

THE ART OF VICTORY OF ZAHIRIDDIN MUHAMMAD BABUR

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Abstract. This article examines the military genius and historical significance of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, focusing on the factors behind his remarkable victories and enduring legacy. Particular attention is given to Babur's early military training, his rapid rise to power at a young age, and his innovative tactical approaches during his campaigns in India. The article explores the strategic methods he employed, including mobility, ambush tactics, feigned retreats, and the tulghama maneuver, which enabled him to defeat numerically superior forces. Furthermore, the paper discusses Babur's role in founding the Mughal Empire and unifying fragmented territories into a centralized state.

Keywords. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur; Mughal Empire; military strategy; Timurid dynasty; Chinggisid dynasty; tulghama tactic; battlefield tactics; leadership; Central Asian history; Baburnama; early military training; historical legacy.

Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, a commander, poet, scholar, and statesman, was born on February 14, 1483, in the city of Andijan, the capital of the Fergana principality, into the family of its ruler, Umar Sheikh Mirza. He was the second child after his sister Khanzada Begim and the eldest among the sons of the ruler of Fergana. Babur's younger brothers were Jahangir Mirza and Nasir Mirza.

On his father's side, Babur belonged to the Timurid dynasty in the fifth generation: Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was the son of Umar Sheikh Mirza; Umar Sheikh Mirza was the son of Sultan Abu Sa'id Mirza; Sultan Abu Sa'id Mirza was the son of Sultan Muhammad Mirza; Sultan Muhammad Mirza was the son of Miran Shah Mirza; and Miran Shah Mirza was the third son of Amir Timur¹. On his mother's side, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was a twelfth-generation descendant of the Chinggisids. His mother, Qutlugh Nigar Khanum, was the daughter of the Tashkent ruler, Yunus Khan.

Yunus Khan was the son of Uwais Khan; Uwais Khan was the son of Sher Ali Oglan; Sher Ali Oglan was the son of Muhammad Khan; Muhammad Khan was the son of Khizr Khwaja Khan; Khizr Khwaja Khan was the son of Tughlugh Timur Khan; Tughlugh Timur Khan was the son of Esen Buqa Khan; Esen Buqa Khan was the son of Duwa Khan; Duwa Khan was the son of Barak Khan; Barak Khan was the son of Yesen Tuwa; Yesen Tuwa was the son of Mutugen; Mutugen was the son of Chagatai Khan; and Chagatai Khan was the son of Genghis Khan². Thus, on his mother's side, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was connected to the Chinggisid dynasty. In his lineage were united two great warrior dynasties that left a profound mark on the history of world civilization.

¹ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Baburnama (Memoirs of Babur). Main Editorial Office of Encyclopedias. Tashkent, 1993, p. 33.

² Tulkin Saydaliyev. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Art. Monograph. Chirchiq, 2024, p.

More than five centuries have passed, yet interest in Babur's personality has not diminished; on the contrary, it has only intensified. What accounts for such enduring interest? Why has he continued to captivate the minds of humanity for centuries?

Babur's most significant achievement lies in his military accomplishments, through which he founded the great Mughal Empire across the territories of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. The dynasty established by Babur, following the terminology introduced by the Hungarian scholar Armin Vambery, is widely known as the "Great Mughals."

This empire endured for more than three centuries and played a progressive role in uniting numerous small principalities and territories that had been fragmented among rajas and local rulers toward the end of the Delhi Sultanate under the Lodi dynasty. Although the rulers of Delhi possessed a large army and immense wealth, they were unable to withstand the advance of a gifted and determined military commander.³ The diverse tactical methods employed by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur during his campaigns ensured his military success in his fifth expedition to India. In particular, he utilized the most advanced tactics of the nomadic Uzbeks, including ambush attacks, feigned retreats followed by sudden assaults, the flanking maneuver known as *tulghama*, and highly effective siege techniques.⁴ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur unified these fragmented lands into a single centralized state.⁵ In the battles fought in India, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur decisively defeated adversaries who outnumbered his forces by eight to ten times.⁶ Even such eminent conquerors as Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, Attila the Hun, and Genghis Khan did not accomplish such a feat.⁷ At the birth of a boy, both the Timurids and the Chinggisids regarded him as a future warrior. In every noble family, particular attention was devoted to the upbringing of future warriors.

