

Prophet As Military Strategist

→ Introduction ^(Introduction tell the whole structure of the Answer)

"The survival of the world is associated with the seerah of beloved Holy Prophet (PBUH), he is the Panacea to all problems of the world."

(Allama Iqbal)

The life of the Prophet^p as a role model for human beings encompasses all aspects of life. Besides all other faculties, as a military Strategist Too, he^p set the most perfect examples of wisdom and far-sightedness. Throughout his life, he^p exhibited the most perfect military leadership skills for protecting Muslims as well as the nascent Islamic state. Even before establishing the state of Madina, he^p was aware of the importance of military training of Makkah Muslims where they were being persecuted by the infidels.

He always led the Muslims from the front and preached that martyrdom is better than turning back on the battlefield. He has well-defined military tactics about reconciliation with the enemy, attitude toward combatants and non-combatants, and strategies before, during, and after the war. In a nutshell, he^e is considered as a role model for military strategists for his military tactics to execute the necessary evil of war in a ^{very} peaceful way; even these strategists are still valid in contemporary times across the globe.

⇒ Reformation of the objectives of War

The Prophet^e altered the standards and aims of wars. The Pre-Islamic wars were fought for the purpose of robbing, killing, plundering, tyranny and aggression. Those wars focused on winning victory, oppressing the weaker sides and demolishing their houses and installations. The

jahiliyah was used as a tool to rape or unveil women, practice cruelty against the elderly, the children and the infirm, spoil tillage and animals and spread corruption on the earth. Islamic wars are different from pre-Islamic wars. A "war" in Islam is a jihad. The traditions of jahiliyah period were turned upside down by Islam. Following objectives of warfare can be deduced from the Quran:

- To fight against aggression and defend Islam lands
- To assist the oppressed especially in non-Islamic lands.
- To eradicate mischief and fitnah
- To eliminate oppression and cruelty
- To remove hindrance in the way of Islam

→ Prophetic Principles of War

The Prophet introduced clear ethical boundaries for warfare that prioritized humanity even in conflict.

Sulaiman bin Buraidah narrates that

Whenever Allah's messenger (P.B.U.H) appointed a leader on an army or on a battalion, he used to instruct to him:

“Let your invasion be in the name of Allah and for His sake. Fight those who disbelieve in Allah. Invade but do not plunder nor conceal booty. Never deform the corpse of a dead person or kill an infant child.”

The Principles of war were:

- He avoided conflict unless all peaceful means had failed.

- He prohibited cruelty, mutilation, and harm to civilians.

- He humanized warfare by regulating the treatment of enemies.

- prohibition of burning

- prohibition of mutilation

- prohibition of killing emissaries

- He prohibited damaging crops.

DAY: _____
→ Military Strategies of the Prophet
He^p has always adopted three different strategies to tackle the situation peacefully. These include:

- i) Military tactics before the war
- ii) Strategies during the war
- iii) After-war principles

These military strategies are the model tactics for military strategists at all times. By adopting these strategies, the holy prophet^p has made wars less destructive.

He fought almost 27 wars, and only 254 Muslims were martyred, and approximately 1018 non-Muslims were killed in these wars.

1) Military Tactics Before The War

He^p has always defined some military tactics before the war to settle issues peacefully or to prepare his army for war.

i) Inclination Towards Reconciliation

He^p gave education about adjustment

and reconciliation towards the enemy if he wants to get reconciliation. A case in point in this regard is the example of the treaty of Hudaibiyah of 6th A.H.

ii) Economic Blockade of Enemy

The Quraysh of Makkah, a persistent enemy of the Prophet's mission, sought to obstruct Muslims from migration to Madinah. To counter their hostility, the Prophet adopted an economic strategy by threatening the Quraysh's trade routes to Syria, which were vital to Makkah's economy. This move alarmed the Quraysh, who, in response, prepared an army to counter the forces of Madinah.

iii) Espionage and Surveillance of Enemy

It is considered a crucial war strategy for the preparation of war and risk assessment. He also took practical steps to get information about enemy moves and remained updated according to it.

