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Discuss the contents of peace agreements made during the Prophet's era, by determining the parties thereof.

1) Introduction:-

Describing the attributes of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Quran says:-

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

And this showed in his statecraft because he made the best effort to ensure peaceful existence for all irrespective of their religion, race and class.

In his era (in Mecca and Medinah), he made several peace treaties and agreements with Polytheists, Christians and Jews to ensure peaceful existence of Muslims with them and to pave way for Islam.

2) Peace Agreements of Prophet's Muhammad (PBUH) Era

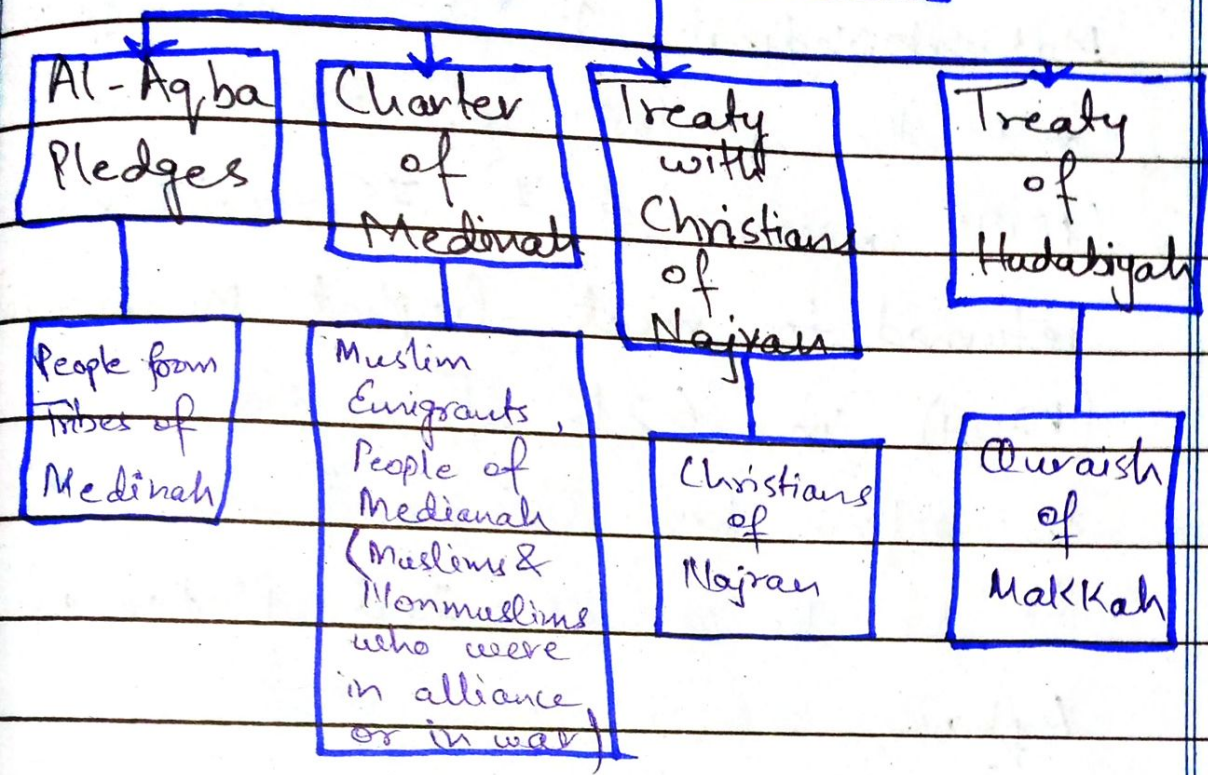
The peace agreements of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) clearly show that his strategy for spreading Islam was never aggressive. He firmly believed in the Quranic injunction

لَا إِكْرَهَ فِي الدِّينِ (2:256)

There should be no compulsion in the acceptance of religion.

Therefore, he used peace agreements throughout his prophethood to ensure peace between Islam and its adversaries. The four main peace agreements that we know before and after hijrat are

Peace Agreements of Prophet Muhammad and the Other Parties



3) Contents and Parties of Al-Aqba Pledges -

In the summers of 620 AD, 6 men from Medinah met Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They were highly impressed by his qualities and mission. Soon 5 of them returned with 7 more men and collectively they pledged to refrain from sins. This pledge came to be known as 1st pledge of Aqba.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), then sent Musab Bin Umair as Ambassador to ~~Makkah~~ Medinah. It was his efforts and the popularity of Muhammad's (PBUH) message that 75 more men returned to meet Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in 621. They also pledged to refrain from sins and this came to be known as 2nd Pledge of Aqba.

4) Contents and Parties of Charter of Medinah :-

The parties of this Charter were explained in the following words:

"From the Apostle of God, for those of Quraysh and the Inhabitants of Medinah who accept Islam and adopt the faith; and for those who are subservient to them in war or alliance."

In short the charter was a unilateral declaration from the Prophet (PBUH) and the other parties were Muslims of Medinah, Monotheist Jews and Polytheist tribes of Medinah.

a) Political Clauses

i) Muslims and Jews will constitute a political entity.

ii) Valley of Yathrib to serve as a sanctuary for all citizens.

iii) All cases (includes that of murder) to be referred to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

iv) Decisions of war should be made collectively.

v) Muslims should fight in the cause of Allah.

vi) None of the non-Muslims should offer refuge of life or property of Quraish of Makkah against Muslims.

b) Religious Clauses

- 1) Believers to be one unit.
- 2) If a Jew accepts Islam, he would not be tyrannized and no help would be offered to anyone against him.
- 3) In case of aggression or breach of treaty, people from both parties should present themselves for accountability.

c) Civic Clauses

- 1) Quraishite emigrants and people of Aus and Khazraj to be responsible for their words.
- 2) Tribes will pay blood money on cooperative basis.
- 3) Tribes will ransom their prisoners out of their own pockets.
- 4) None of the believers to harbour any murderer or abet him in any way.
- 5) Pious Muslims to rise against anyone who rebels, commits fornication, tyranny or attempts to stir mischief.

5) Contents and Parties of Treaty with Christians of Najran :-

This treaty was between Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Najran's Christians. Regarding this treaty, **Montgomery Watt** says :- "The Christians were probably better off under Arab Muslim rulers than they ever were under Byzantine Greece."

a) Contents :-

- i) Their priests and monks will not be apprehended
- ii) They will ^{not} be considered inferior
- iii) They are exempt from Muslim battles
- iv) Muslim armies will not attack them
- v) They will be provided justice on filing a suit in court.
- vi) No man will be held for other's fault.

6) Contents and Parties of Hudaibiyyah Treaty :-

The parties of this treaty were Muslims of Medinah and Quraish of Makkah.

a) Contents:-

i) This year Muslims will go back and return for Umrah next year. They will only stay for 3 days and keep their swords sheathed.

ii) There will be armistice and no fighting between two parties for 10 yrs

iii) An tribe or person who wishes to join Muhammad can do so and vice versa

iv) If a young man with guardian goes to Muhammad without permission, he shall be returned.

The same doesnot applies to Quraish.

7) Conclusion:-

All of the treaties of Muhammad (PBUH) show his love for peace and co-existence. All of these treaties helped to spread Islam in the long run and pacify adversaries.