From infancy, they were entrusted to mentors selected from among experienced and battle-hardened beks and distinguished warriors, known as *atabegs*.

As soon as the young princes began to take their first steps, the *atabegs* initiated them into the fundamentals of military art. The mentors trained the youths in archery, spear throwing, swordsmanship, and horsemanship. Day after day, they rigorously prepared future commanders for the art of warfare.

The mentors also recounted to their pupils the heroic exploits of their forefathers, thereby strengthening the continuity of generations.

This training continued for Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur until the tragic death of his father, Umar Shaykh Mirza. Babur recalls this tragic event in his own work as follows:

"At that time, an extraordinary event occurred. It has already been mentioned that the fortress of Akhsi stood on a high elevation, with its buildings situated at the edge of a precipice. In that year, on Monday, the fourth day of the month of Ramadan, Umar Shaykh Mirza, together with his pigeons and dovecote, fell into the

³ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабур). Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г. 265 – 267 с.

⁴ Saydaliyev T. X. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur : strategiya, taktika va harbiy san'at. Monografiya. Chirchiq.: - 2024 53-b. 53-b.

⁵ Saydaliyev To'lqin. Shukurali Atayev. "Bobur armoni". "Yabgi O'zbekiston" gazetasi. 2023 yil 16 fevral. 6 – s.

⁶ Dilshod Saydaliyev. "Even the War Elephants Trembled." Narodnoe Slovo Newspaper, February 14, 2023, p. 8.

⁷ Tulkin Saydaliyev; Mirzaakhmad Rasulmetov. "The Military Art of Babur." Vatanparvar Newspaper, February 14, 2019, p. 12.

ravine and died. He lived for thirty-nine years...⁸ On this day, the carefree childhood of the young Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur came to an end. He describes his accession to the throne of the Fergana principality in his autobiographical work, Baburnama, as follows:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful!

In the month of Ramadan of the year eight hundred and ninety-nine (899 AH), I became the sovereign of the region of Fergana at the age of twelve... ”⁹

It is important to note the age of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, who was compelled to assume the throne of his deceased father. At not yet twelve years of age, Babur became the ruler of Fergana. Upon closer examination, however, he was in fact only eleven years old.

This is documented in the introductory remarks by Mikhail Sheverdin to the first Russian edition of the Baburnama, translated by the distinguished Soviet scholar Mikhail Salye.

Despite his disability, which prevented him from walking, this devoted scholar translated the Baburnama into Russian during the war years by candlelight:

“...He was merely an eleven-year-old boy when he ascended the throne... ”¹⁰ While his peers were absorbed in childhood games and amusements, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was compelled to make decisions of great importance, upon which the fate of the state depended. It is important to emphasize that this was a particularly difficult period.

The once powerful and centralized Timurid state was disintegrating. The country was engulfed in chaos, as continuous struggles unfolded among Timurid rulers for supremacy in Transoxiana and Khorasan. This was an era of instability and uncertainty.

The state had fragmented into numerous small principalities, whose rulers were unable to reach a unified decision regarding the future of the country. From the northwest, a serious threat emerged in the form of nomadic Uzbek tribes, driven by ambitions to seize centralized power in Transoxiana and Khorasan.

At the head of these nomadic forces stood the experienced commander Muhammad Shaybani Khan, who was thirty-two years older than the young ruler of Fergana.¹¹ While still residing in Andijan, the capital of the Fergana principality, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur found himself in a difficult situation. Court intrigues and the machinations of his close relatives created a challenging environment for the young ruler.

It should be noted, however, that this young талант possessed remarkable strength of will and charisma, which enabled him to make correct and timely decisions. Fortunately, his mother, Qutlugh Nigar Khanum, was by his side; her wise counsel helped him maintain the loyalty and obedience of local emirs and beks.

As mentioned above, Timurid princes were always under the careful supervision of atabegs, that is, mentors. Babur devoted himself diligently to the study of military arts, which soon proved essential for repelling and suppressing both internal and external enemies.

