

# (.Operations Personnel of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W

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Operations personnel were all the units responsible for planning, command, training, upgrading weapons, equipment and war strategies and all matters related to these. We shall now proceed :to give details about each one of these

## **First: Department of Operations**

The Department of Operations was a division that was responsible for planning, military command and securing backup from the military and administrative standpoint.

a) Orders of operations: Before or during battle, the Holy Prophet (who was also the supreme commander) issued orders to the army either verbally or in writing, as he had done with 'Abdullah ibn Jahash and Abi Salamah ibn 'Abd al-Asad al-Makhzumi when sending them to the tribes of Bani Asad, or to the commander of the groups during the Battle of Hunayn and during their entry into Makkah.

These orders included the following:

1. Objective: In all the orders of all the battles and military missions, the objective was specified.
2. The necessary measures to be taken during war: as in the Battle of Badr, digging the trench in the Battle of Ahzāb, or before the start of the war like in the Battle of Tabuk.
3. Choosing the specific location: For each operation, the area where the forces would remain and from which they would not cross would be specified, as in the Sariya of 'Abdullah ibn Jahash towards Nakhlah and like the Battle of Dhi Amr towards the place where this tribe had settled and also in the 'conquest', towards Makkah.
4. Ways of reaching the goal: It was necessary for the army to cross over certain points, lands and known areas, like in the battles of Badr, Saleem, Hdaybiyya and Khaybar.
5. Direction: The Muslim army would march towards the places where the enemy had been mobilized or towards the areas where the supreme commander had specified for them, like in the Sariya of Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib towards the land of the Juhaynah, Abi Qatāda ibn Rab'i al-Ansāri towards Batn Adham and Kurz ibn Jābir Fahri towards the area where he could join the group of 'Ikl and 'Urayna, and also in the Battle of Bani Quraydha to the place where the Jews were living.

6. Locating the most appropriate place to set camp: The most appropriate place for the army to set camp and create a base, where the required amenities were close by and from where administration and medical care could be given, was ascertained. Like in the battles of Badr, Uhud and Khaybar.
7. Guarding and protection: The number of guards, their commander, their orders, their position and all related issues were specified.
8. Secret code and identification: In order to identify the forces of the (Muslim) army, secret codes were used, which were changed from battle to battle and from mission to mission, as was done in the battles of Badr and Khandaq and the Sariya missions of Abu Bakr against the Bani Kilāb and of Usāma bin Zayd towards the Abnā.
9. Changing the flag-bearer: The flag-bearer would be appointed by the supreme commander and would be changed from battle to battle. The responsibility of carrying the flag was given to one of the soldiers who was known for his trustworthiness and reliability.
10. Commanding the rear: For the rear of the army, a specific commander was appointed who was in charge of all the administrative matters [of that portion of the army]. Some of these commanders would always be given this responsibility [in every battle].
11. Command of Sariya missions: For separate and independent intelligence gathering or military missions, a leader was chosen over a group of forces.
12. Special conditions: These special conditions called for special measures, like giving an immediate response to the enemy in the Battle of Dhāt al-Suwayq and other battles, carrying out attacks and assaults like in the battles of Bahrān and Bani Lihyān, the conducting of suicide missions by 'Umayr ibn 'Uday bin Kharshah in order to assassinate 'Asmā', by Sālim ibn 'Umayr in order to kill Abi 'Akf, by Muhammad ibn Maslamah in order to kill Abi Ashraf and by 'Abdullah ibn 'Ateek to assassinate Salām ibn Abi al-Haqeeq.
13. Securing different requirements in the battlefield: like securing intelligence information and administrative requirements in the battles of Badr, Khandaq and Tabuk.
14. Increasing the zeal: When the orders would be issued, effort would be made to ensure that the spirit and zeal of the soldiers should be lifted while at the same time disheartening the enemy. Like the orders that were issued in the battles of Badr and Uhud.
15. Insisting on the steadfastness of the troops: This can be clearly seen from the words of the supreme commander in all the battles.
16. Seek recourse in patience: Patience is the prerequisite of victory and many a group consisting of few individuals has been led to victory over a large army of soldiers through patience.

17. Sacrificing one's wealth and life: These are the two prime ingredients of volitional warfare and for this reason, the Holy Prophet (S) put a lot of importance on these two factors in all his orders to the troops. This was the summary of the orders given and we will now proceed to explain each one in detail

### Objective .1

**Every war has 'objectives'. The objectives of the Holy Prophet (S) in the battles were:**

**Acquiring information.**

**Invading the enemy caravans.**

Weakening the economic strength and cutting the lines of reinforcements from the west and east for the Quraysh and the Jews of Khaybar.

Securing freedom for the propagation and spread of Islām as was the case in the Sariya of Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and Khālid ibn Walid against the Bani Hārith and also that of 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib ('a) against the Bani Mudhjah.

Displaying the strength and might of the Muslim army as in the battles of Hamrā al-Asad, Hdaybiyya and Muta and that which was done against the Romans.

Instilling fear and terror in the hearts of those who allied themselves with the enemies of Islām or were preparing to do so.

Enacting peace treaties with neighboring tribes: like the Bani Dhumrah, Bani Juhaynah and Bani Mudlij as well as the treaty with Bani Kalb; meaning those who had come to fight in Dumat al-Jundal, Tabir and the outskirts of Shām. This was done in order to secure the success of the military operations.

Concentrating on the points and areas of tactical and strategic importance like the areas around the coast and towards the east after the Battle of Badr against the Bani Saleem who were a threat to the revolution and also towards the north in order to survey the area of Dumat al-Jundal and invading upon the enemy who were waiting for opportunity or had already begun working against the Muslim army, like the Jews and the Romans.

Assassinating those who had evil intentions against the supreme commander, the army troops, the caretakers of the towns or the Islāmic revolution in general.

Punishing the Jews of Bani Qaynuqā' because they broke their allegiance and their covenant for their own benefit, and similarly the Bani Nadhir, Bani Quraydha and the inhabitants of Khaybar. The Prophet (S) destroyed the pact of these four groups with each other as well as their pact with the enemy Arab tribes.

Giving a strong reaction against Abu Sufyān and his forces: this was when they had the intention to invade Madina and ransack it in the Battle of Dhāt al-Suwayq.

Dealing with the two tribes of Bani Saleem and Bani Ghatfān because they had declared their open enmity against Islām.

Preventing other tribes from attacking Madina, such as the tribes of Bani Tha'labah and Muhārib and others.

Teaching and training the children of the Ummah and purifying their hearts from filth, doubts and falsehoods.

Creating fear against Rome and Persia: The Prophet (S) made it his general policy in dealing with these two states and preparing for war with them before they launched an attack on the Muslim lands or gain control over the northern borders.

Taking the battle to the enemy territory: The Prophet (S) would only fight against the enemy outside Madina and the moment he received information that the enemy intended to attack Madina, he would launch a pre-emptive strike on them before they could start marching from their own lands. This happened in many of the battles like Bani Saleem, Dhi Amr and Bahrān against the Arab tribes and in Muta and Tabuk against the Romans.

Taking revenge and punishing those who killed innocents: As was the case in the Sariya of Kurz ibn Jābir Fahri in order to teach the 'Ikhl and 'Urayna a lesson. Or in order to punish those who were acting against the rules and regulations of the leader and ruler, like the opposition of the Jews of Bani Quraydha to the agreements and conditions of the homeland pact.

Realizing peace: This was another objective. An example of this was the Battle of Hudaibiyya against the Quraysh and the Sariya of 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Auf against the Bani Kalb.

Coming to the aid of the oppressed: as was the case in the Battle of Dumat al-Jundal which took place on the orders and instructions of the supreme commander.

Belief in oneness and unity: This was done by destroying the idols that were adorned and worshipped by the Arabs. An example was the Sariya of Khālid bin Walid in order to destroy the idol 'Uzzā', that of 'Amr bin 'Aās to destroy the idol Siwā', of Sa'd ibn Zayd al-Ashal to destroy the idol Manāt, Tufayl ibn 'Amr to destroy the idol Dhil Kiflayn and 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib ('a) to destroy the idol al-Filis and all the idols of the Ka'bah.

.Collecting taxes from the tribes that had accepted Islām

## **Sending military missions and commanding the army in battle .2**

The Holy Prophet (S) arranged a number of military missions and battles or personally took on the responsibility of commanding them. On the tactical and strategic level he did the planning

and expounded the short and long term goals and the primary and secondary objectives, just as the primary objective of the Battle of Dumat al-Jundal was crushing the tribes of that area who were forcing the traders and travelers to pay a toll and the secondary objective was to instill fear in the hearts of the Romans.

The primary objective in the Battle of Khaybar was also to bring down Khaybar and deal with its inhabitants while the secondary objective was to prevent the Arab tribes from allying themselves to the Jews and preparation for war against the Quraysh in Makkah and those enemies who were deemed more dangerous.

He (S) also planned 'offensive' and 'defensive' operations and would always use assaults and offense in every battle. He made this something that was ingrained in the minds and hearts of the soldiers. He would specify different stages of battle, meaning he would not just attack the enemy at one go, rather he would launch assaults on them at different times. If the enemy did not launch an all-out attack against him, he would launch successive and consecutive attacks on them and would fight each one independently while at the same time preventing others from joining forces with the enemy.

This is precisely what he did in his battle with the Jews. He started with the Bani Qaynuqā' and ended with Khaybar. He employed the same tactic against the Arab tribes of Bani Tha'labah and Ghatfān in the Battle of Dhi Amr, Bani Saleem in the Battle of Bahrān and Bani al-Mustalaq in the Battle of Bani al-Mustalaq and others.

The Prophet (S) would command the troops using 'new techniques' of warfare, including centralization of command, organizing the ranks, laying siege, mobile defense, pre-emptive, offensive and psychological warfare

### **Studying what was important and necessary .3**

The Holy Prophet (S) would define the primary and secondary objectives for his commanders and would stress on the importance of achieving the primary objective. His commanders would also adhere to this and issues of secondary importance would not deter them from their priorities. For example, when the supreme commander sent 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb to fight the 'Ajz Hawāzin, after doing this he refrained from invading the other related tribes saying, "The Prophet (S) only commanded me to fight against the Hawāzin."

Tufayl ibn 'Amr also accomplished his primary objective which was to join with the army that was sent towards Tā'if as well as his secondary objective which was to break and destroy the idol Dhil Kiflayn and he never crossed over the limit that was determined for him. In the same way, he (S) specified the missions during the entry into Makkah by selecting the commanders

of the different groups, and in defining the priorities, he considered the personality of the commander, the type of enemy, the ordinances and the route to be taken

#### **Preserving the goal .4**

The goals of the Holy Prophet (S) were numerous and various and all of them were geared towards the complete annihilation of the enemy both materially and spiritually and the spread of the message of Islām, which he accomplished with complete freedom and total success. The Prophet's enemies would always try to prevent him from attaining his goals, but they were not successful and he (S) was steadfast in guarding his goal. The supreme commander would also require this from his commanders.

For example, he sent 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib ('a) to destroy the idol of the tribe of Tā'i and also sent him in the second phase to spread Islām among the tribes of Yemen. 'Ali ('a) arrived in their land. The tribes rose up in opposition to him, but he fought them and continued his important mission until he was able to secure his goal. However, Khālid bin Walid did not remain steadfast in his mission to invite the Bani Judhayma to Islām and diverted from his goal. .Despite not having been ordered to kill them, he slaughtered some of the men of the said tribe

#### **Exhortation to fight .5**

The Prophet (S) would exhort the soldiers and fighters towards dedication and self-sacrifice, to the extent of their ability, and would try to strengthen their spirits, resolve and readiness before they entered into battle. He would call on them to be just and fair in their dealing with those whom they were fighting. He would also encourage his soldiers and urge them to be brave and would recall the reward of those who were patient in the battlefield.

