

LARGER THAN **LIFE**
A CELEBRATION OF GREATNESS

Prithviraj Chauhan

1168 - 1192



Introduction

Prithviraj Chauhan was a **King of the Kshatriya Chauhan (Chahaman) Rajput dynasty, who ruled a kingdom in northern India during the latter half of the 12th century.** He reconsolidated control of the Chauhan kingdom and conquered several neighboring kingdoms, which made his state the leading Hindu kingdom in northern India. His **kingdom included much of the present-day Indian states of Rajasthan and Haryana, and parts of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab.**

Birth And Early Years

Prithviraj was **born in 1168 to King Someshwara Chauhan and his wife Karpuravalli.** He was the sharpest of all the princes at learning the military skills. He had the **skill of hitting the target only on the basis of its sound.** He **succeeded the Throne of Ajmer at the age of 13, in 1179, when his father died in a battle.** At the age of 13, he killed Bheemdev Solanki, the King of Gujarat, who betrayed his father Someshwar Chauhan. **His grandfather Angam, ruler of Delhi, declared him heir to the throne of Delhi after hearing about his courage and bravery.**

Immortal Love for Sanyogita

Sanyogita, the daughter of Jaichandra Gahadwala fell secretly in love with Prithviraj. Her father, Jaichandra got wind of this and he arranged a **'Swayamwara' for Sanyogita.** He called many princes worthy of his daughter, from all across the country except **Prithviraj.** To humiliate Prithviraj, **Jaichand erected his statue, dressed and bent as a dwaarpal**

at the gateway to the swayamvar. At the time of the swayamvar, Sanyogita passed all the eligible princes and finally **garlanded Prithviraj's statue.** At that moment, **Prithviraj, who was hiding behind the statue stepped out and whisked his beloved away and put her up on his steed to make a fast getaway to his capital in Delhi!**

Important Battles

Another ruler also named **Mahmud who was from Ghor** in Afghanistan had grown powerful and had captured Ghazni and subsequently attacked the Ghaznavid, Governor of Punjab, and defeated him. The kingdom of Mahmud Ghor now stretched up to the domains of Prithviraj Chauhan. A clash was inevitable.

The 1st Battle of Tarain 1191 C.E. - Victory of Prithviraj Chauhan

Mahmud Ghor threw the gauntlet by laying siege to the **Fortress of Bhatinda in East Punjab, which was on the frontier of Prithviraj's domains.** Prithviraj marched on to Bhatinda and met his enemy at a place called Tarain near the ancient town of Thanesar. Prithviraj won the battle and general **Mahmud Ghor** became a **prisoner in Prithviraj's hands.** Eventually, Prithviraj pardoned Mahmud Ghor.

The 2nd Battle of Tarain 1192 C.E. - Defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan

The very next year Prithviraj's gesture was repaid by Ghor who re-attacked Prithviraj with a stronger army and guilefully defeated him by attacking the Rajput army before daybreak. **Prithviraj was defeated and brought to Afghanistan as a captive to Ghor.**

The Blinding of Prithviraj

As a prisoner in Ghor he was presented before Mahmud, where he looked Ghor straight into the eye. **Ghor ordered him to lower his eyes. On Prithviraj's denying to do that, Ghor ordered that Prithviraj's eyes be burnt with red-hot iron rods.** After that, Prithviraj was regularly brought to the court with his friend Chand Bardai.

Death And Revenge Of Prithviraj

Prithviraj got an opportunity of revenge when **Ghor announced a game of Archery.** Prithviraj, who was then at court said he would also like to participate though he couldn't see. He **told Mahmud Ghor to order him to shoot, and he would reach his target.** Ultimately, Mahmud Ghor agreed. Chand Bardai provided Prithviraj with an aural indication of where Ghor was seated. He gave Prithviraj indication of the same, by composing a couplet.

Ghor then ordered Prithviraj to shoot. Prithviraj took aim based only on the voice and on Chand Bardai's couplet, he sent an arrow racing to Ghor's throat. Ghor was thus stuck dead by Prithviraj. **Prithviraj and Chandar did not want to die from the hands of Ghor's courtiers so they stabbed each other.**

Thus ended the story of the brave Prithviraj Chauhan - the last Hindu ruler of Delhi. **Delhi was to remain under Muslim rule for the next 700 years till 1857 and under British rule till 1947.**