Military affairs deeply interested Babur, to which he attached great importance. In particular, he carefully studied the work of his great ancestor, Amir Timur, The Institutes of

⁸ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Baburnama (Memoirs of Babur). Translated by Mikhail Salye; edited by S. Azimjanova. Tashkent: Main Editorial Office of Encyclopedias, 1993, p. 33.

⁹ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Baburnama (Memoirs of Babur). Translated by Mikhail Salye; edited by S. Azimjanova. Tashkent: Main Editorial Office of Encyclopedias, 1993, p. 29.

¹⁰ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Baburnama (Historical Notes). Part I. Translated by Mikhail Salye; edited by Mikhail Sheverdin. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1948, p. 5.

¹¹ Tulkin Saydaliev. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Art. Monograph. Chirchiq, 2024, p.

Timur, where the principles of military organization and command were described in detail.¹² At that time, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was not yet familiar with the combat tactics of nomadic tribes. In time, however, he would encounter the diverse battlefield strategies of the nomadic Uzbeks.

With the guidance of his father and the support of his mentors, Babur meticulously devoted himself to mastering the art of victory—that is, the science of operational military strategy.¹³ For two years, the young ruler Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur remained almost continuously within his domain, while the political situation in Transoxiana was rapidly changing. His cherished ambition was the restoration of a unified centralized state in Transoxiana, following the example of his great ancestor, Amir Timur. He awaited an opportune moment to seize the capital of Transoxiana—Samarkand.

Such an opportunity soon arose. The ruler of Samarkand, his cousin Baysunqur Mirza, was engaged in rivalry with Sultan Ali Mirza; neither side achieved success in this struggle. As a result, some of Baysunqur Mirza's military commanders defected and joined Muhammad Shaybani Khan. Consequently, Samarkand was left without reliable defense.

The perceptive young commander decided to take advantage of this situation. With a force of only 240 cavalymen, he set out from Andijan toward Samarkand. After a seven-month siege, Babur succeeded in capturing the city. This occurred in 1497, when the commander was just fourteen years old.

Babur demonstrated a keen sense of political awareness and skillfully exploited the weaknesses of his opponents. During this siege, even the experienced Muhammad Shaybani Khan was unable to assist Baysunqur Mirza and was eventually forced to withdraw back to Turkestan.¹⁴ No one before or after Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur had captured a capital city at such a young age. However, Babur was unable to retain control of Samarkand for long, as a rebellion was instigated in Andijan by his own beks, Uzun Hasan and Sultan Ahmad Tanbal.¹⁵ During his first occupation of Samarkand, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur remained in the city for only one hundred days. During this time, the young commander fell seriously ill and even temporarily lost his ability to speak. His unscrupulous beks took advantage of this situation.

In order to suppress the rebellion, Babur was forced to abandon Samarkand. Although he managed to defeat his enemies, the internecine conflicts steadily weakened the still fragile foundations of his state authority.

In 1499, between the settlements of Saka and Khuban, Babur engaged in battle with the enemy for the first time on the battlefield. The young commander arranged his forces according to the classical formation: hirovul (vanguard), barangar (right wing), javangar (left wing), gul (center), and chaghdavul (rearguard).

His great ancestor, Amir Timur, had divided his army into seven units—an innovation for his time—and consistently emerged victorious.¹⁶ At that time, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur had not yet developed such innovative military concepts; nevertheless, his perseverance yielded results. The great-grandson of Amir Timur relied on established methods and achieved success.

¹² Tulkin Saydaliev. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Art. Monograph. Chirchiq, 2024, p.

¹³ Tulkin Saydaliev. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur: Strategy, Tactics, and Military Art. Monograph. Chirchiq, 2024, p.

¹⁴ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Baburnama (Memoirs of Babur). Translated by Mikhail Salye; edited by S. Azimjanova. Tashkent: Main Editorial Office of Encyclopedias, 1993, p. 29.

¹⁵ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г. 77 с.

¹⁶ Якубовский А.Ю. Тимур. Общий курс характеристики. Вопросы истории. М.: 1946 г. № 8 – 9 70 с.



In this battle, the left wing of Babur's forces, through a bold and decisive strike, determined the outcome of the engagement. This marked his first victory in an open-field battle.