This yielded many results, because the soldiers would jump into the heat of battle and in order to combat the enemy, would try to overtake death. Many of them came to the battlefield with complete courage. In one of the battles, a soldier who had a date in his mouth spit it out, another threw away his armor and fought courageously. The youth would keenly prepare for battle and as a result, with a small force they were able to gain victory over large hoards

#### **The flag and banner .6**

The Liwā' was one sign that was carried by the most courageous and strong soldier in the Muslim army under the command of the supreme commander. The flag-bearers, who were

personally selected by the Holy Prophet (S), would be changed in every battle. The color of the flag was white and its shape was quadrangular. As for the Rāyah, it too was held by the bravest and strongest soldier of each tribe and depending on the number of tribes present at the time of organizing the army, it had various shapes and colors. The Rāyah was normally smaller than the Liwā'. The flag was a means of strengthening the spirits of the forces, and as long as it was hoisted, the forces would continue fighting. If the flag fell, the troops would be faced with defeat, so the commander would insist on guarding the flag and self-sacrifice until death in order to safeguard it. The flag-bearer would strive to keep the flag hoisted even if it meant having his hand chopped off or giving up his life. If one of the brave-hearted soldiers saw in himself the ability to rescue the army from defeat, he would raise the flag again after it had fallen, and it would not be long .before the dispersed army would again assemble and prepare to fight

#### **Code words and identification .7**

These were words by which the soldiers would recognize each other when battling against the enemy. This code word was changed from battle to battle. In the Battle of Badr, the code was 'Ahad... Ahad' (one... one). The code word of the Khazraj was 'O Bani 'Abdillah' and the code word of the Aus was 'Bani 'Ubaydillah'. In the Battle of Khandaq, the code word of the army was 'Hum La Yunsarun' and the code of the Muhājirs was 'Ya Khaylullah'. In the Conquest of Makkah, Hunayn and Tā'if it was 'O Bani 'Abdul-Rahmān'. The code word was used when the forces would communicate with each other and was especially necessary during the night, because the clothes were similar and there was the possibility of mistaking enemy patrols for friendly patrols. Even today, code words are still used. These secret codes are always different in each war, and when they are found out by the enemy, they are immediately changed. The mentioned codes were not limited to battles, rather the commander of Sariya missions would also give his troops different codes when sending them out on missions. Just like what happened in the Sariya of Abu Bakr against the Bani Kilāb .and that of Usāma against the Abnā

#### **Being prepared for war .8**

This took the form of giving a quick response to the incursions of the enemy and not giving them an opportunity to accomplish their intended goals. It was required of the soldiers that they should quickly assemble at the call (of the supreme commander) with their weapons,

armor and means of transport ready to launch counter-attacks. It is obvious that the Muslim army was prepared for battle with Kurz ibn Jābir Fahri when Madina was attacked and the strong response of the army when the supreme commander declared war against the Bani

Quraydha, therefore they were able to get prepared for battle within a short period of time. The preparation included wearing armor, sharpening swords, carrying spears and getting the means of transport ready. After assembly, all the columns would move towards the enemy and would in the end come together. The Holy Prophet (S) was the first person who prepared for battle in this war (against the Bani Quraydha).

In the Battle of al-Ghābah, the soldiers quickly became ready with their battle gear, weapons and mounted their horses and joined 'Ayniyyah ibn al-Hisn. The Muslim army displayed its mobilization and readiness in the Sariya of Usāma ibn Zayd. At this time three thousand troops who were fully equipped came together on the orders of mobilization and assembled in one day, something that is not seen even in today's armies, because mobilizing such a large force cannot be done in less than three days. In reality, the zeal for war and martyrdom, discipline, sufficient training and constant preparedness for battle were the necessary pre-requisites for .this higher level of readiness

### **General mobilization .9**

The general mobilization is the creation of a battle-plan and making the necessary preparations for the armed forces, mobilizing the human, material, psychological and spiritual resources for battle while at the same time being economically and materially prepared for it. The Noble Prophet (S) would mobilize the people in groups or all together depending on the available resources and the type of enemy.

This is why he conducted a general mobilization during the battles of the conquest and Tabuk, while in the Battle of Badr, he only ordered a partial mobilization. In most of the wars and battles, this would take place in secret but sometimes, as in the case of the Battle of Tabuk, it was conducted openly.

The armed forces would thus be prepared. When the order of mobilization reached the other Muslim tribes, they would all be called to prepare for battle. Once the troops were organized, they would be ready for a new mission; as had happened in the Conquest of Makkah and the Battle of Hunayn. The battle gear and weapons were taken on loan from Safwān ibn Umayya before the battle and some more was bought to make it more complete, and the people would also assist in the preparation out of their fervor by contributing what was required, and they would be encouraged to do so.



The spirit among them would be strengthened and the faith in the righteousness of the battle that they are fighting would be ignited in them, the love for battle and combat became intensified, and when it was announced that certain equipment was required, it would be collected and sent to fight the battle against the enemy. It was certain that the people would all answer the call to mobilize and none of them ever turned away, and they would wear their battle armor in the quickest time possible. In some of the battles, the speed of mobilization and preparation of the army was such that it was done in less than 24 hours. The distinguishing feature of the mobilization of the Muslim army was that the forces would try to outdo each other in obedience (to the Prophet) and would act with complete love and devotion

#### **Taking the appropriate counter-measures .10**

The Holy Prophet (S) would retaliate against the enemy in various ways, among them were: Preventive counter-measures which would be taken when information about an impending enemy attack on Madina was underway. This was seen in the battles and missions such as

Bani Saleem, Dhi Amr, Bahrān, Dhāt al-Ruqā', Dumat al-Jundal and Bani al-Mustalaq.

Disciplinary counter-measures: These operations were conducted as a result of the breaking of pacts, heedlessness and impudence of the enemy against the rules and regulations of the Islāmic state. Of course it was normally the case that first warnings would be given, as in the

case of the battles against the Bani Qaynuqā', Bani Nadhir, Bani Quraydha and Khaybar.

Decisive and conclusive counter-measures: This was a more serious and firm response to the enemy's incursions, to such an extent that they should never again even think of carrying out similar attacks in the future. Like what was done to the Bani Quraydha after they broke their pact and mobilized themselves to fight against the Muslims in the Battle of Ahzāb, and as a result they were all killed, and also what transpired against Abu Sufyān, the commander of the enemy forces, when he tried to threaten the Muslims and the response to his threat was much stronger and more forceful.

Immediate counter-measures: This would take place immediately and swiftly after the enemy's incursion and would be forceful and strong, to such an extent that it would weaken the enemy's base and inflict severe loss and casualties on them; like in the battles of Badr al-Awwal and al-Ghābah

#### **The routes taken by the forces .11**

The Holy Prophet (S) would study and specify the routes (to be taken) from Madina to the

enemy, just as he had done in the Battle of Badr, Hdaybiyya and Khaybar, and he would also define the arrangement in which the forces would march, and would also keep an eye over the main focal points like the movement of the forces from Madina towards Tabuk and from Madina towards Makkah, and would also select the places where 'military parades' would be held in the areas of settlement and assembly.

In the Battle of Badr, the parade and review of the army in the area where it was assembled and camped was carried out in al-Buq'a. In the Battle of Uhud, the Muslim army was reviewed in Shaykhayn and in the Sariya of Usāma bin Zayd it was carried out in Jaraf. The places of rest for the forces in the daytime and nighttime and the places where the army should concentrate were also considered by him (S) as in the battles of Badr and Tabuk. He (S) would select the shortest route to arrive at the goal and would keep it hidden from the view of the enemy. At the same time, he would try as much as possible to choose routes that had wells and plenty of water supply throughout.

The supreme commander would give the following instructions to the army when they set out: To be careful not to make noise and avoid anything that would draw the attention of the enemy, like the bells worn around the necks of camels.

Not to use shiny and glittery tools.

Staying behind or moving ahead of the forces.

Moving during the night in order to remain hidden from the enemy.

Taking routes that would not bring them directly face to face with the enemy, like in the Sariya of 'Abdullah ibn Jahash and the Conquest of Makkah.

Moving swiftly in order to remain one step ahead of the enemy and arriving at the place of battle at the appropriate time.

At the same time, the movement of the forces would be such that a group of information gathering patrols would be kept at a distance in order to keep watch. During this march, the .forces were either on foot or on riding on camels

## **The area of assembly and mobilization .12**

This was a place which the Prophet (S) had chosen to conduct the following matters: assemble the forces, organize them, review them, carry out a selection of some soldiers and ask others to return, prepare the battle gear, weapons, conduct a final check, arrange the necessary food and water provisions, prepare (the soldiers) physically and mentally, make the battle-plan by taking all the possibilities and different battle scenarios into consideration, select and announcing his deputy in Madina, review the flags and banners and select those

who will carry them, determine the tribes who will participate in the battle and review the  
.means of transport to be used by the forces

### **The area of encampment and setting up base .13**

This was a place selected by the Prophet (S) for the army to set camp. In the Battle of Badr it was in al-'Adwat al-Dunyā, in the Battle of Uhud it was in front of the Mountain of Uhud and in the Battle of Khandaq it was near the Sala' Mountain. The camping of the troops in a suitable place, like an area which is fortified in three directions and keeps the enemies at bay; as in the Battle of Khandaq where only the northern area was accessible, and also selecting suitable places in battle, such that this place is in accordance with all the required conditions of a base camp. For example in the Battle of Khaybar, the said places were chosen by the inspection of

the commanders and the decision was based on the following criteria:

Securing the ease of access and movement for friendly forces while at the same time making it  
hard to reach for enemy troops.

Facing the direction which would cause the sun to be behind their own forces; like in the Battle  
of Badr and other battles.

For the troops to be in front of a mountain or any other natural fortress; as in the Battle of  
Uhud.

Keeping the base camp near sources of water and some major highways.

Plentitude of grass and grazing ground in the area.

Making sure the area is suitable medically and hygienically.

Ensuring the ground is hard and with areas where the battle can be fought.

Being far away from the reach of enemy arrows; as in the battles of Bani Nadhir, Bani  
Quraydha and Khaybar.

Having the possibility of moving away in case there are no reinforcements.

The ability to cut off the enemy supply routes and stopping them from obtaining it (supplies).

The possibility of securing the necessary cover and camouflage.

Being able to fully control their own forces.

Ease of movement in order to keep watch over the enemy and spy on them.

In this area, the Prophet (S) placed the command post at an elevated position, so that it would be possible for him to have complete control and ability to supervise the war. He (S) would arrange the forces in ranks according to their battle instructions; like the cavalry, the infantry, the special forces, the vanguard, the archers, the rear and others.

The measures that were taken in the area when the base camp was set up included: review

and assessment; inspection of the troops; assembling the troops and their accouterments; organizing the ranks; specifying the battle instructions, and the necessary guarding and protection especially of the command post; appointing the commanders of the ranks and contingents including those responsible for the command post and its protection; preparing the troops psychologically and spiritually; encouraging them to fight; specifying the secret code words for identification; issuing the command to start the war; the mode of co-operation between the forces as was done in the Battle of Badr – between the units like in the Sariya of Tufayl ibn ‘Amr, between the commanders who marched towards Tā’if after the Battle of Hunayn and between the units and contingents, as in the troops who entered Makkah during the Conquest of Makkah; conducting training exercises on the principles of archery, attack or the techniques that the soldiers should use when they come face to face with the enemy; specifying the time and place for war which would be before the enemy was well prepared and in the hours of twilight. Aside from these issues, in the command post the battle with the enemy would also be supervised

#### **Keeping the operations secret and covert .14**

The Holy Prophet (S) would try very hard to conduct the military operations in a covert and clandestine manner. Therefore he would take extra measures to attain this goal. For this reason, the mobilization and preparation for war would take place in secret; like in the Sariya of ‘Abdullah ibn Jahash and the Conquest of Makkah etc. and aside from a select few who were known for their trustworthiness and their ability to keep secrets, nobody was aware what the intention and goal of the Holy Prophet (S) was.

