

Describe the characteristics of Military Strategist in the light of Sunnah of Muhammad with arguments. (2016)

The life of Holy Prophet encompasses all aspects of life. His sacred life is the best model for all mankind. Each and every action of Holy Prophet is a role model for our exemplary life. Beside all the faculties, as a military strategist too, he (Peace be upon him) set the most perfect examples of sagacity and prudence.

Throughout his life he exhibited the most consummate military leadership skills, for protecting Muslims as well as nascent Islamic state. When he announced his Prophethood, he invited people to the way of peace but most of them rejected and forced him & his followers to leave their hometown of Makkah. He was commanded by Allah Almighty to defend Islam and Muslims against the enemies of Islam in armed way.

After reaching Madinah and establishing the first Islamic city state in 622 AD, the Holy Prophet give more attention to military organization of Muslims as the infidels were adamant on annihilating them. The Prophet (SAW) introduced 2 new concept in military strategy, "Jihad fi Sabeelillah" and emphasized that a win in battlefield will only by the grace of All-Mighty."

# Jihad Fi Sabeelillah

## Jihad literal meaning:-

The word "Jihad" in Arabic is derived from the root word "jahada" which means "to strive" or to "struggle".

## Theoretical Meaning:-

It refers to the concept of striving or struggling for the sake of Allah.

It is important to note that Islamic military strategy is subject to a framework of ethics, rules and principles and it's not a carte blanche endorsement of a violence.

## Struggle in the Path of Allah:-

It is a concept in Islam that encompasses various forms of struggle and striving for the sake of Allah, often associated with greater good of Muslim community and the promotion of righteousness.

\* A man asked the Messenger of Allah about fighting in the way of Allah, the exalted and Majestic, a man who fights out of rage or out of family pride. He raised his head toward him & he did so because the man was standing and said "Who fights that the word of Allah be exalted, fights in the way of Allah"

This hadith highlights the importance of pure and sincere intentions in any form of struggle or combat, especially in context of

armed conflicts. Fighting should not be driven by personal grievances, anger or family disputes, but rather by a deep commitment to cause of justice, righteousness & propagation of Allah's message.

**Emphasized that a win in battlefield will only be by the grace of All-Mighty:-**

Victory in battlefield is ultimately by grace of Almighty is a deeply ingrained belief in Islamic tradition and is emphasized in Quran.

Surah Al-Imran (3:126)

"And Allah made it not but good tidings & so that your hearts would be assured today thereby. And victory is not but from Allah.

Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise"

During the battle of Badr, Prophet Muhammad prayed earnestly to Allah for victory. He said, "O Allah, fulfil your promises to me. if we fail today, you will not be worshipped on Earth."

"His heartfelt prayer showed his trust in Allah's help. The battle of Badr ended in significant victory for Muslims, emphasizing power of sincere supplication & divine support.

**Used to consult his companions before every battle:-**

Prophet Muhammad was known for his consultative approach when it came to making important decisions, especially in matters of warfare. He would consult with his companions to seek their advice & opinions.

**Badr - Whether to fight or not:-**

Before the battle of Badr, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) consulted with his companions about whether to engage in battle or not. Some of his companions expressed their opinions, & eventually, the decision was made to proceed with battle. This consultation demonstrates Prophet's commitment to consensus & collective decision making. The battle of Badr turned out to be a significant victory for Muslims.

**Uhud: Whether to fight inside or outside**

**Madinah:-**

At the battle of Uhud, the Prophet Muhammad sought the counsel of his companions regarding the battlefield strategy. Some suggested that they should remain inside the city & fight, while majority suggest they should fight outside the city. However, during battle, there was a breach in plan, leading to unexpected challenges for Muslim army.

**Khandaq (battle of trench) - How to tackle the large numbers of the enemy:-**

Before the battle of Trench, when Muslim community faced a large coalition of enemies, Salman al-Farsi, a companion who was not from Arabia, suggested a trench digging as a defensive measure. This proved an effective defensive strategy.

These instances illustrate the Prophet Muhammad's commitment to inclusivity, consultation, and consensus-building within the Muslim community.