The opposing side succeeded in winning over Babur's younger brother, Jahangir Mirza, to their cause.¹⁷ While Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was engaged in restoring order in Andijan, uncertainty also prevailed in Samarkand.

Ultimately, Samarkand fell into the hands of Muhammad Shaybani Khan; this development will be examined in greater detail in the subsequent sections of this monograph.¹⁸ This occurred in 1500. The young commander, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, had always cherished the ambition of capturing Samarkand. With only 240 men under his command, Babur resolved to storm the capital, as the situation within the city made such an undertaking feasible.

Many of the inhabitants were dissatisfied with Muhammad Shaybani Khan, and by taking advantage of this discontent, it became possible to achieve the intended objective. Indeed, this is precisely what occurred—Samarkand was captured for the second time. At that moment, Muhammad Shaybani Khan was in Bukhara.

The inhabitants of the city warmly welcomed the young Timurid ruler, who was renowned for his justice and generosity. From this, it may be concluded that effective intelligence and a steady flow of information regarding conditions within a besieged city can play a decisive role.

In this respect, Babur acted as a true successor to Amir Timur, who consistently relied on intelligence gathered by his scouts. No major campaign of the Sahibqiran was undertaken without thorough reconnaissance.¹⁹

Muhammad Shaybani Khan, however, prevented Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur from consolidating his rule over Samarkand, defeating him in April–May 1501 near Sari Pul.²⁰ The young commander, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, retreated to Samarkand, where a prolonged siege began, exhausting the inhabitants of the city through hunger and other hardships. Although Babur employed firearms—muskets (matchlocks) and arquebuses—as well as artillery in the defense of the fortress,²¹ Although Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur employed firearms—muskets (matchlocks) and arquebuses—as well as artillery in the defense of Samarkand, this did not alter the course of the struggle, and the situation grew increasingly dire with each passing day.

The young commander's close associates gradually began to abandon the capital, and Babur was ultimately compelled to withdraw from Samarkand for the second time.²² In this context, particular emphasis should be placed on the magnanimity of Muhammad Shaybani Khan, who refrained from preventing the departure of his rival, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur.²³ This episode may be interpreted in various ways; however, one point remains clear: the leader of the nomadic Uzbeks, Muhammad Shaybani Khan, showed mercy toward his relative—namely, the younger brother of his wife, Khanzada Begum.

¹⁷ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.91 с.

¹⁸ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.98 с.

¹⁹ Дадабаев Хамидулла. Амир Темурнинг харбий махорати. Т.: 1996 й. 9 б.

²⁰ Мухаммад Солих. Шайбонийнома. Фафур Фулом номидаги Адабиёт ва санъат нашриёти. Т.: 1989 й. 75 б.

²¹ Мухаммад Солих. Шайбонийнома. Фафур Фулом номидаги Адабиёт ва санъат нашриёти. Т.: 1989 й. 89 б.

²² Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.111 с.

²³ Сайдалиев Тулкин. Замондош харбий дахлар. Мухофаза журнали. 2024 йил 11 сон. 31 – 32 б.

After this, a period of severe trials began for Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. His warriors gradually abandoned the young ruler and dispersed throughout the land. Babur found himself in a desperate situation, yet he did not break.

Even during years of hardship and wandering, his faith in a better future never left him. Babur never succumbed to despair; instead, he consistently maintained his belief in the future.

During the years of the World War II, the distinguished Russian translator Lev Minaevich Penkovsky translated the quatrains of the commander-poet into Russian in 1942, which helped to inspire and strengthen the morale of soldiers. Here is one of those quatrains:

*Хоть временем на краткий срок и вознесён твой враг,
Вином победы два-три дня опьянён твой враг.
Пусть кажется, что до небес он вырос, - не горюй,
Ведь низок он, и будет вновь с землёй сравнён твой враг.*²⁴

The publishing house Sovetsky Pisatel, evacuated to Tashkent, issued a collection of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's poems in Russian, which inspired soldiers to acts of self-sacrifice and heroism. The collection was titled "Warrior-Poet."²⁵ These were extremely critical times for our army, when the enemy was advancing on all fronts. A particularly severe and precarious situation had developed along the Kharkiv, Stalingrad, and Caucasian directions.