The Holy Prophet (S) would then issue brief instructions for the commander of the operations and would complete his orders to the commanders either by letter or verbally. He (S) would also specify the time it should take for the mission to be conducted and the direction and ways by which they should divert the enemy. He would keep the missions and preparations for some of the battles hidden and would not do them openly. Aside from this, he would give instructions that the secrets should be kept hidden and the goal should not be announced until the appropriate time.

He would disperse spies and intelligence agents, arrest enemy spies in order to prevent them from sending information to the enemy, blockade the routes used by the enemy spies so that they could not take information back to the enemy base, and would actually not permit any of these forces from entering or exiting the said area. In order that the intelligence apparatus may function even better, the Holy Prophet (S) would personally oversee these operations and

.would stress on their importance

### **Specification and assessment of the battle ground .15**

The assessment and specification of the battle grounds was linked to the military, economic and political prowess of the commanders and personnel. Strategically, a more prudent and complete, and from the tactical viewpoint, the enemy, the land and the battle strategy a firm position was selected.

The Holy Prophet (S) would assess the battle readiness in all the ranks and would constantly seek information and updates about the enemy and his own forces in the battlefield and was completely aware of all the other military and political conditions. As a result, his orders would only be issued after being supported by strong intelligence and various other means of affirming their prudence and correctness.

Other matters that were examined and looked into by the Holy Prophet (S) included:

With regards to the enemy: their strength, assembly, preparation and weaponry.

With regards to the friend: Furnishing complete battle gear and military equipment and making them equally trained and motivated.

With regards to the land: ensuring that it is suitable for setting up camp and carrying out .military operations

### **Co-operation .16**

The Holy Prophet (S) would encourage his forces to co-operate with each other when he was readying them for battle. He asked the soldiers and all the people to assist the army materially. In the same way, he would instruct the commanders to work with those who were under them, the soldiers to co-operate with each other, the units to collaborate with one another, the cavalry to support the infantry, the rear to work with the vanguard and the contingents to work with the army. In the same way he would himself, as the supreme commander, work with the soldiers and in order to strengthen this bond, he instituted a pact of brotherhood between the .Muhājirs and the Ansārs and placed all the believers as one entity and one body

### **Invasion and attack .17**

‘Invasion and attack’ was one of the military strategies of the Holy Prophet (S) that he would implement against the enemy. He (S) employed a state of constant offense and would attack

the enemy continuously, and as a result he left them with no choice but to do things that would make their goals and intentions clear. The Prophet's goal in invading and attacking was displaying the strength and might of the Muslim army, gaining the upper hand over the enemy and continuously encountering them (and countering their intended attacks). The Sariya and military missions that he (S) would send was not for anything but invasion and attack, the Battle of Hamrā' al-Asad was only a show of strength and the Battle of Dumat al-Jundal was only fought to get information, learn about and test the strength and capability of the Roman army. The Muslim army fought Badr al-Aākhar only in order to gain the upper hand over the enemy and it was then that Abu Sufyān turned back on his promise of war and tried to give excuses (for not fighting). However, the Prophet (S) had decided to launch an attack and said: 'I swear by He in whose hand my life is, even if nobody accompanies me, I will come out'.to fight

### **Display of strength and might .18**

One of the manifestations of attack is 'psychological warfare' which is actually an indirect type of warfare whose goal is instilling fear in the enemy, weakening his spirits and preventing him from many of his aggressive plans. The Noble Prophet (S) used various methods to gain information in order to create fear in the enemy. In the battles of Hamrā' al-Asad, Khandaq and the Conquest, by burning the dry date palms and plantations of the enemy, he created a large fire and paraded the large number of troops and weapons he had in front of the enemy commander i.e. Abu Sufyān, before entering Makkah. Before the Battle of Badr, while performing the Hajj al-Tamatu', he slaughtered the camel that was linked to Abu Jahl. During the Conquest, he performed the Sa'ee between Safā and Marwa quickly, with his followers carrying sheathed swords, he performed the circumambulation while riding on a camel. Then he turned his cloak on the side and left his right arm open, ordering the whole army to do just as he had done. He praised those of them who displayed their strength to the enemy. These tactics were quite successful and assisted in destroying the resistance of the enemy, to such an extent that he had made them certain that they would by no means be .capable to come face to face with the Muslim army

### **Forewarning prior to battle .19**

The supreme commander would commence war in the following manner: In a direct manner i.e. he would normally remain in a condition of continual war with the enemy,

and would use it as a preventative measure.

Giving the enemy an choice between accepting Islām and war. He would send this type of warning through a messenger, and if he did not get a response he would commence the war; like in the Sariya of 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Awf and Khālīd bin Walīd to Dumat al-Jundal and against the Bani al-Hārith.

Nullification and breaking of pacts: When the enemies would break their peace pacts, the Prophet (S) would send some people to warn them and remind them of their treachery and betrayal; just as he had done in the 'four battles' against the Jews.

The Holy Prophet (S) would fight three types of battles. One was the battle fought without any warning or notice, like the battles that he fought against the hostile Arab tribes or the Quraysh and external foes. In these cases, he would launch surprise attacks on these groups in their own territories. Another type was preceded by forewarning, so he would mostly give the enemy an option and try to reason with them kindly as he wanted all the people to accept Islām.

However, nullifying the pact was dealt with in a different way when it came to the Jews who lived in Madina and its outskirts. The Prophet (S) created a pact of defense with them as 'citizens' and had acknowledged them as fellow compatriots. Despite this they broke their pact and turned into a center for plotting and ambush (against the Muslims). He (S) also sent a representative to the Bani Qaynuqā' and the Bani Nadhir and gave them a notice that they should leave their lands in ten days, but they did not pay any attention to the warning reacted .with disdain. The Prophet (S) was left with no option but to wage war against them

## **The order to commence the war .20**

The order to start the war was issued by the supreme commander or by the commander of any independent unit and would usually be marked by the sounding of "Allahu Akbar" which would be repeated loudly so that all the soldiers could hear. In the Battle of Hunayn, the Holy Prophet (S) took advantage of the loud voice of his uncle 'Abbas for this. The soldiers would be asked to remain silent (after the battle had begun). No loud sound was heard from any soldier, except the movement of their lips and whisperings of 'Takbir' and 'Dhikr'.

In the Battle of Badr, during the heat of battle, someone (from among the enemy) said: Don't you see them? It is as if they are all mutes; they don't say anything but they are alive and are benefitting from life.

In the new battles, the command to commence the war was issued by sounds that were made from behind trenches or fortified areas or by fires that were thrown up in the air or by other means of communication.

The command to begin the battle with Takbir and other similar slogans would heighten the .bravery and courage of the troops and would remove the fear of battle from their hearts

## **Combat .21**

Battle and combat between the two sides would start in such a way that first one or a few brave soldiers from the Muslim army, and from the enemy's army, would come forward. These combatants would use various weapons including swords. They would either be on foot or horseback and would be in full armor and would move to fight each other in single one-on-one combat. Each one of them would kill one or more of his opponents. It is then that the other soldiers rush in and the full scale battle starts with complete intensity.

In the Battle of Badr, three fighters from the Muslim army stood to face three soldiers from the polytheists and ended up (successfully) killing their opponents. In the Battle of Uhud, one person from the Muslims went to face one person (from the polytheists) and caused him to fall to the ground by one strike of the sword. This (one-on-one) combat would be observed by the supreme commander and the soldiers of both sides. So if they would kill their opponents, the spirit and courage of the troops would be strengthened while weakness and a sense of defeat .would prevail over the enemy

## **Organization of the battle .22**

The Assembly of the troops and arrangement of their encampment was done in spaced out columns which would be organized in one line or more. The arrangement of the soldiers in form and depth, was dependent on the type of war, enemy forces, military facilities, the number of forces, battle gear and equipment available, the type of weapons used and the terrain. The aim of this organization was creating a readiness for launching the main strike on the enemy, gaining freedom to maneuver, co-operation and assistance, preventing the strikes of the enemy and reducing losses.

The Arabs of the Age of Ignorance would employ the 'Karr wa Farr' (strike and flee) tactic in their wars. But the Holy Prophet (S) invented a new form of arrangement and organization of the ranks with a specific order, and this technique has also been used in more recent wars and especially in World War II. The arrangement of ranks was either in the form of a single column or many columns.

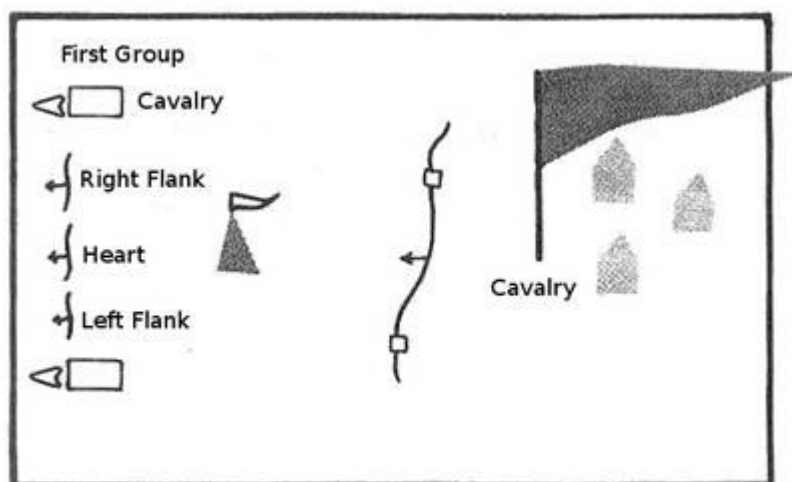
In the Battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet (S) arranged the troops in two columns, in such a way that he placed the archers in the first column and in the second column he positioned the



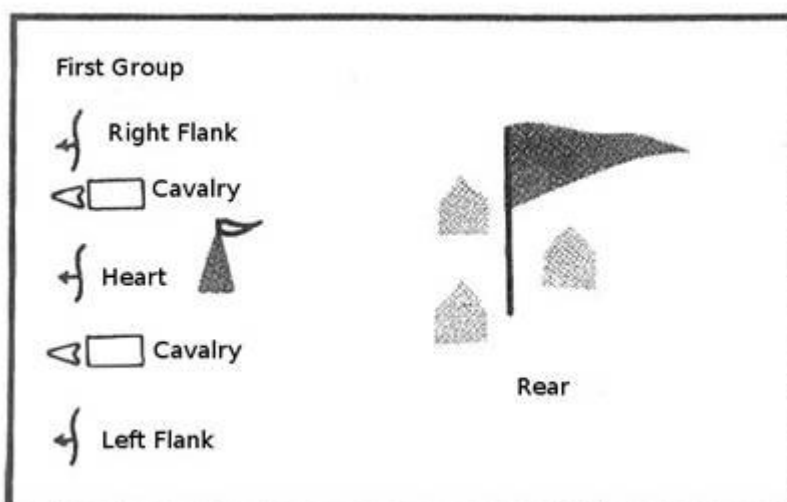
spearers and the infantry, and behind this column he put the rear of the army. Later, he changed this arrangement and organization and transferred the first column to the heart of the army and reorganized the right flank, the left flank and also the infantry. When the soldiers would be arranged into two columns, a section of the cavalry would remain behind the second column and in the rear i.e. behind the infantry and the second column. The women, munitions, preserves, the commander's camp, the place for prayer, food and other provisions were placed at the rear of the army. The place of the commander was in the heart and the first column of the army, the lookout post was at an elevation from where he could get an overview and control the battle, just as the Holy Prophet (S) had done in when commanding the battles of Badr and Uhud.

