

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Expansion of Islam and Military Campaigns

Conquest Of Makran

From Persia the conquering Muslim forces crossed over into Makran district of Baluchistan. That was the first contact of the Muslims with the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent in 644 A.D.

Makran was then a part of the dominions of Raja Rasil. Raja Rasil is referred to in contemporary histories as the Raja of the Sind. When Rasil came to know of the advance of the Muslims he rushed his forces to Makran. He is reported to have crossed a river in Makran, and took his position on the western bank thereof. The name of the river or the exact site of the battle have not been mentioned in contemporary histories.

The Muslim forces were commanded by Hakim bin Amr Aghlabi. He was assisted by Suhail bin Adi. The details of the battle are not known. It is, however, related that the fighting was severe, and that ultimately Raja Rasil was defeated with considerable loss. He crossed the river in his rear, and withdrew to Sind.

Makran was annexed after the people surrendered on the usual terms. Considerable booty was gained and this included a number of war elephants. The state share of the spoils of war along with all the elephants captured were sent to Umar. Suhar Abdi, a man of a poetic bent of mind carried the news of victory to Umar.

When the messenger waited on Umar, he was asked to describe the country. Suhar Abdi broke into rhyme:

"O Commander of the faithful!

It's a land where the plains are stony;

Where water is scanty;

Where the fruits are unsavoury

Where men are known for treachery;

Where plenty is unknown;

Where virtue is held of little account;

And where evil is dominant"

Umar looked at Suhar Abdi and said:

"Are you a messenger or a poet."

He said that he was a messenger, and that he had merely described the things as they were.

Thereupon Umar said, "If what you say is true, it would be futile to advance in such a land."

Umar instructed Hakim bin Amr al Taghlabi that for the time being Makran should be the easternmost frontier of the Muslim dominions, and that no further attempt should be made to extend the conquests.

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Source : Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History