Despite the mass heroism and self-sacrifice of its soldiers and officers, the Red Army continued to retreat eastward. Lines imbued with the pathos of victory helped sustain the fighters engaged in a life-and-death struggle on the Soviet-German front.

During the fierce battles at Stalingrad and along the Battle of Kursk, a booklet of poems by the commander-poet could be found in the breast pocket of every Red Army soldier, sailor, and officer.

Four centuries later, the verses of this remarkable commander and poet continued to inspire the defeat of the hated enemy²⁶.

Once, during one of his journeys, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur stayed in the mountainous village of Dikhket, in the house of the village elder. The elder was of advanced age, yet his mother was still alive at the remarkable age of one hundred and eleven.

A relative of this elderly woman had once taken part in the Indian campaign of Amir Timur. She possessed an excellent memory and recounted a great many details.²⁷ This knowledge proved valuable to Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur in his struggle against war elephants during his Indian campaigns. At that time, the war elephant was regarded as a formidable weapon in the hands of the enemy. Babur learned how his great ancestor, Amir Timur, had overcome this obstacle during his conquest of India.

These insights later proved useful in Babur's subsequent campaigns in India, although this would come later. Under the powerful pressure of the Shaybanids, Babur left the confines of Transoxiana and, together with his forces, advanced to Kabul, which he captured almost without a fight.

²⁴ Бабур. Лирика. Т.: Советский писатель. 1943 г. 2 с.

²⁵ Поэт-воин. Издательство «Советский писатель». Т.: 1943 г. 12 с.

²⁶ Сайдалиев Тўлқин. Бобур лирикаси бадииятининг русча таржималардаги талқини. Монография. Т.: 2020 г. 17 с.

²⁷ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.113 с.

Babur was a magnanimous ruler, and he spared the life of the governor of Kabul, Muhammad Muqim, whom he would later encounter again on the battlefield.²⁸ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur not only spared the life of Muhammad Muqim, but also ensured that his property remained entirely intact. Those who attempted to plunder and seize his possessions were personally executed by Babur as a warning to others.²⁹ These qualities and the bravery of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur became widely renowned, and for this reason ordinary warriors were always drawn to him. Fear was foreign to Babur; even when alone, he could charge with his sabre against a hundred enemy horsemen and put them to flight.

Such was the case near Andijan, when three hundred cavalymen of Sultan Ahmad Tanbal were routed by Babur, who was accompanied by only three of his retainers.

He describes this episode in his work, Baburnama, as follows:

“I did not even have time to restrain my men and rode forward to meet the enemy. Mir Shah Kuchin, Baba Shirzad, and Dost Nasir immediately followed me. All the warriors, except the four of us, fled. When I withdrew slightly, the attackers drew near, shouting and releasing arrows. A man on a horse with a white mark on its forehead approached very closely; I shot at the horse, and it collapsed to the ground. The enemies seemed to fall back somewhat...”³⁰ In the twentieth century, a feat comparable to that of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was repeated by Senior Lieutenant Zinoviy Kolobanov.

On August 20, 1941, a company of tanks under Kolobanov’s command received orders to hold defensive positions on the approaches to Leningrad. The tank company, consisting of five KV-1 tanks, took up defensive positions near the town of Krasnogvardeysk.

The Soviet tank crews dug caponiers along the road and awaited the advancing German column. After allowing enemy motorcycle reconnaissance units to pass unimpeded, they waited for the main force. Kolobanov destroyed the lead tank, then struck a tank in the middle of the column, and finally the rear vehicle. As a result, panic and chaos ensued.

This situation played to the advantage of the Soviet tank crews, who destroyed a column of twenty-two tanks in just thirty minutes of combat. Five KV-1 tanks successfully blocked the advance of the 6th Panzer Division of the Wehrmacht.³¹

The courage and bravery of the young commander, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, consistently enabled him to overcome even the most critical situations, when both his life and the fate of the state hung in the balance.

It is therefore no coincidence that the Head of State, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, highly regards Babur as a military leader, particularly in light of his outstanding personal qualities.³² The nineteenth-century English scholar Edward Holden observed that Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur was one of the bravest of men.³³ The Russian scholar, Professor of St. Petersburg University, Nikolai Veselovsky, wrote the following about Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur:

²⁸ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.142 с.