Organization and arrangement of the troops in battle

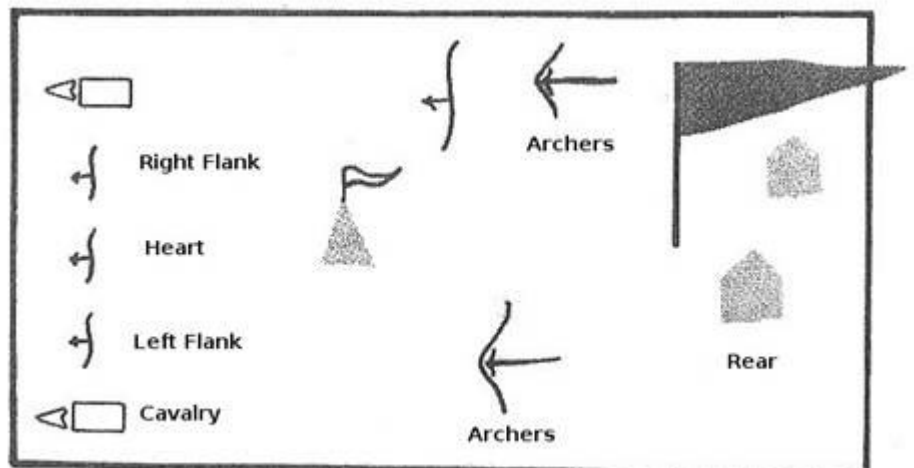
### First scenario



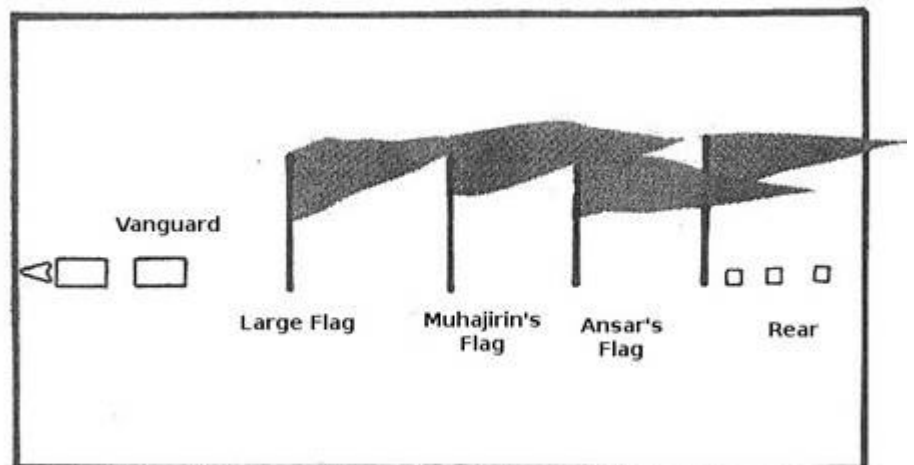
### Second scenario



### Third scenario



### Fourth scenario



The situation on the ground in the Battle of Uhud and its results

#### KEY

The place where Hamza the uncle of the Prophet (S), 'Abdullah ibn Jahash and Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr have been buried.

The place where the martyrs of Uhud have been buried.

The area where there Muslim army fought with the army of the polytheists.

The last borders of the battle in the east and west.

The place where Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib ® was martyred.

The place where archers from the Muslim were positioned to guard the pass on the small Mountain of al-Rummāh.

The place where the Holy Prophet (S) was hidden after he had been injured - it was inside a

**fissure in the side of Mount Uhud.**

**Masjid al-Fasah.**

**Masjid al-Mustarāh (where the Holy Prophet (S) rested with his army before entering into Uhud).**

**(Masjid al-Dir' (where the Prophet (S) stopped briefly when returning from Uhud**

### **Battles fought in order to capture forts (Harb al-Husun) .23**

The Holy Prophet (S) employed the tactic of 'siege' in order to capture forts and aside from Khaybar and Tā'if, he never used 'direct attack and assault', because this type of warfare led to many casualties. Using heavy weaponry on a wide scale as in the Battle of Tā'if was not common practice for the Muslim army.

Many military operations would be carried out while laying siege on the fortresses, the most important among which included: completely cutting off any aid and support to the enemies who were besieged inside the fortresses, distancing one's own forces from the reach of the enemy's arrows, deceiving the besieged enemy using different means in order to get them to come out of their fortress.

The Bani Qaynuqā' surrendered after fifteen nights of siege and the Bani Nadhir had also been besieged for fifteen days after which they lowered their heads in surrender on the command of the Prophet (S). The Bani Quraydha were also dealt with in the same manner. After this, the inhabitants of Khaybar came to the Prophet (S) and agreed to obey his commands, thus they were exiled to Syria. The Holy Prophet (S) also besieged Tā'if and after a while he caused them to come out of the siege.

The Noble Prophet (S), in his orders, limited the attack on the Fortress of Khaybar to the eastern direction, just as the present day armies do. He made the priority of the mission was to gain control over the primary fortress and then he gained control over all their forts one after another. Once their fall and defeat was complete, he gave the order for them to attack the secondary fortress. They gained control over that too and captured (the forts) one after the other until they achieved their goal completely and then proceeded to conquer the main defense fortress which was another of the orders the army had been given.

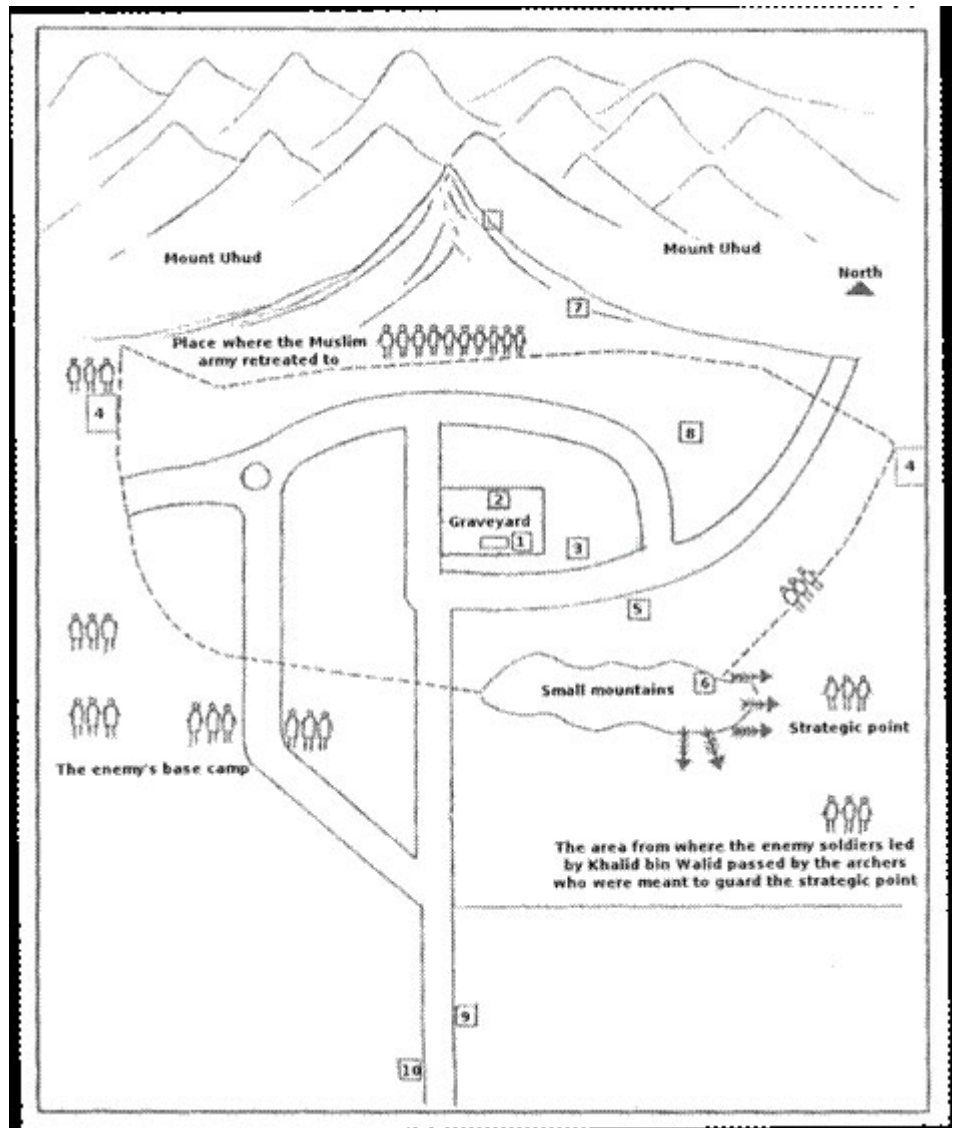
The Muslim army turned its focus on the first defensive fort, and especially on the Fort of Nā'im and once that had fallen, they moved towards the other forts. Before carrying out any attack on these forts, he (S) obtained the required information and surveillance on them, then he positioned his forces in the area of al-Rajee' thereby separating the Ghatfān (who were allies and helpers of the enemy) with the inhabitants of Khaybar and through this tactic he gave

the advantage to the Muslim army, because he was able to prevent these tribes from working with the Jews of Khaybar thereby making it easy to attack the forts from all sides and conquer them while also being free to maneuver and divide the enemy. The supreme commander started with the Fort of Nā'im and conquered it. Then he attacked the other forts and in this way he conquered the forts gradually, one by one

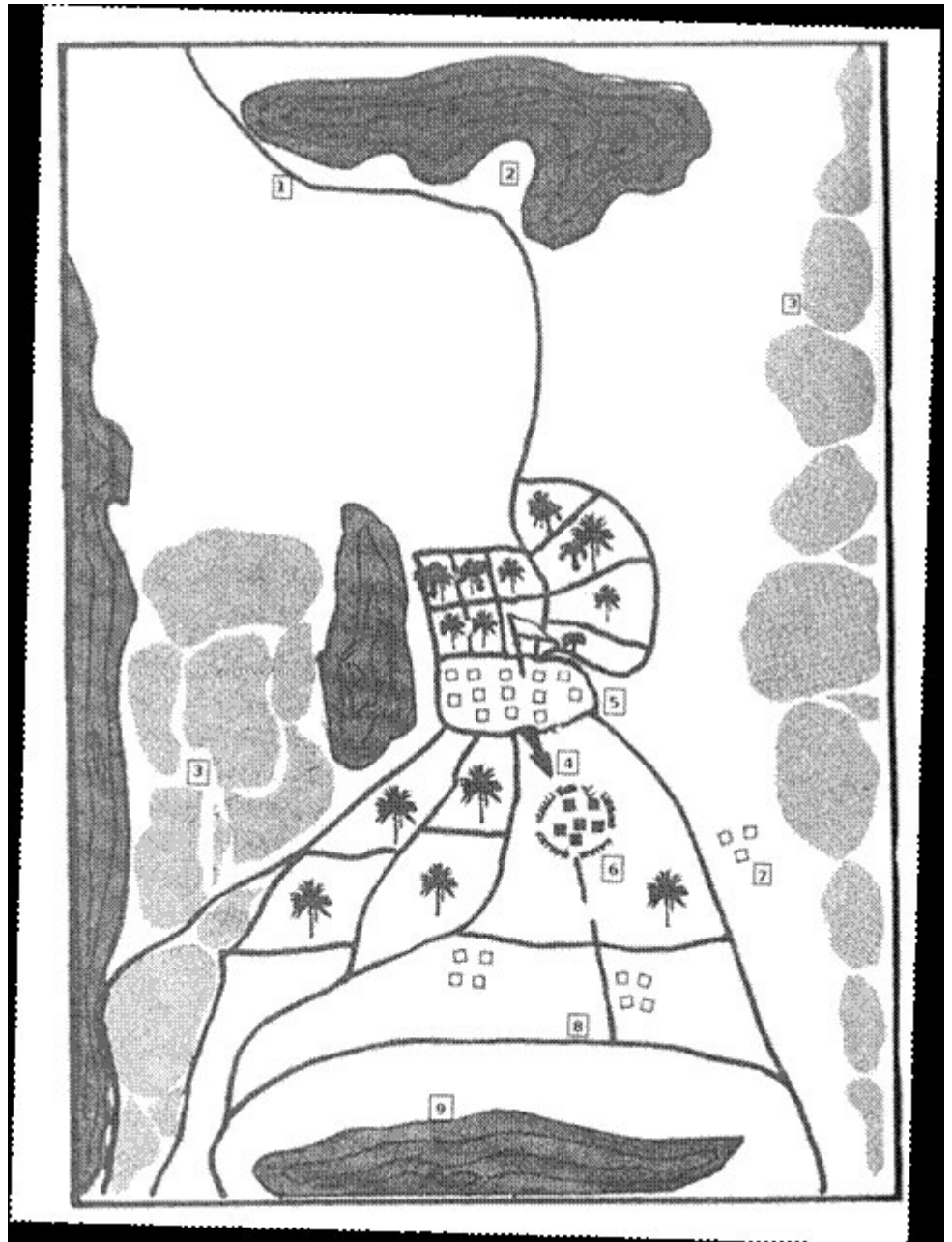
#### **Battles with barriers (and impediments) .24**

Using barriers in battle has been an age-old practice that started with the very first battles. For example, the Romans and Persians would use trenches in their battles. However, we do not have any evidence that the Arabs used such barriers before the advent of Islām. The Holy Prophet (S) ordered that a trench be dug in order to prevent the army of confederates from gaining access into Madina from the north and west, and selected the suitable ground for this purpose, and personally specified its dimensions for the army i.e. the length of the battlefront which was from Mudhād up to Dhubāb Rātij was dug by the Muslim army. In order to remove the gravel, they used metal tools, pickaxes and large buckets and the removed gravel was poured outside to hide the front-line that would counter the enemy and the remaining areas were concealed using rocks that were brought from Mount Sala'. Then passageways from which their own troops could pass from the trench were made. In order to dig through hard ground and rock, water was first poured over it and then it was struck with the pickaxe continuously until it eventually broke up.

