treasure hidden in its fort. The subahdar of the province, Jan Sipar Khan, refused to hand over the money.^[9] Enraged, Kam Bakhsh confiscated his properties and ordered the recruitment of four thousand soldiers for the attack.^[10] In July, the garrison at the Kulbarga fort declared their independence and garrison leader Daler Khan Bijapuri "reported his desertion from Kam Bakhsh". On 5 November 1708 Shah's camp reached Bidar, 67 miles (108 km) north of Hyderabad. Historian William Irvine wrote that as his "camp drew nearer desertions from Kam Bakhsh became more and more frequent". On 1 November, Kam Bakhsh captured Pam Naik's (zamindar the landlord of Wakinkhera) holdings after Naik abandoned his army.^[11]

On 20 December 1708, Kam Bakhsh marched towards Alab-i-Mir Jumla, on the outskirts of Hyderabad, with "three hundred camels, [and] twenty thousand rockets" for war with Shah. He made his son Jahandar Shah commander of the advance guard, later replacing him with Khan Zaman. On 12 January 1709, Shah reached Hyderabad and prepared his troops. Although Kam Bakhsh had little money and few soldiers left, the royal astrologer had predicted that he would "miraculously" win the battle.^[12]

At sunrise the following day, Shah's army charged towards Kam Bakhsh. His 15,000 troops were divided into two bodies: one led by Mumin Khan, assisted by Rafi-ush-Shan and Jahan Shah, and the second under Zulfiqar Khan Nusrat Jung. Two hours later Kam Bakhsh's camp was surrounded, and Zulfiqar Khan impatiently attacked him with his "small force".^[13]

With his soldiers outnumbered and unable to resist the attack, Kam Bakhsh joined the battle and shot two quivers of arrows at his opponents. According to Irvine, when he was "weakened by loss of blood", Shah took him and his son Bariqullah prisoner. A dispute arose between Mumin Khan and Zulfiqar Khan Nusrat Jung over who had captured them, with Rafi-us-Shan ruling in favor of the latter.^[14] Kam Bakhsh was brought by palanquin to Shah's camp, where he died the next morning.^[15]

Notes

1. Khafi Khan, p. 577.
2. Irvine, p. 22.
3. Irvine, p. 34.
4. Irvine, p. 50.
5. Irvine, p. 51.

6. Irvine, p. 53.
7. Irvine, p. 56.
8. Irvine, p. 57.
9. Irvine, p. 58.
10. Irvine, p. 59.
11. Irvine, p. 60.
12. Irvine, p. 61.
13. Irvine, p. 62.
14. Irvine, p. 63.
15. Irvine, p. 64.

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- Irvine, William, *The Later Mughals*, Low Price Publications, ISBN 81-7536-406-8
 - Muhammad Khafi Khan. *Muntakhab-ul Lubab* Sang-e-Meel. ISBN 9693518829.
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