

any information about them. One of those days Suśarman, King of Trigarta, told Duryodhana that the Virāṭa King had lost his power and spirits due to the death of Kīcaka and it was, therefore, the proper time to attack the Virāṭa country and subjugate it thoroughly. The idea appealed to Karṇa, who prompted Duryodhana to war against Virāṭa. The army was fully mobilised. As an excuse for the war, at the instance of Duryodhana, Suśarman, King of Trigarta lifted innumerable cows of the Virāṭa King. This happened on the day on which the life incognito of the Pāṇḍavas was to have ended. And war started thus. The Virāṭa prince Uttara who spent his time in the zenana in the palace appeared in the field of war. Arjuna, under the assumed name of Bṛhannala took up the charioteership of Uttara. But, at the sight of the vast Kaurava army Uttara fainted, and Arjuna hurriedly drove the chariot over to where his bow gāṇḍīva was kept hidden, and with the bow in his hands Arjuna jumped into the thick of the fight. A fierce war ensued in which the Kaurava army was completely routed. The life incognito of the Pāṇḍavas was also over, and Duryodhana became naturally anxious about the future of things. (M.B. Virāṭa Parva, Chapter 65).

14) *Preparation for war.* Duryodhana refused to give the Pāṇḍavas, even after their return from twelve years' exile in forest and one year's life incognito, even 'as much land as would hold a pin', and war became inevitable. The Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas fought the great war which lasted for eighteen days on the field of Kurukṣetra.

(1) *Duryodhana went to invite Śrī Kṛṣṇa.* Preparations for the war were gathering speed and momentum. Both the sides were on the look out for more friends and allies. Being told that Arjuna had gone to Dvārakā to seek Kṛṣṇa's support Duryodhana rushed to the place. Seeing Duryodhana from a distance Kṛṣṇa lay on his bed in a false sleep, and Duryodhana took his seat on a stool at the head of the bed awaiting Kṛṣṇa to awake from sleep. Soon after, Arjuna came there and he stood at the feet of Kṛṣṇa with head bowed down. When Kṛṣṇa awoke from sleep it was Arjuna whom he saw first, and while exchanging greetings with Arjuna he was told that it was Duryodhana, who had come first. But when Duryodhana and Arjuna explained the object of their visit he told them thus:—

"No doubt it was Duryodhana who came first. But, it was Arjuna whom I met first. Since Duryodhana came first and I saw Arjuna first I shall help both of you in war. There is the adage that youngsters should be given priority of consideration. So, Arjuna may indicate his preference first. I shall give one of you an army of 10 lakhs of warriors as strong in body as myself, and I shall stand by the other without arms and without fighting. Arjuna may make his choice first. And, he chose Kṛṣṇa for his side in the war while Duryodhana was happy to get Kṛṣṇa's mighty army. (M.B. Udyoga-Parva, Chapter 7).

(2) Duryodhana sought Balabhadra's help but Balabhadra told him frankly that since he could not forsake Kṛṣṇa he would remain neutral in the war. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 7, Verse 25).

(3) Duryodhana got an akṣauhiṇī (a specific division of army) from Kṛtavarman. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 7, Verse 32).

(4) Śalya promised to captain the Kaurava army.

(M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 8, Verse 18).

(5) Duryodhana could collect a total of eleven akṣauhiṇīs. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 19, Verse 27).

(6) He assured Dhṛtarāṣṭra that the Kaurava army would easily defeat the Pāṇḍava army. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 57).

(7) He declared that war was a yajña. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 58).

(8) At the instance of Dhṛtarāṣṭra a rest house was built for Śrī Kṛṣṇa on his way to the Kauravas for compromise talks on behalf of the Pāṇḍavas. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 85).

(9) Duryodhana opined that Kṛṣṇa be taken captive when he came to plead for compromise and peace, but the others did not support him. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 83, Verse 13).

(10) Duryodhana worshipped Kṛṣṇa with rare and excellent things and invited him for meals, but Kṛṣṇa did not accept any. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 91, Verse 13).

(11) Duryodhana rejected the advice of sage Kaṇva to come to terms with the Pāṇḍavas. (Udyoga Parva, Chapters 97-105).

(12) He emphatically announced in the Kaurava assembly that even as much land as may be required to hold a pin would not be given to the Pāṇḍavas. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 127, Verse 26).

(13) Kṛṣṇa's pleadings in the Kaurava assembly for peace and amity on behalf of the Pāṇḍavas failed to have any effect. On the occasion Duryodhana, Śakuni, Karṇa and Duśśāsana conspired to take Kṛṣṇa captive. Sātyaki informed Kṛṣṇa secretly about the conspiracy and Kṛṣṇa informed Dhṛtarāṣṭra about it, and he warned the conspirators against their wicked plan. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 13, Verse 4).

(14) Duryodhana appointed Kṛpa, Droṇa, Śalya, Jayadratha, Hārdika, Aśvatthāmā, Karṇa, Śakuni, Bāhika and Kāmbhoja as commanders of the army. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 155).

(15) Duryodhana appointed Bhīṣma as the Commander-in-Chief of the army. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 156 verse 26).

(16) He appointed Ulūka as messenger and warned Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas, Drupada, Virāṭa, Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna and others. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 10).

(17) He ordered the army to the Kurukṣetra field. (Udyoga Parva, Chapter 195).

(18) He appointed Duśśāsana as Bhīṣma's body-guard. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 15).

(19) On the flag staff of Duryodhana studded with gems his flag with the serpent's emblem flew high in the air. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 17, Verse 25).

(20) He learnt from Droṇa the names of heroes on both sides before the fighting started. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 25).

15) *Duryodhana in battlefield.* The following incidents relating to Duryodhana in actual war have been noted.

(1) In the first day's fighting he fainted, hit by the arrows of Bhīma. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 58, Verse 17).

(2) He attacked Bhīma with the support of the elephant division (Gajasenā) and the latter fainted. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 64, Verse 14).

(3) Bhīmasena again confronted him, and again he fell down fainted. (Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 80, Verse 4).