**(The Battle of Bani Qaynuqā' (fig. 1**



(The Battle of Bani Nadhir (fig. 2



KEY (fig. 1 & 2)

1. The route from Basra to Damascus
2. Mount Uhud
3. Volcanic rock
4. Route taken by the Muslim army (fig. 1) & Mount Sala' (fig. 2)
5. The city of Madina
6. The Jews of Bani Qaynuqā'
7. The Jews of Bani Quraydha
8. The Jews of Bani Nadhir
9. Mount 'Aseer

The length of the ditch was five thousand cubits, which is equivalent to two kilometers and its

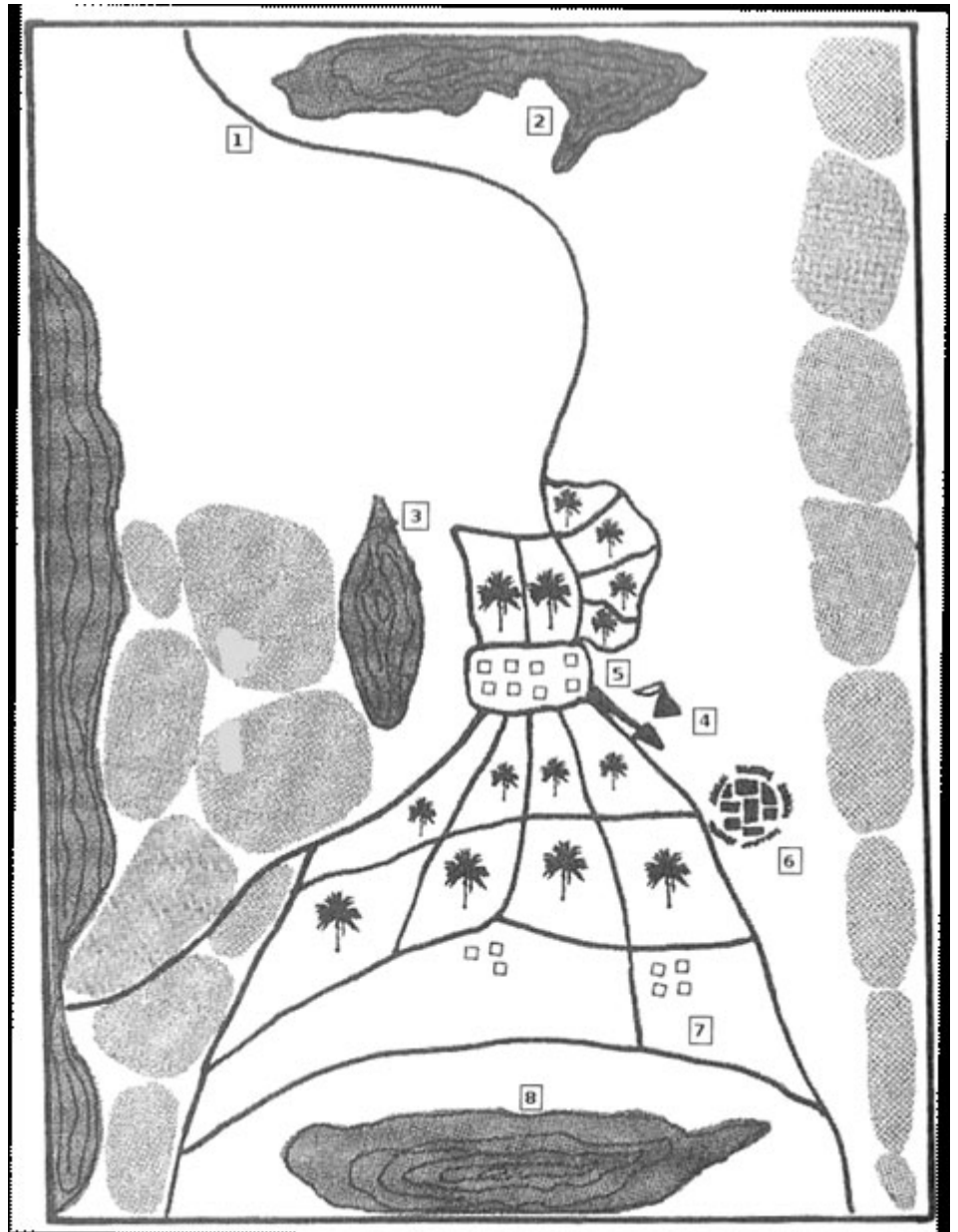
width was nine cubits, which is equal to four meters, while its depth was between five and seven cubits which comes up to about three meters. Digging the trench took between six to ten days. The Muslim army spread out along the border of the trench to face the enemy. They carried with them the weapons that were required and stood right behind the trench. They would remain on constant watch and guard the areas where there was a possibility that the enemy could pass through.

When the soldiers of the two armies came face to face, they began shooting long arrows towards each other. If the enemy came near the trench and crossed over it, they would use their swords, and when this was happening to some of the enemy soldiers, and in the process 'Amr ibn 'Abd Wudd was killed, the other soldiers retreated and rejoined their forces behind the trench. In this battle, the Muslim forces used stones abundantly and had gathered them along the line of the trench.

The trench that was dug was quite helpful to the Muslim army and acted as a barrier between them and the enemy. In the end it must be said that the Battle of Khandaq is not much different from the present-day battles, and aside from different weaponry, there is very little else that is dissimilar.

### **Battles in cities and towns (Harb al-Mudun) .25**

After he had concealed all his might and strength and military prowess from the inhabitants of Makkah, the Holy Prophet (S) conquered this city. In this battle, he also: used psychological warfare; entered the city from all four directions; divided the operations according to the arrangement and formation of the troops; explained the route, direction, goal, force and other matters; asked them to be careful to refrain from bloodshed.

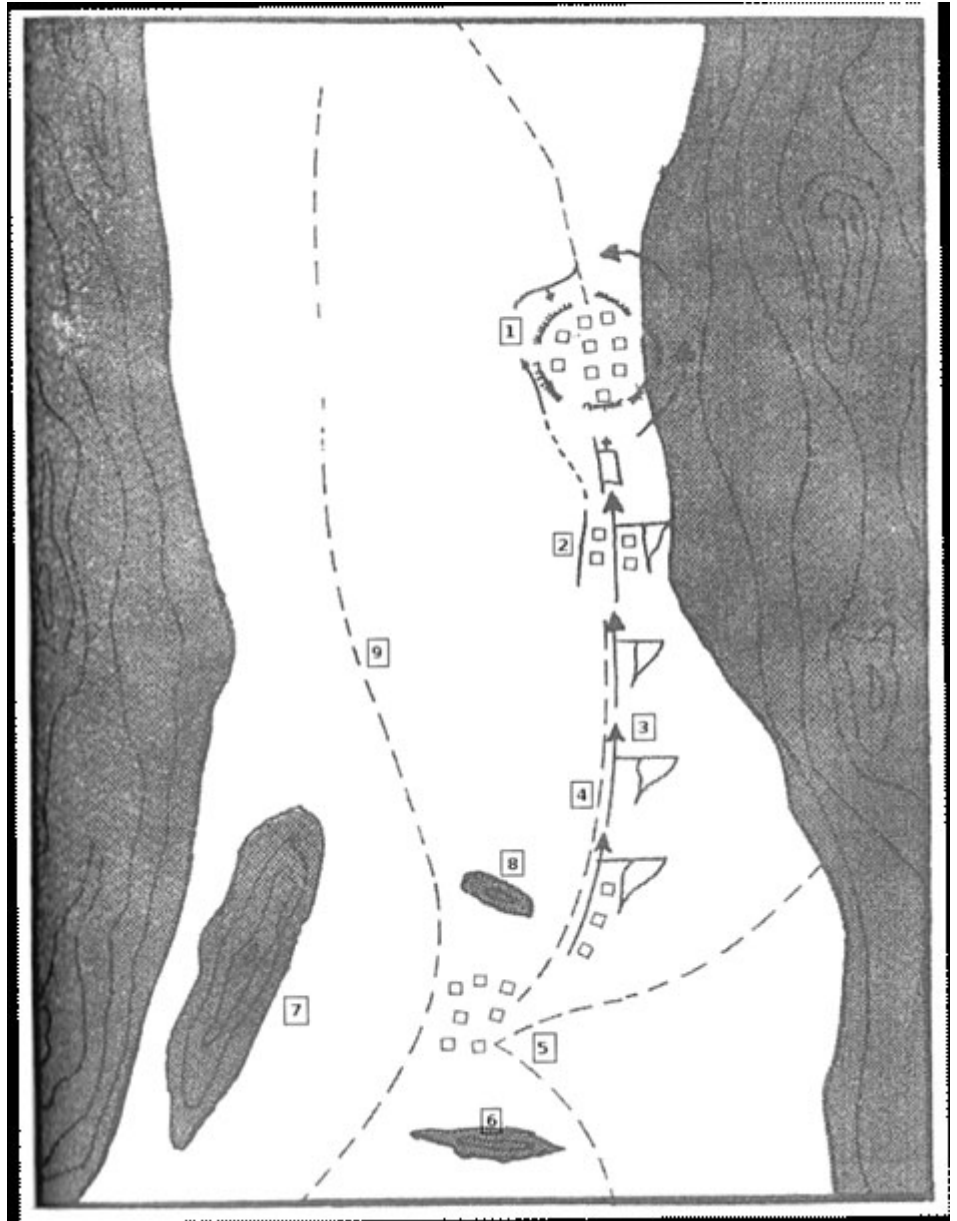


**The Battle of Bani Quraydha (Ref. KEY 2.1)**

**KEY 2.1: Battle of Bani Quraydha**

- 1. The route from Basra to Damascus**
- 2. Mount Uhud**
- 3. Mount Sala'**
- 4. The Muslim army**
- 5. The city of Madina**
- 6. The Jews of Bani Quraydha**
- 7. The Jews of Bani Nadhir**
- 8. Mount 'Aseer**

