



JAUHAR IS COLLECTIVE SUICIDE BY MASS SELF-IMMOLATION IN MASSIVE FIRE AMONG HINDU RAJPUT WOMEN IN INDIA

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<p>Article Info</p> <p>Article Received: 20 February 2026, Article Revised: 13 March 2026, Article Accepted: 02 April 2026.</p> <p>DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19425923</p>	<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>Jauhar (or Jahar Brata) was a historical practice of mass self-immolation among Hindu Rajput women in India to avoid capture, rape, and enslavement by invading enemy armies, particularly during the Delhi Sultanate era. It was considered an act of honour and ultimate sacrifice, often occurring after the men committed 'Saka' (a last-stand, fight-to-the-death battle). The Jauhar Kund (or Jauhar Stahal) is a historic site within the Chittorgarh Fort in Rajasthan, marking where Rajput women committed mass self-immolation (Jauhar) to avoid capture, rape, and enslavement by invaders. The most famous instance was led by Rani Padmini in 1303 after Alauddin Khilji's victory. Jauhar Kund is a historical site of mass self-immolation practiced by Rajput women, most notably at Chittorgarh Fort, Rajasthan, to avoid capture and enslavement by invaders, primarily during the 14th-16th centuries. The most renowned instance, the Jauhar of Rani Padmini, occurred in 1303 upon Alauddin Khilji's invasion.</p> <p>KEYWORDS: jauhar, mass immolation, collective suicide, Rajput.</p>
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INTRODUCTION: Key Aspects of Jauhar Kund History

Definition & Purpose: Jauhar was a desperate measure committed when defeat was imminent to protect honor against invaders. Women, children, and valuables were thrown into a massive, intentionally prepared fire (Jauhar Kund).

The Three Famous Jauhars at Chittorgarh

1. 1303: Led by Rani Padmini after Alauddin Khilji's siege.
2. 1535: Committed by women when Gujarat's Sultan Bahadur Shah attacked.
3. 1568: Led by Rani Phool Kanwar during Akbar's siege.





Figure-1: Jauhar by Hindu Rajput Women.

Key Aspects of Jauhar Kund History

The Act of Jauhar: It was a final act of collective suicide, usually occurring at night by jumping into a massive fire pit (Jauhar Kund) during the siege of the fort.

Chittorgarh's Three Jauhars: The fort saw three significant Jauhars (1303, 1535, and 1568), with the first (1303) led by Rani Padmini being the most well-known.

Rani Padmini's Legend (1303): To avoid falling into the hands of Alauddin Khilji, Rani Padmini, along with thousands of women and children, burnt themselves in a fire, which is the most widely recognized instance, even if some historians debate its details.^[1-2]

Key Aspects of Jauhar

Context: It occurred when defeat in battle was inevitable, most famously in Chittorgarh (1303, 1535, and 1568) and Jaisalmer.

Method: Women, dressed in bridal attire, would enter a massive burning pyre to protect their chastity.

Cultural Significance: In Rajasthan, this act was glorified in local folklore as a supreme sacrifice to avoid humiliation.

Jauhar Kund in Rajasthan, particularly within Chittorgarh Fort, is a historical site where Rajput women

committed jauhar (mass self-immolation) to protect their honor during sieges by invaders like Alauddin Khilji in. It symbolizes ultimate sacrifice, with the most famous instance involving Rani Padmini.

Location: Primarily associated with the Chittorgarh Fort in Rajasthan, India.

Significance: It is the place where Rajput women chose to immolate themselves in a large fire (or pool) rather than face captivity or dishonor at the hands of conquering armies.

Historical Context: The most notable Jauhar occurred in 1303 CE, when Sultan Alauddin Khilji besieged the fort. It is often coupled with Saka (the final battle to the death by men).

Visitor Info: It is a somber, sacred landmark within the fort complex often called the Jauhar Sthal.

Another notable Jauhar Kund is also found within the Gwalior Fort in Madhya Pradesh.

Chittorgarh, located in southern Rajasthan, India, is a historic city famous for the massive 7th-century Chittorgarh Fort, the largest fort in Asia and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It represents the epitome of Rajput valor, known for historic sieges and the jauhar (collective sacrifice) performed by Rani Padmini.^[3-5]



Figure-2: Jauhar Kund.

Key Highlights of Chittorgarh

Chittorgarh Fort: Sprawled across 700 acres on a 180-meter-high hill, this 13-km perimeter fortress contains 4 palaces, 19 temples, and 20 water bodies.

Vijay Stambh (Tower of Victory): A 9-story tower built by Maharana Kumbha in 1440 to commemorate his victory over Mahmud Khilji.

Kirti Stambh (Tower of Fame): A 22-meter high tower dedicated to Adinath, the first Jain Tirthankara.

Rani Padmini's Palace: A beautiful palace located in the middle of a lake, linked to the legendary queen.

Gaumukh Reservoir: A deep, sacred tank fed by a spring shaped like a cow's mouth.

Meera Temple: A temple dedicated to the poet-saint Meera Bai, known for its intricate architecture.

Visiting Information

Location: Situated on the banks of the Berach and Gambhiri rivers.

Best Time to Visit: October to March, when the weather is pleasant.

Nearby Attractions: Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary.

Nearest Airport: Maharana Pratap Airport (UDR), Udaipur, about 65 miles away.

Accessibility: Well-connected by rail at Chittaurgarh Junction Railway Station.



Figure-3: Chittorgadh Kirti Stambh.

CONCLUSION

Jauhar was a historical practice of mass self-immolation by Rajput women in medieval India to avoid capture, rape, and enslavement by invading armies. Performed when defeat was certain, it was often accompanied by Saka, where men marched to certain death on the battlefield. Most commonly associated with Rajasthan during the 13th–16th century, these events are remembered as symbols of honor and resistance.

Key Historical Jauhars in India

Chittorgarh Fort (Rajasthan): Famous for three major Jauhars (1303, 1535, 1568) in response to attacks by Alauddin Khalji, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, and Akbar.

The Legend of Rani Padmini (1303): One of the most famous accounts, where the Queen of Chittor, along with thousands of women, committed Jauhar to avoid being

captured by Alauddin Khalji, a story immortalized in poetry.

Ranthambore (1301): Occurred during Alauddin Khalji's siege of the fort.

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