

Q. Describe the characteristics of Military Strategist in the light of Sirah of Muhammad ^ﷺ with arguments.

During his life, the Holy Prophet ^ﷺ took part in 26 battles and in each of them presented a role model in complete perfection for coming military strategists to follow. He is a true guidance in all perspective of his military reforms and strategies from consultations with companions, occupying strategically important locations to peace-making.

I. Consultation strategy regarding the preparation of war plans

In the Battle of ⁶⁶Chandak ⁹³, the Prophet ^ﷺ made consultations with his companions regarding the preparation of war plans.

Hazrat Salman RA put forth a suggestion to dig a trench on the unprotected side of Madinah. It was accepted and executed, thereupon.

a. Success of the consultation strategy as a revolutionary reform

On account of hectic consultations by Prophet ^ﷺ, the City of Madinah was saved from ~~Hadis~~ destruction. The trench was used as a successful defense strategy.

b. Prioritisation of Diplomacy to Avoid war ~ Treaty of Hudaibiyah

During 624-627 AD, Madina was attacked three times, but the prophet ﷺ used his great diplomatic acumen and military genius to successfully defend Madina. In 628 AD, he ﷺ left Madina for Makkah with 1400 companions for performing Umrah. But, when they reached 'Hudaibiyah', the Makkans were coming out for a war.

Prophet ﷺ sent Hazrat Usman ra as an envoy to hold hectic deliberations and diplomatic manoeuvring which led to a written agreement as Treaty of Hudaibiyah and a war was stopped.

Regarding this element of Shura and consultation, the Quran says:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ

“Consult them in affairs...”

The importance placed on consultation in affairs and military matters is immense and should be exercised in light of the Sirah of prophet ﷺ.

II. Consolidation after war and treatment of prisoners of war Mercifully and Justly

In the Battle of Badr, the 70 infidels and prisoners of war were treated kindly and humanely by Prophet ^ﷺ. He freed the literate prisoners on the condition that each one of them would teach the art of reading and writing to 10 Muslims.

III. Listening to the leader's commands and sticking to one's place

In the Battle of Uhud the Prophet ^ﷺ posted a band of 50 archers under the command of Hazrat Abdullah bin Jubayr and instructed them to stick to their place. Because they disobeyed, the commander's instructions, the result of a won war was reversed.

a. Breaching the command of the leader/ Prophet ^ﷺ can convert triumph to defeat

The Battle of Uhud proved the Prophet ^ﷺ's expertise and success of military skills as he was able to guide the Muslims well. Had they listened to his commands, their triumph was guaranteed.

IV. Swiftness strategy to gain competitive advantage

The swiftness strategy was frequently employed by Prophet ^ﷺ to gain competitive advantage in battles and campaigns.

a. Taking a difficult route in Battle of Badr to reach faster than enemy

Muslims took a difficult route to control the resources and strategic location before the enemy and be well-prepared for war.

b. Moving very fast in Ghazwah e Khaybar

In Ghazwah e Khaybar, 7 A.H, the Prophet ^ﷺ and Muslims moved very fast towards Khaybar. Their enemies were taken by surprise and did not have the opportunity to combat.

c. How the swiftness strategy is used in modern military through the first mover advantage approach

The concept of swiftness is reflected in modern military through the first mover advantage approach. First mover advantage is development of innovative war system against opponents to equalise the level.

V. Showing a strong image in front of the enemy — Vigorous Image Strategy

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ

66 And muster against them whatever force... 22 (Al-Anfal: 60)

This strategy is meant to show a strong image in front of the enemy. Allah commanded Prophet ^ﷺ and Muslims to prepare and show their strength.

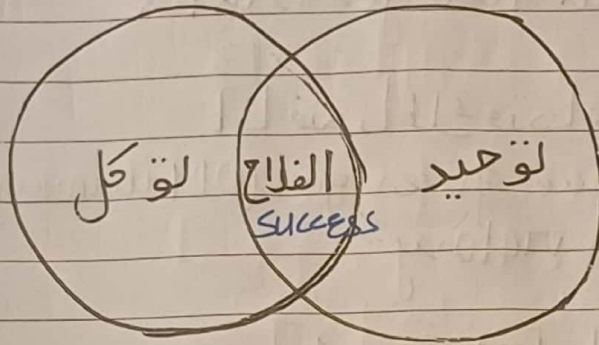
a. Proceeding with a force to deter the enemy because of threat

In Uhazwa Bani Sulaim, as the report came of the gathering of the tribes of Bani Sulaim and Bani Ghatafan with intent to attack Madinah, Prophet ^ﷺ proceeded with a force of 200 men to stop them. The enemy had fled upon hearing of the arrival of Muslim force.

b. Pakistan and its nuclear status to show force and seeking protection against threat

In light of the prophetic military strategy, Pakistan's case to acquire nuclear power helped it build a strong image and strength against outsider attacks and deterrence.

VI. Steadfast - al-sabirun strategy of seeking and relying on Allah's grace: "تو حید" and "توکل"



This strategy has its origins in the Quran as Allah names a group of people (al-sabirun), who were brave enough to challenge a bigger sized army. In Islamic perspective, this is employed by those who are brave, have tawhid (تو حید) and توکل (tawakkul) - BELIEF and TRUST in Allah in order to achieve Al-Falah (الفلاح), success in this world and hereafter.

"How often a small group overcame a mighty army by Allah's grace? And Allah is with As-Sabirun (the patient)"

[Al Baqarah : 249]

Treaty of Hudaibiyah as a clear sign of victory despite not favorable to Muslims

As a result of avoiding war due to diplomatic viability, tolerance and

belief in Allah's grace, Muslims were given a good tidings of dear victory, and the treaty proved to be the bedrock for the conquest of Makkah two years later.

انا فتحنا لك فتنا مينا
"do! we have given you (O Muhammad)
a signal victory"

[Al-Fateh : 1]

VII. Adaptive and dynamic strategy.

a. Adapting with the environment in Uhazwa
Al-Hudaiybiya

The prophet ^ﷺ's prior goal was to perform Umrah. But he discarded his prior strategy and goal in order to adapt with the environment.

b. Calling the army to retreat

During the siege of Taif, the prophet ^ﷺ learned that Taif was a very rich city, with many resources. It was not easy and costly to defend them. The prophet ^ﷺ changed his strategy and called his army to retreat.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Islamic Principles of peace, prosperity and compassion in Prophet^ﷺ's military strategy

If we critically analyse, Prophet^ﷺ's military leadership skills for protecting Muslims, the nascent Islamic state and non-Muslims, we would be able to conclude that his journey ~~as~~ was a speaking testimony of Islamic principles of peace, prosperity and success. As Allah says in the Quran:

فبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَاقِينًا لِقَافِئِكُمْ فَذَلِكُمْ لَعْنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْكُفْرِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
وَأَسْفَر لَّهُمْ وَشَاوَرَهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ...

“It was by God's grace that you (Muhammad) did deal generously with your followers: for if you had been harsh and hard of heart, they would indeed have broken away from you. Pardon them, then, and pray that they be forgiven. And consult them in all matters of public concern.”

All the principles of justice, consultation in all matters of public concern and mercy ~~are~~ form an all-encompassing and diverse military strategy of Prophet^ﷺ and embody the characteristics that a military strategist today should have.

ولا يجزئكم شأن قوم على الآ
تعدلو! عدلوه هو اقرب للتقوى ٥
واتقوا الله ان الله خبير بما تعملون

⁶⁶ Never let the hatred of others
make you swerve to wrong and
depart from justice. Be just:
that is next to piety.

[Al-Maidah: 8]