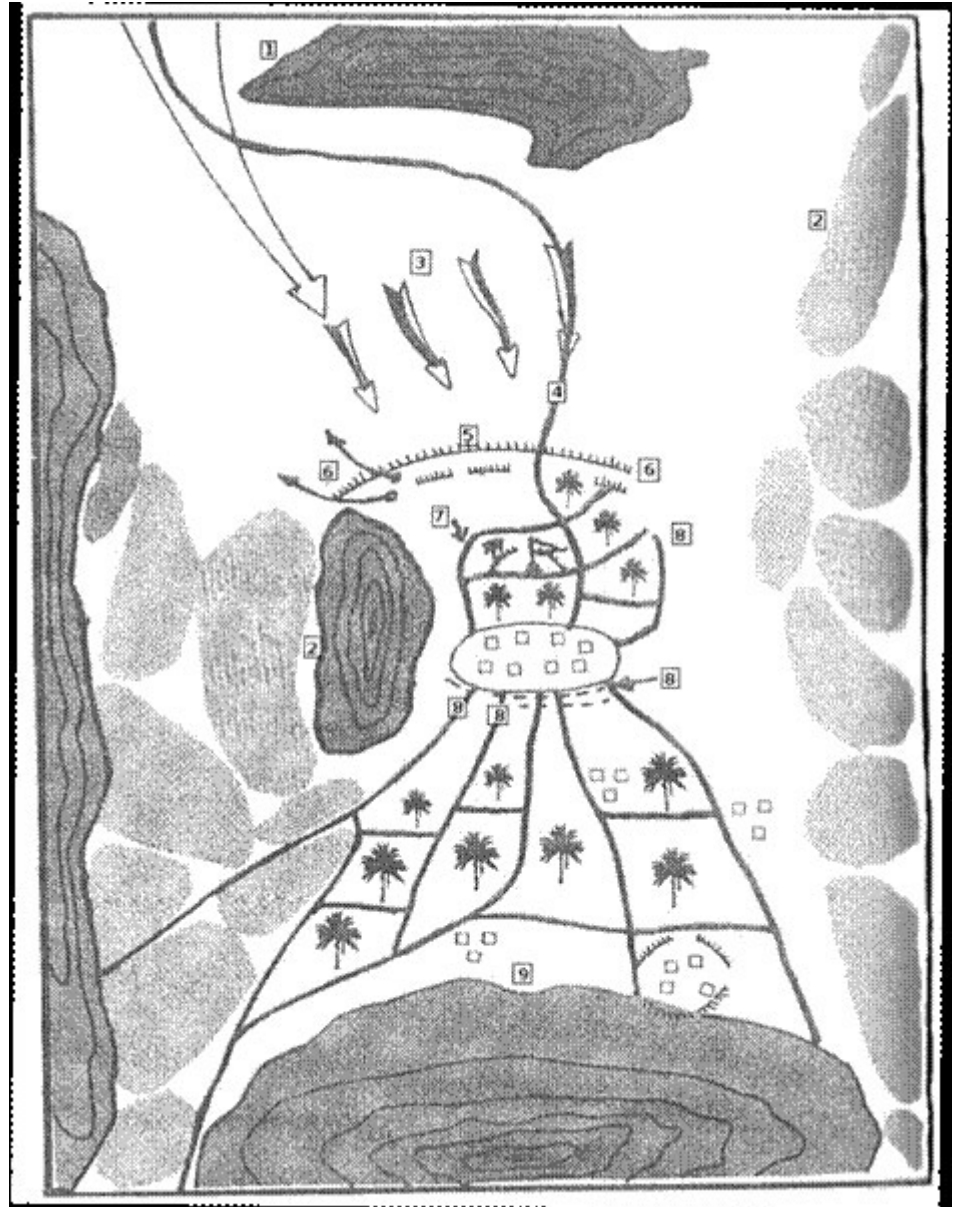




**The Battle of Khaybar (Ref. KEY 2.2)**

**KEY 2.2: Battle of Khaybar**

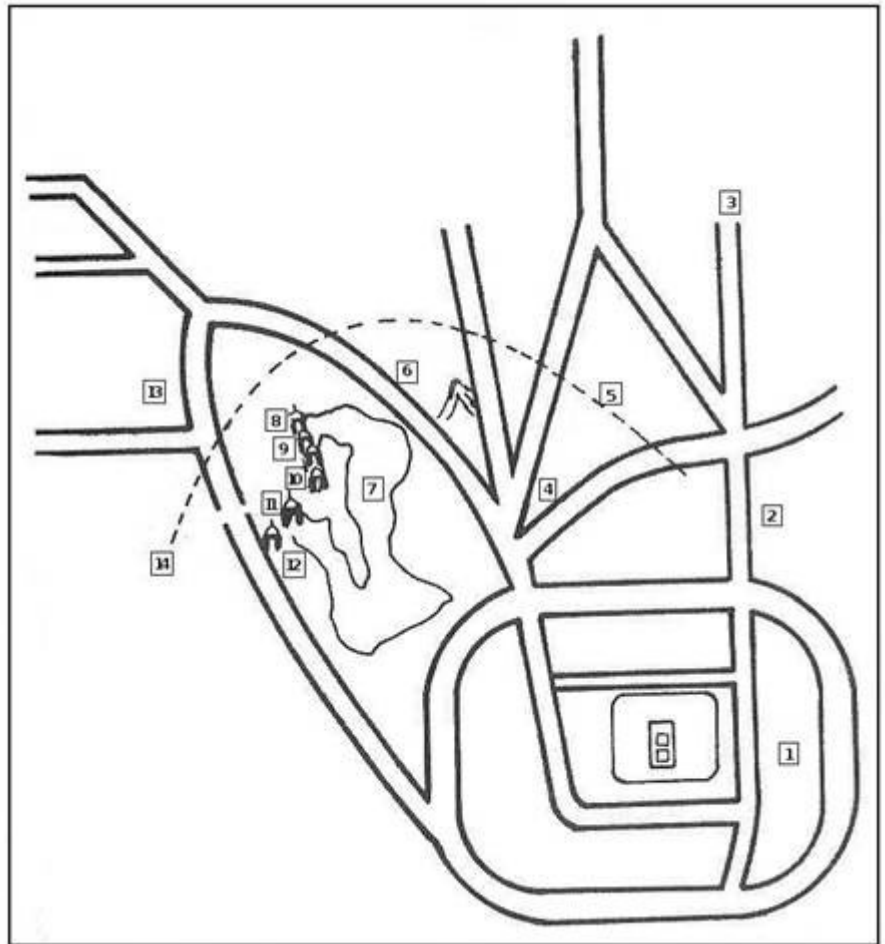
- 1. Khaybar**
- 2. Fadak**
- 3. The Muslim army**
- 4. The route traversed by the army (in eight days)**
- 5. The city of Madina**
- 6. Mount 'Aseer**
- 7. Mount Sala'**
- 8. Mount Uhud**
- 9. The route to Madā'in**



The Battle of Khandaq (Ref. KEY 2.3)

KEY 2.3: Battle of Khandaq

1. Mount Uhud
2. Volcanic rocks
3. The confederate army (Ahzāb)
4. The place where the enemy was blocked
5. The defensive trench (2 km long)
6. Permanent guard-posts

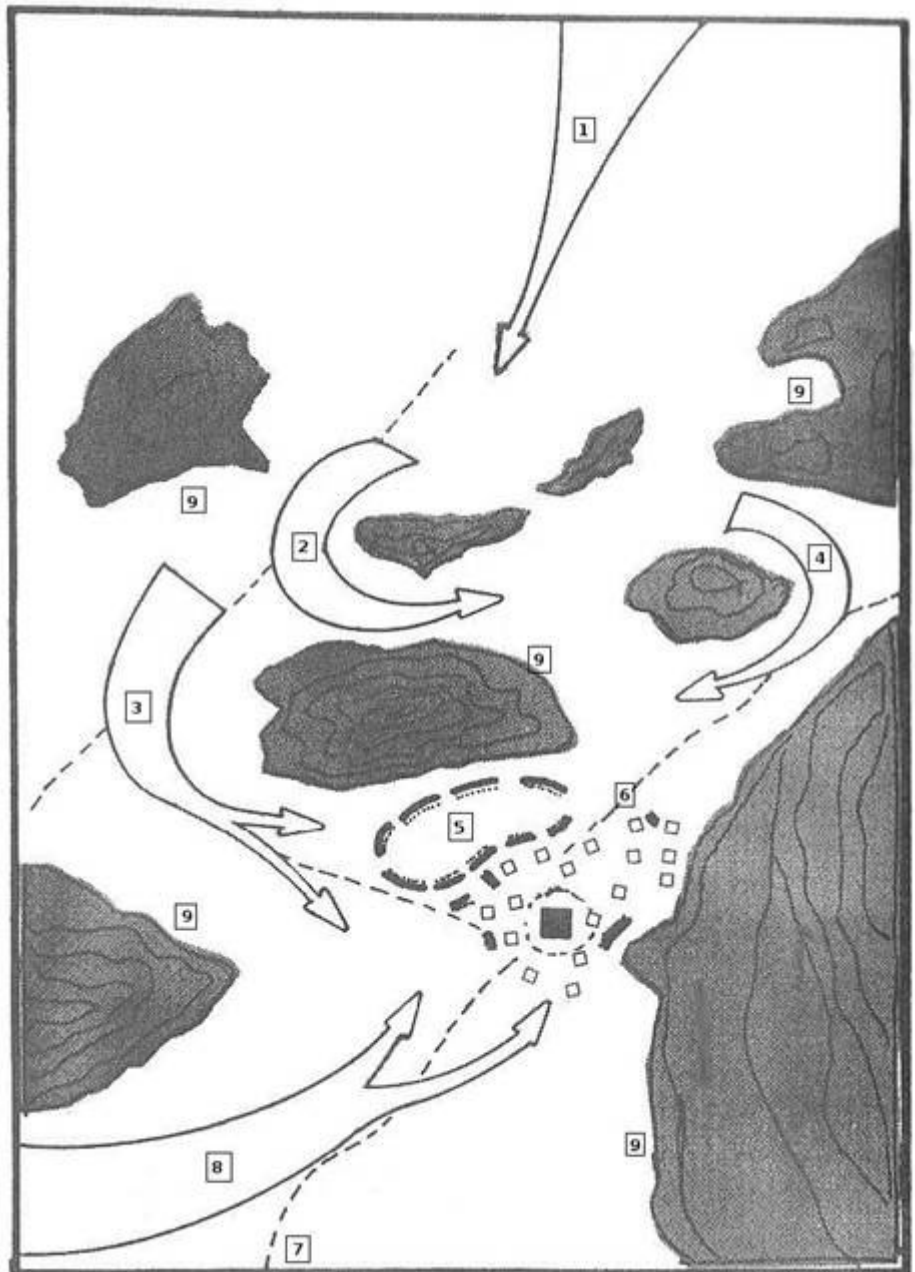


Current map of Madina with the place where the Battle of Khandaq took place and the location of the al-Masājid al-Sab'ah or 'seven mosques' (Ref. KEY 2.4)

KEY 2.4: Present-day Madina

1. The graveyard of al-Baqee'
2. Abu Dharr al-Ghaffāri Street
3. The area of Uhud
4. Sayyid al-Shuhadā Street
5. Path of the trench (that was dug in the Battle of Khandaq)
6. Abu Bakr Street
7. Mount Sala'
8. Masjid al-Fath
9. Masjid Salmān al-Fārsi
10. Masjid 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb
11. Masjid Abu Bakr
12. Masjid 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib ('a)
13. Masjid Dhul Qiblatayn

(14. Masjid Fātimah bint Muhammad (S



The Conquest of Makkah (Ref. KEY 2.5)

KEY 2.5: Conquest of Makkah

1. The Muslim army - 10,000 strong

2. The forces of Abi 'Ubaydah ibn Jarrāh

3. The forces of Qays ibn Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah

4. The forces of Zayd ibn 'Awām
5. The place where the Muslim army encamped
6. The city of Makkah al-Mukarramah
7. Entrance into Makkah
8. The forces of Khālid bin Walid
9. Mountainous areas

He instructed the inhabitants of Makkah to throw down their weapons, close their door and windows, and show no resistance whatsoever. It was after these orders and instructions that he set up camp for the army in Hajun, and after conquering Makkah, he again prepared them for the next important mission.