## "Espionage & Intelligence activities"

(i) Prophet Muhammad as a Spy before Badr:-

Before the battle of Badr, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) played a unique role as an undercover agent, acting as a spy himself. He gathered intelligence about the Quraysh tribe's caravan that was returning from Syria to Mecca. This information was crucial in the decision to intercept the caravan, which eventually led to the battle of Badr. The Prophet's role as a spy in this instance demonstrates his dedication to protecting the Muslim community's interests. Eg. importance of gathering accurate intelligence for strategic decisions.

(2) Huzaifa ibn Yaman (R.A) as a Spy during Khandaq (battle of the trench):-

During the battle of the Trench, Prophet Muhammad sent Huzaifa ibn Yaman on a covert mission. He was tasked with infiltrating the enemy camp to gather information about their plans & intentions. His mission was successful.

## "Extremely Secretive"

Prophet Muhammad was known for his wisdom & caution, especially when it came to

matters of security & personal safety. His practice of not disclosing his route except to a select of his companions can be understood in following ways.

Security protection

Selective disclosure

Strategic Advantage

Leadership and Trust

Protection of Mission

Prophet's practice of secrecy regarding his travel plans was primarily a matter of personal safety & strategic consideration related to his role as a leader & messenger.

**"A staunch believer in Meritocracy:-"**

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) emphasis on meritocracy had a profound impact on early Islamic society and continues to be a guiding principle for leadership in many Muslim majority countries & communities.

Appointed Khalid bin Walid & Amr bin Aas:-

Holy Prophet appointed commanders based on their competence & experience in military expeditions, regardless of when they embraced Islam. Both of them accepted Islam late in their lives but were renowned for their military skills.

## Appointment of Usama bin Zaid :-

The appointment of Usama bin Zaid as a commander of a crucial military expedition, even though he was just 18 years old at time. However, Prophet choose him because of leadership potentials, competence & understanding of military strategy.

## Acknowledge the fact that use of trickery is valid in war:-

The use of trickery and deception in warfare is a strategy that has been acknowledged & employed throughout history.

"War is deception"

War is deception is often attributed to various sources within Islamic tradition, including Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, & Ibn Majah.

One of the most notable instances of deception during battle of the trench was when a Muslim, Nu'aym ibn Mas'ud, pretended to have defected to enemy side and suggested to them that he could sow discord among Muslims. He successfully gained attention & trust among enemy. This led to confusion and division among enemy forces.

## 6:- Encouraged and commended material preparation for a war:-

"Prepare against them whatever force you can, and trained horses whereby you frighten Allah's enemy & your own enemy." (Al-Anfal-60)

R This verse is interpreted as an encouragement for Muslims to prepare & gather their resources for defense & protection.

### "Tabuk-expedition"

It was a military campaign led by Prophet Muhammad, he called upon the Muslim community for donations & contributions to support the expedition. This call for donations was made to ensure that necessary resources, including weapons, provisions, were available for expedition.

## 7:- Praised his companions who fought bravely:-

"O Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas was one of the prominent companions of Holy Prophet. During battle of Uhud, Sa'd was known for his valor & archery skills, & Prophet Muhammad's words of praise & sacrifice for him are a testament to his bravery and dedication to cause of Islam."



8:- Accepted innovative ways of battle even if they were invented by non-Muslims:-

Trench in Khandaq:- This tactic was not a traditional Arabian method of warfare but rather an innovative approach. The Prophet Muhammad & Muslim accepted & implemented the idea because it was an effective way to defend the city from superior force of enemy.

Catapult at Siege of Taif:-

In siege of Taif, which took place after the conquest of Mecca, Muslim employed catapult which was siege weapon used by non-Muslim. The Muslim use such technology regardless of their innovation, origin.

9:- Taught Manners of War to his Companions:-

who  
 "O you <sup>who</sup> believe! When you meet a force, stand firm, and remember God much, so that you may prevail. And obey God & His Messengers, and do not dispute, lest you falter & lose your courage. And be steadfast, God is with the steadfast. And do not be like those who left their home boastfully, showing off before the people, and barring others from the path of God. God comprehends what they do."  
 (Al-Anfal 45-47).