²⁹ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.143 с.

³⁰ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.120 с.

³¹ Великая Отечественная война 1941 – 1945. События. Люди.Документы. Краткий исторический словарь. М.: Издательство политической литературы – 1990 г. 34 с.

³² Мирзиёев Шавкат. Газета «Народное слово» 21 января 2020 года. 1 с.

³³ Холден Эдуард. Загирь-Эддинъ – Мухаммадь Бабуръ, завоеватель. (съ англ. Пер. Н.Гребнев.и П.Бор Туркестанские веломости -6 (19) дек. № 264 с. 2 ; 1916 – 8 (дек. № 265 – с. 2, - 1916 – 11(24) дек. № 268.с. 2. 1916 – 16 (29) дек. № 272.- с.1.)

“The courage, bravery, boldness, and valor of Babur knew no bounds. He alone dared to storm the city of Samarkand with only two hundred warriors, despite knowing that Muhammad Shaybani Khan had fortified the city with fifteen thousand troops. He not only launched the assault but also captured the fortress, driving out Shaybani Khan’s forces. In India, with relatively limited military resources, he wrested the country from Ibrahim Lodi and established his own empire. His heroism will continue to serve as an example for future generations for many centuries to come.”³⁴ According to the Uzbek scholar Zakirjon Mashrabov, what Nikolai Veselovsky referred to as “limited armaments”—namely cannons and firearms—were, for India of that period, remarkable novelties and technological innovations..³⁵ These cannons and firearms played a crucial role in the defeat of the vast army of the Delhi Sultan, as well as in neutralizing thousands of war elephants.³⁶ The thunder of cannon and musket fire threw the war elephants—these massive beasts—into a state of terror, instilling fear in them and causing them to recoil. In their panic, they trampled the battle formations of the infantry and cavalry of Ibrahim Lodi.

All of this resulted in chaos and a loss of command and control over the troops. Subsequently, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur’s tulghama tactic brought about the final defeat of the Indian army.³⁷ The tulghama tactic was a favored strategy of the nomadic Uzbeks, which the talented commander Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur studied and brought to a high level of refinement.

He came to understand the advantages of this tactic during the battle near Sari Pul against Muhammad Shaybani Khan, where he suffered a crushing defeat.³⁸ Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur consistently drew the right conclusions from each of his setbacks, ensuring that he would not repeat them in the future. Over time, he thoroughly mastered the tulghama tactic and, by learning from his mistakes, refined it to a high degree of effectiveness.

This tactic, together with artillery, muskets, and arquebuses, enabled the commander to conquer India and establish the great Mughal Empire, which endured for more than three centuries.

The First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, regarded Babur’s life as a vivid example of how an individual, despite confronting hardships, can attain greatness.

In general, the statements of Islam Karimov about Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur reflect his deep respect for the historical past of Uzbekistan and his understanding of the significance of cultural heritage in shaping national identity. He employed the image of Babur to emphasize the importance of preserving historical memory and to motivate the citizens of Uzbekistan toward creativity, progress, and national development.

At a recent meeting of the National Security Council of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the country, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his address placed particular emphasis on the study of military heritage by the armed forces.

He stated that every serviceman should possess a copy of the Baburnama, in which the principles of the “science of victory” are comprehensively articulated.

³⁴ История Востока. Лекция III – курс. С.П.-б. – 1888-1889 уч. Год. 165 – 167 с.

³⁵ Зокиржон Машрабов. Бори элга яхшилиқ қилғил. Мақола ва сухбатлар, ёзишмадан намуналар. Ғафур Гулом номидаги нашриёт-матбаа ижодий уйи. Т.: 2013 й. 194 б.

³⁶ Сайдалиев Дильшод. “Даже дрогнули бовые слоны.” Газета “Народное слово”. 14 февраля 2023 года. С. 8.

³⁷ Бобур энциклопедияси. “SHARQ” матбаа концерни нашриёти. Т.: 2014 й. 416 б.

³⁸ Бабурнаме. (Записки Бабура). Пер. М.Салье. Под ред. С.Азимджановой. Главная редакция энциклопедий. Т.: - 1993 г.107 с.



“We must learn a great deal from our great ancestor,” he noted, referring to Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur.

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