Indeed, the supreme commander was highly capable in carrying out all these measures. Among other things, he made it clear to the people of Makkah that they were incapable of resisting the mighty Muslim army, and in this way he entered Makkah peacefully and enacted a peace treaty without any bloodshed or war.

#### **Daily reports .26**

These reports contained details about the state of the battle, the munitions, the spirit and zeal of the forces, the requirements and the objectives, and would usually be compiled and sent to the supreme commander daily. The Holy Prophet (S) told all his commanders to chronicle the objectives and important developments of the battles and send them to him, so that he was fully aware of what was going on at their end. This was something that was not done verbally and it was not necessary to send it in the day, as the military do these days, rather, depending on the need, it would be sent after the mission or battle was over by means of a messenger on horseback or on foot.

The most important issues that were contained in these reports were: the missions of the units and especially the sentinels, intelligence information, the method of attack on the enemy, the results that were seen from that battle - especially the losses, booty and the measures that needed to be taken to strengthen the troops.

#### **An analysis of the battles on the various front-lines**

The Holy Prophet (S) would simultaneously battle on many front-lines, against the Quraysh, the Arab tribes, the Jews and the Romans. Therefore, he would prepare for numerous wars and in the end, he achieved victory in all of them. These front-lines included

### **a) The front-line against the Quraysh**

Before preparing for any war, the Holy Prophet (S) would send Sariya missions or numerous military missions to gather intelligence from the enemy forces and also to dishearten them or he would send them to attack their trading caravans - in order to display the might of the Muslim army. In this way, he established a somewhat new base of command in Madina. When the Quraysh came to learn of this change and technique, they decided that to destroy this army and were searching for an opportunity to annihilate the Muslim army before it could grow and

develop into an unstoppable power, and this is why they prepared for the Battle of Badr. Badr was the first full-fledged battle where the Muslim army displayed its readiness and capability for war especially by choosing the appropriate place for setting up camp, innovation, organizing the battle-formation into columns in depth, training, zeal, faith and a new belief, discipline and following orders, the necessary organization and hierarchy of command and by these military tactics, they strengthened their soldiers.

As for the Quraysh, they were stronger in terms of numbers and battle gear, and just as we will demonstrate, the victory is for the side that is better in terms of quality, not quantity; that is why the Prophet (S) astounded the enemy by his victory in Badr. After their defeat, the Quraysh became worried about the loss of their profits and trade and responded with a weak blow to this victory, and this was when Abu Sufyān launched an incursion into Madina and killed two civilians and then quickly returned towards Makkah. At this point, the Holy Prophet (S) sent soldiers to follow him as he was fleeing, but they did not catch up to him.

The supreme commander of the Muslim army would use economic sanctions and other means to put pressure on the Quraysh. For instance, he sent Zayd ibn Hāritha to al-Qurdah in order to attack the trading caravan of the Quraysh and he too was successful in overpowering it. In order to take revenge and gain freedom from sanctions and other pressures, the enemy assembled a large army and prepared for the Battle of Uhud. In the first phase, the Muslim army was victorious, but in the second phase, because of the disobedience of the archers to the orders of the supreme commander and their abandonment of their positions in order to take the spoils of war, the result turned in favor of the Quraysh.

In the end, however, the final result was in favor of the Muslim army i.e. when the Holy Prophet (S) was able to gather a large number of troops, and remain steadfast despite his injuries and losses, was able to launch a counter-attack in the Battle of Hamrā' al-Asad. In this way, by being a prudent, determined and courageous commander, and by using psychological warfare through which he instilled fear in the hearts of the enemy, he caused their forces to fall down helplessly.

The string of consecutive victories that were achieved by the Prophet (S) against the Quraysh, the Jews and the enemy Arab tribes, made it evident that there was a serious threat that was forming against them and they had no choice but to annihilate this Muslim army. For this purpose, they came together, joined hands and made covenants with each other so that they could assemble a united army to fight against the Muslims. As a result, some Arab tribes and Jews joined with the Quraysh and launched what was to be known as the Battle of Confederates (Ahzāb).

The confederates came into the field with a large force, numbering almost ten thousand strong, and proceeded towards Madina. However, they were stopped in their tracks by the large trench that was dug by the Muslim army. Although they made many attempts to cross over it, but all in vain and because of the differences that arose between them, they returned without having realized their military objective. From the ingenuity and innovation of a new strategy in warfare i.e. digging the trench and also due to the leadership of a confident, steadfast commander, using deception and having high spiritual values, the Muslim army gained victory over the Quraysh and their allies.

The consequence of this was that the reverence that the Arab tribes felt for the Quraysh was greatly reduced and they lost their position as central political and military figures. The respect of Abu Sufyān was lost because of this, he failed as a commander and his pivotal role was demeaned in the eyes of his allies. This was because the severe loss he faced was caused by a trench and by the fleeing of the tribes of Ghatfān and their partners, the Quraysh were put to shame and it became established that they are totally incapable of gaining a victory over this (Muslim) army.

After this battle, the Jews got worried and became sure that they would be annihilated because they broke their pledges and pacts with the Muslims. The Prophet (S) immediately besieged the Bani Quraydha and was successful in removing them from Madina. It must be said that this battle was the point of change for the Muslim army, from a defensive state to an offensive one.

News of the pressure and hardships that came upon the Quraysh because of their loss in this battle reached the Holy Prophet (S), so he sent Zayd ibn Hāritha with a mission to cut off their supply routes and prevent their caravans from travelling outside, and he successfully carried out this mission.

This victory was followed soon after by the Treaty of Hudaibiyya which was to tantamount to another victory for the Muslim army, however the Quraysh reneged on the agreement, and were looking for an opportunity to come out of it and stand up against to the Muslim army. As a

result, the Prophet (S) hastened his preparation for the Conquest (of Makkah) and marched against their city and homes. In order to enter Makkah, he made a secret plan and this plan was to carry out a surprise invasion. After he had bewildered the Quraysh and left them with no choice but to surrender to this army, he entered Makkah and gained victory over his enemies. After this victory, the Quraysh also acknowledged the Holy Prophet (S) as their leader and .accepted the religion of Islām

#### **b) The front-line against the other Arab tribes**

The Holy Prophet (S) fought many battles against these tribes, either commanding them personally or sending contingents and Sariya missions to fight against them. Aside from this, he would send individuals and small groups to assassinate the leaders of these tribes and those who were opposed to the Islāmic revolution and had evil intentions against its leader or had plans to carry out invasions (against them).

The tribes that were fought by the supreme commander were: Bani Saleem, Kadar, Bahrān, al-Jumūm, the tribes of Bani Tha'labah, Ghatfān and Mahārib in Dhi Amr, the tribes of Sirār, Bani al-Mustalaq in al-Muraisiya', the tribe of Bani Lihyān in Gharrān, Bani Hawāzin and the Thaqeef in Hunayn.

The Holy Prophet (S) also carried out Sariya and other military missions against the following tribes: Bani Asad in Qatan, al-Ghamr and Bani Bakr ibn Kilāb, Dhiryah, Bani Tha'labah and 'Awāl in Dhi al-Qassah, al-Tarāf and Bani Judhām in Husmā, Bani Fuzārah in Wādi al-Qurā, Bani Sa'd in Fadak, 'Ajz wa Hawāzin in Turbah, Bani Kilāb in Najd, al-Zajj and Bani Murrah in Fadak, Bani 'Abd ibn Tha'labah in al-Mayfa'ah, Bani Ghatfān in Yemen and Jabbār, Khadhrāh and Bani al-Malūh in al-Kuryah, Bani Qudhā'ah in Dhat Ittilā', Bani Hawāzin in al-Sayy, Bani Tamim in al-Suqyā and Bani Khath'am in Batn Musjā'.

The Holy Prophet (S) would carry out pre-emptive wars against these tribes, meaning that he would launch an attack on them first before they could march towards Madina. More often than not, the enemy would flee in fear the moment they heard that the Muslim army was on its way; to such an extent that they would also leave their animals behind as war booty (for the Muslim army to take).

The number of troops in these military missions would vary from battle to battle. In the Battle of Bawāt, the number of soldiers reached two hundred strong whereas in the Battle of Badr, they numbered three hundred and a few. Similarly, the numbers would change from Sariya mission to Sariya mission. For example, in the Sariya of Muhammad ibn Maslamah against the Bani Bakr, the soldiers numbered thirty, whereas in the Sariya of Zayd ibn Hāritha against the



tribe of Judhām, there were fifty. In the Sariya of Usāma bin Zayd to fight against the Romans, the number of forces reached three thousand. In this way, the supreme commander would send the appropriate number of forces depending on the number of enemy soldiers and the type of mission.

Because of the fact that the enemy tribes that have been mentioned were spread out throughout the Arabian peninsula, from far and near they were affected by the Muslim army and were never able to launch raids, invasions or attacks on Madina. The attacks of the Muslim army on these tribes were based on swiftness, surprise attack, marching at night, secret missions, gathering new and important intelligence; and this is why they would always attain victory.

The priorities in dealing with these tribes and making them submissive were specified in such a way that they would first concentrate their efforts on gaining control over the tribes in the coastal regions, then they would move on to those in the east (of the Arab peninsula) and finally the other tribes would be attacked. In the same way, they would start with tribes that were nearer and then proceed towards those that were further. They were also precautionous of ...the threat posed by the tribes of Bani Saleem, Ghatfān and Tamim

### **c) The front-line against the Jews**

After the Holy Prophet's migration to Madina, he (S) created a 'civil pact' with those who lived in that city. However, not long after this pact was created, the Jews of Bani Qaynuqā' were waiting for an opportunity to break away from the conditions of the pact they had made and bring defeat to the Muslim army, which had since developed and grown after the many battles it had fought. For this reason, they broke their pact and manifested their enmity for the

Muslims, and continued to do so despite the warning given to them by the Holy Prophet (S). In response, the Prophet (S) besieged them in their fortress and gained victory over them. From that day, all the Jews were waiting for the same thing to happen to them that had happened to the other Jews. Ka'b ibn Ashraf, Salām bin Abi al-Haqiq and other Jewish leaders who had gone against and fermented opposition to the supreme commander and the Muslims, had seen their end and were killed in suicide missions.

The Jews of Bani Nadhir also did not hesitate to betray the Prophet (S) after the Muslims lost the Battle of Uhud, and even made plans to assassinate him. This was when the Holy Prophet (S) sought to take the blood-money for the two Muslims killed by 'Amr ibn Umayyah al-Dhumri and had gone to their land for this purpose. Because of this treachery, the Prophet (S) besieged them and took over their lands.

The Jews of Bani Quraydha also joined hands with the Quraysh to work against the Muslim army in the Battle of Khandaq. Their attempts and struggles were to no avail and because they broke their allegiance to the Muslims, they returned back afraid and worried. That which they had thought of did not transpire and now they saw themselves under threat of being besieged. After the Battle of Khandaq, the Holy Prophet (S) himself led the army, marching towards the area of the Bani Quraydha. He fought a battle with them and put them all to death. Despite this, the Jews continued in their enmity with the Muslims and again began inciting and encouraging the Arab tribes to fight against the army of the Prophet (S). This is why the Battle of Khaybar took place. In this war also, the victory belonged to the Muslim army and as a result the greatest opposing force and enemy was done away with, and all the Jews surrendered. The battles against the Jews were different from other battles because they were in fortresses and secure shelters and were able to store the needed supplies and weapons for a long period of time. They used to construct their buildings in elevated locations so as to prevent the archers and lookouts, keep the enemies at bay by the strength and fortification of their fortresses, dig moats just outside the and filling them with water. The Jews would store a lot of other weapons and armaments in the fortress and would use them when needed. At the same time, they would be well trained and would possess all the battle gear that was required. The number of Jews was many times more than the soldiers in the Muslim army. In the Battle of Bani Qaynuqā' they numbered seven hundred as opposed to the four hundred in the Muslim army. In the Battle of Bani Quraydha, three thousand Jews fought against only seven hundred Muslims and in the Battle of Khaybar, there were ten thousand strong against an army of 1, fighters. Aside from this, they had a lot of wealth and wielded a lot of economic, political and military influence; but despite all this, they were still divided and each group would fight on its own without the help of the others. In the Battle of Qaynuqā', nobody joined forces with them and this was the case with the other battles against the Jews also.