For this purpose, he^p deployed his detectives in Arabian Peninsula who provided information about enemies.

iii) Training of Army

The most imp thing before he was for a commander is to invest in the training of his army and to establish a strong army with advanced military tactics. In this regard, he^p sent his soldiers to neighbouring states of Syria and Ethiopia to learn different military tactics and fighting skills.

2) Strategies During the War

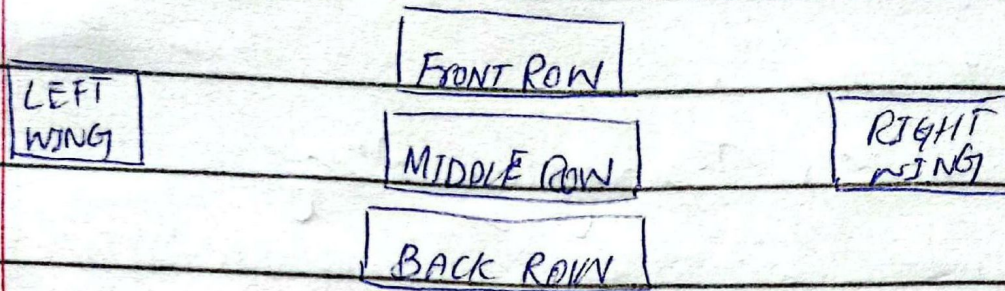
Prophet^p set certain rules to deal enemy and during the war and also used some strategies to defeat the enemy. These included:

i) Positioning of the army

He^p always arranged different groups of army persons at different points and advised them not to move away from it.

These positions are specified following the self-defence and attacking positions of the army. According to the Holy Prophet,

there will be five parts of the army which include:



ii) Division of Battalions

According to the military strategies of the Prophet^ﷺ, Battalions were divided into five groups according to their capabilities and military attacks. These included:

- Infantry → formed the core of the army, engaging directly with the enemy.
- Cavalry segment → provided speed and maneuverability for attack and defense.
- Archers → were positioned strategically to protect the flanks and disrupt enemy advances.
- Luggage carriers → were responsible for safeguarding supplies and provisions.
- Security personnel → maintained internal discipline and protected camps from surprise assaults.

iii) Rights of Non-Combatants

Non-combatants are the people who did not participate in wars, for example, women, children, aged people, sick men, worshippers, idiots, etc. He^o was not in favour of killing them.

iv) Rights of Combatants

Combatants are those people who participated in wars and fought actively against Muslims. For these people, it is allowed to use weapons, but the Holy Prophet^o also drew boundaries towards dealing with combatants.

v) Prohibition of Night Assault

The Holy Prophet^o abolished the custom of night assault which the Arabs used to deliver and laid down the rule that the enemy was not to be attacked before dawn.

vi) Bar on Destruction

It is a common habit of invading armies to destroy the crops, lay waste in the

fields, massacre the population, burn the houses, etc. Islam, however, declares these practices as evil and unlawful and prohibits them strictly. As depicted in Quran:

-- ﴿يَسْخَرُونَ مِنْكُمْ﴾

“And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals, and Allah does not like acts of mischief.” (2:205)

3) After War Principles of the Prophet

i) Ban on the Killing of Prisoners of War

Generally, a prisoner of war could be at the discretion of the military leader, executed, freed, ransomed, exchanged for Muslim prisoners, or kept as slaves. Women and children prisoners of war cannot be killed under any circumstances, regardless of their religious convictions, but they may be freed or ransomed. Women who are neither freed nor ransomed by their people

ii) Ban on killing of an Envoy

He^c prohibited the killing of ambassadors.

iii) Prohibition of Breach of Treaty

Breach of treaty is the worst crime according to Holy Prophet^c. He condemned mutiny, breach of the treaty and assault on the partners in the treaty on several occasions.

iv) Prohibition of Mutilation of Dead Bodies

Islam has strictly prohibited the mutilation of the dead bodies of enemies and to cut their body parts.

v) Principle of the general amnesty

In most cases, when the Prophet^c won the war, he^c mostly announced the general amnesty to the defeated. For instance, at the conquest of Makkah, the Prophet^c declared the amnesty to the Quraysh and those who took refuge in the Kaaba and the house of Abu Sufyan.