In the battles against the Jews, the Muslim army had the following distinct characteristics:

Laying siege: this was a technique where all the aide and military assistance was completely blocked from reaching the enemy.

Remaining far away from the reach of enemy arrows.

Carrying out frontal and side attacks on their fortress, as they did at Khaybar.

Using psychological warfare.

Heightening the spirits of their own forces.

Selecting a suitable place to set camp.

Creating a split between the Jewish forces. This was done using the superior battle strategy of the Muslims. Once this was achieved, the Prophet (S) was able to gain separate victories over the Bani Qaynuqā', Bani Nadhir, Bani Quraydha and the residents of Khaybar. Aside from this, the Muslim army was distinguished by its unity of command, concentration, obedience, persistence and swiftness; all of which made it possible to attain victory and overpower the .Jews

#### **d) The front-line against the Rome**

The Holy Prophet (S) fought the first battle at the border with Rome (Dumat al-Jundal), and this was because of the importance of this location, because this place was the gateway for the future invasions of the Muslim army on Rome and the base of security and also was considered a secure barrier between Rome and the Muslims. By sending 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Awf on a Sariya mission, the supreme commander completed his gathering of intelligence and information from the tribes who lived near the area in order to learn about the Roman forces and how to invade them.

The Battle of Muta was the first full-fledged battle between the Muslim army and the Roman troops. It can be said that the goals of this battle were to display the might of the Muslim army and test the capability of the enemy. However the vast difference between the forces of the two sides made this war one-sided.

The supreme commander came face to face with the Romans for a second time in the Battle of Tabuk. One of the goals of this battle was the avenging of the Martyrs of Muta and launching an attack on the enemy and their allies. In this battle, no combat was seen, however a large part of its objectives were fulfilled. The pressure against the Romans continued and in the end, an army under the command of Usāma bin Zayd was send against them. He attained victory in this battle and in this way the first victory over the Romans was established. After this the Muslims continued in their war against them.

The Romans had become worried from the time when the first battle against them was fought near their borders and they turned their attention towards this growing Muslim army whom they expected to face again. However, the Holy Prophet (S) dispelled the fear of this enemy from his forces and he put the idea in their minds that conquering the lands of Shām is not difficult or impossible. He (S) would train his troops to bear the hardships of travelling the long and arduous routes, and endure the difficulties and tribulations of the desert. Having subjugated some of the neighboring tribes, he made several pacts with them so that they could act as a refuge and a leading force in this army against the Romans and open up the way for

the Battle of Muta.

The Roman soldiers were known for their military outfits and great adornments. Their forces, weapons, equipment and armaments were plenty for this reason they became heavy and their maneuvers became sluggish and slow. The Roman foot-soldiers would use bows in situations where they had not been trained for battle. Aside from this, the Roman forces and the Arabs (who were in their service) had no co-operation with each other, and because they were all mixed together, they did not have an opportunity to conduct well planned maneuvers together. Aside from this, they had a weak system of command which greatly reduced their efficiency and speed in battle.

As for the Muslim army, it was distinguished by its continuous attacks on the enemy, psychological warfare, securing of the northern borders and strategic locations, taking the battle away from its own land, remaining steadfast against an enemy that was stronger, and employing the principles of war in different ways. This was accompanied by practice, maneuvering and ease of movement. When a soldier would shoot arrows while moving, his stability and poise would increase. It was as if he was not carrying any weapon or battle gear .such as would impede on his swiftness or cause him to remain behind and become weary

### **Second: Department of Training**

This was the department that was responsible for preparing the armed forces and their various units in order to carry out battle operations. In the Muslim army, training was common to all and included individuals, communities, groups, large organizations and all the armed forces and would be conducted in all the situations that arise in battle. This included: recognition, archery, combat, fighting when being attacked, running, carrying out surprise attacks, onslaught, moving covertly and camouflage, conducting ambushes and patrols, marching at night, covering long distances on foot, the principle of concentration, assistance and co-operation, pre-emptive warfare, taking advantage of the enemy's negligence, mass attacks, psychological warfare, remaining patient and steadfast against the enemy, bearing all the hardships of securing resources and reinforcements, battling to overcome fortresses, war using trenches and fighting battles in the cities.

The supreme commander paid special attention to training the cavalry. That which separated the training of this army from those of other armies was that training took place in real-life situations and in the battlefield, during battle. One of its distinguishing features was that it gave skills to individuals, groups and contingents, preparing and polishing them for every different battle scenario and taught them about all the intricate details. It did away with mistakes and

error or greatly reduced them. It made the troops precautionary when facing the enemy, to the extent of necessity, just as the armed forces today conduct training exercises so as to gain experience and remain free from fear, sluggishness or laziness.

Military training in the Muslim army was something that was conducted on a continuous basis.

Between one Sariya and another or between one battle and the next there was not a long gap. For example, after the completion of the Sariya of Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, a month later the Sariya of 'Ubaydah ibn Hārith was conducted. The Battle of Dhi al-'Asheera took place a month after the Sariya of 'Abdullah ibn Jahash and the gap between the battles of Dhi Amr and Bahrān was no more than two months. The Sariya of Muhammad ibn Maslamah against the Bani Tha'labah and 'Awāl took one month and the Sariya of Abi 'Ubaydah ibn Jarrāh came immediately after it. During these short gaps, the forces would prepare to march against the (next) enemy and some of the units would undergo training before battle; just as they had done in the Battle of Badr and the Conquest.

The continuous training (of the troops) had the following results: It would increase in the steadfastness of the individuals, like in the Sariya of Zayd ibn Hāritha where his later missions were carried out with more steadfastness than his previous missions. Similarly, the 'battle of the fortress' that took place at Khaybar was better than the battles of Bani Nadhir and Bani Qaynuqā'.

The hesitation and fear of coming face to face with the enemy was removed. In the Battle of Badr, the forces were more hopeful of taking over the caravan of the Quraysh without having to fight a battle and they were fearful of face to face combat. However, in the Battle of Uhud, they were competing with each other to go to battle and most of them gave the view that they should go out of Madina to face the enemy threat, because at this time fear and trepidation had totally disappeared from them.

It strengthened the spirits of the forces and established the certainty of victory in them; as in the battles of Hunayn and Ahzāb.

Swiftness in getting prepared for battle was maintained with precision and quality as in the Battle of Dhāt al-Suwayq, the war against the Bani Mahārib and Tha'labah in the Battle of Dhāt al-Ruqā', and in the Battle of Bani Quraydhah. This made them stronger and more capable to quickly carry out orders, remain swift in the difficult circumstances of battle and able to change tactics; in the same way as was witnessed after the army had dispersed and the forces had made blunders in the battles of Uhud and Hunayn.

This was the department responsible for securing the weaponry and battle gear, either by producing it, buying it or taking it from the spoils of war, and then distributing it and the issue of armament was done in conjunction with the department of munitions and the training of weapons-use was in co-operation with the department of training; and in the end the discharge, restore and stockpile the armaments.

The most important weapons that were used by the Muslim army were:

1. Offensive weapons: these included mainly the sword, spear and bow.
2. Defensive weapons: the most important of which were the armor, shield, helmet and the mail .that was worn under it

#### **a) Offensive weapons**

- 1) The sword was considered the most important weapon for offense and the Holy Prophet (S) also gave a lot of importance to it. He (S) had many swords that were either from war booty, gifts or inheritance of his father, and he had named each of them with specific names.
- 2) The spear was another of the weapons of offense. The supreme commander had different types of spears and would use whichever one he wanted. In total they were of four types.
- 3) The bow was of various types and each one had a specific name depending on its attributes, the type of action it would be used for and how it would be carried. The most important types were the hand-held bow and the 'Hijāzi' bow. The Holy Prophet (S) had four bows: i) al-Safrā' (the Yellow) ii) al-Rawhā' (the Open) iii) al-Baydhā' (the White) and iv) al-Katum (the Secret-keeper).

#### **b) Defensive weapons**

Armor was considered one of the most important weapons of defense which was worn to remain protected from the strikes of swords, spears or arrows. Armors were of different shapes and types, each with a different name. The supreme commander also had a number of armors, the most important of which were: Dhāt al-Fudhul, al-Sadriyya and al-Sird. Helmets would be made from iron and would be worn to protect the head from attacks by offensive weapons.

'Mighfar' was the armor or mail that a soldier would place under his helmet and would cover his head and face with it so that he does not get injured. The Holy Prophet (S) and the soldiers who fought alongside him in battle would use this.

'Minjineeq' (catapult) was one of the 'heavy' weapons which was used to throw huge boulders

or fireballs on the enemy.

'Dabbābah' (tank): These two weapons (i.e. the catapult and the tank) were used in the Battle of Tā'if.

In the same way, the Muslim army would give importance to the arming of the cavalry and would give it a priority over the other ranks. In the first battles, the soldiers on horseback were few. For example, in the Battle of Badr, there were only two soldiers on horseback. This number reached two hundred in the Battle of Khaybar and in the Conquest of Makkah there were more than two thousand soldiers on horseback.

As for the sources from where weapons could be procured, these included:

1. By way of those who would engage in making them and selling them to the soldiers but this small number was not enough for the whole army.
2. From the buyers who would buy from inside the Arabian Peninsula and outside it. The budget for buying the weapons from this source would be gotten from:
  - a) The personal wealth and possessions of the soldiers
  - b) Those who were in charge of the army.
  - c) The wealth that would remain after distribution.
  - d) The booty that was taken from the enemy and especially the Jews.

The supreme commander would leave behind some of the wealth after making pacts of alliance with the defeated enemies, however he would never leave behind any of their weapons; because this was the main source of weapons and strengthening the army while at the same time weakening the enemy in order to prevent any future attacks and incursions. There was also another source of weapons for the army and that was taking them on loan and then returning them to their owners after the battle.

Training with weapons was one of the requirements of the Muslim army and the supreme commander would insist and encourage the fighters to train on how to carry the weapons, the principles of their usage, archery and gaining mastery over it, training on the use of the catapult. Many of the Muslims such as Talha ibn 'Abdillah al-Qarashi and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqās were well known for their skill in archery. At the same time, the Prophet (S) emphasized on training the riders who would fight on horseback. He (S) also gave importance to the creation of weapons and encouraged and promised paradise to those who would undertake this task. For this purpose, he sent a group to Jurash (Yemen) in order to learn how to make new weapons and acquire them before the siege of Tā'if.

The importance given to making various light weaponry was another of the goals of the supreme commander and for this he would give orders to the weapon makers in the area for

different models of spears and bows. When the weapons were distributed among the soldiers, those that were on loan would be taken back and those acquired from war booty would be kept by them. In this way, each soldier would get to use more than one type of weapon. As for supplies of weapons during battle, the situation was not as it is in the new age. A soldier would bring whatever weapon he had in his possession, and whatever he needed in the battlefield, he would have to carry himself. So if he were to lose one of his weapons or it were to break, he would exchange it and continue to fight. With regards to the storing and stockpiling of weapons, each individual would store his own weapons in his home and things were not as they are today i.e. there was no central repository where the weapons would be stockpiled. In the house of every soldier, a number of swords, spears and bows could be found, and he would pay due attention to their repair and maintenance. In times of 'peace', the weapons would be kept in a large warehouse that was strategically located and would be guarded. The supreme commander would order that weapons must be carried at all times, in every situation, even when the enemies are not (apparently) present. He would forbid the forces who had returned from battle and were tired and weary, and intended to remove their weapons, from doing so and he was always put the thought about the struggle (against the sworn enemy), whether in times of war or peace, in the present or future, despite the presence or absence of the enemy in their minds and would strengthen this idea in them

#### **Note**

**To study the book "Military Management in the Battles of the Prophet (s)", please click here:**

<http://alhassanain.org/english/?com=book&id=1281>