



# JCC: IMJIN WAR

**AGENDA ITEM:  
OPEN AGENDA**

**UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL:  
MELIKHAN DEMIRKIRAN**

**ACADEMIC ASSISTANT:  
YAGIZ EREN BAYBURTLU**

**ACADEMIC ASSISTANT:  
BORA GÜNGÖRALP:**

*"It's all begins in the Sky"*

# **IMJIN WAR**

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## **Letter From The Secretaries-General:**

Honourable participants of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25,

As the secretary generals of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25, taking place from November 14th to November 16th, we would like to extend our warm welcome to all participants of this prestigious conference.

Model United Nations conferences are more than just a simple event, it is a torch that shines its light upon a variety of great opportunities, guiding the youth to the future through the brightness it radiates. It grants the opportunity to be in the minds of diplomats and decision makers allowing the participants to learn the ways of decision making and debating, at the same time giving the chance to apply the learnings in real time debates. When organised with utmost care and responsibility, one conference can shape hundreds of individuals into leaders of the future.

In the first official edition of ÇAĞDAŞMUN, our mission is to achieve what most struggle to do: committees with a wide grasp of the past, present and the future, a marvelous organisation team to be in our most perfect form and most importantly, a mission to create space for bright minds to shine the most powerful, hidden gems to come to light for the greatest jewelries and disregarded souls to prove themselves as unignorable leaders.

It all begins in the sky.

With our warmest regards,

Secretary Generals of ÇAĞDAŞMUN'25,  
Mustafa Aslan and Kuzey Karlık.

## **Letter From The Under Secretary General:**

Dear delegates,

It's Melikhan, the Under Secretary General of this committee. It is such a pleasure to welcome you all to this amazing committee. I can proudly say the Imjin War was one of my dream committees. I'm saying "it was" because it will

no longer be a dream after this conference. We, as the academic team of this committee, have prepared a magnificent study guide for you. I would like to appreciate my academic assistants with my letter too because working with them was truly like a dream. We politely ask you to read the study guide \_at least once\_. That will be all for now. If you have any kind of questions you can reach me without hesitation. I'm looking forward to seeing you in the CAGDASMUN'2025

**Melikhan DEMİRKIRAN:**

05443681943

### **Letter From The Academic Assistances:**

Dear MUNers,

When we came up with the idea of making a committee about this topic, we were so thrilled that we couldn't even decide how to start writing about it. The fact that there is so much to talk about Eastern history or even with the Imjin War period made it nearly impossible to choose an exact topic. Now we are proud of the work we created. We want you to feel the same about this committee as we do, so if you have any kind of questions, problems or suggestions about this committee we would like to hear your words too. See you in the CAGDASMUN'2025.

**Bora GÜNGÖRALP:** 05300613847

**Yağız Eren BAYBURTLU:** 05378571097

### **Committee Procedure:**

First of all this is a crisis committee where actions speak louder than words. So rather than your words you will use directives to achieve some greater goals. In addition to that this committee is a Joint Crisis Committee (JCC) which means there will be two separate cabinets which have different goals. You will experience your goals' are in contradiction with, then you will encounter the inevitable consequences of these contradictions.

In JCC committees there are usually two sides who constantly try to dominate or even destroy each other. In this committee your main task will be dominating the other side but of course you can decide the future of those pesky fools that fight against you!



As obvious as it is, one of the sides will represent Joseon Kingdom and the other will represent the Japanese Kingdom. You will do everything you are capable of to win.

### **Directive 101:**

Crisis committees need directives to go on. Directives decide everything in such committees. In this part, directives will be introduced to you shortly to relax you. In the first session of the conference we will give you a detailed workshop about them.

### **How to write them?**

Firstly we have 6 types of directives

They are

1-Personal

2-Joint

3-Cabinet/Committee

4-Intelligence

5-Press release/Declaration

6-Top Secret

In personal directives you use all of your power in order to achieve some goals.

In joint directives more than one people come together and combine their power to achieve some goals.

In committee directives every member of the cabinet come together and write a directive that is a crucial for the future of the committee

In intelligence directives you ask something to crisis team that only they can know about like how many troops you have

In declarations/press releases you make a speech in order to notify press or public about your plans or to calm their nerves

You use top secret directives when you have a directive but you want nobody to see it. You can fold it and write top secret on it. This way nobody, even your board, will see it until the crisis team gets it.

About writing them, the format for the first three is more important. While writing them, for the first three, you need to focus on WH questions. Your Directive should answer each of the questions without any further hesitations. The crisis team will evaluate your directives so to make everything clear for them you must pay attention to it.

### **Example for personal directive:**

Me as the head of the spartans, command my 300 men not to be afraid of. I tell them to wait until midnight when our enemy will not notice us in the darkness of the night. So we will wait until midnight in the forest. In the bushes, on the trees etc. So even in the brightness of the daytime it will be hard to notice us. After successfully hiding until midnight we will slowly leave our hiding places without leaving the forest itself. We will gather in the forest to discuss our plan one more time. I will command them to slowly approach the enemy sides. Since it is night and they didn't see us a day before I don't think there would be many guards. We will check the enemy side one more time before leaving our places. We will check to see how many torches are burning to guess the guards awake. After making sure there are not so many I will assign 30 of my men to slowly approach the guards. They will slowly creep to the guards. They won't carry any kind of light sources and close the tip of their spears with some clothing so it won't be shining. Also to our luck the clouds are preventing moonshine from entering. When my 30 men come close enough to guards they will pull their legs making them fall. After the guards fall my men will rotate their heads like spinning a wheel thus the guards will have their neck cracked. After the guards, my men stand up and give us the signal. This signal will mean the guards are down and you can come. Me and my remaining 270 men will go there slowly again but this time we will not be creeping since there are no guards to notice us. When all of my army makes it to the enemy side we will start slaughtering them all. We will make sure that there will be no survivors from the attack. We will kill all the enemy and loot their belongings.

Don't forget that this is just an example and you are capable of writing better directives than this.

### **How to submit them?**

To submit your directives you fold them. We will show how. After you fold it you will raise it high enough for your admin to see it. Then your admin will take it and bring it to us. When your admin takes the directive you can accept it as submitted.

### **How to get the updates?**

For each directive crisis team evaluated, they will prepare an update. When there is an update crisis team will knock on the door and open it. After entering they will shout “update”. After hearing the voice update you have to be quiet. Then your update will be read to the committee.

## **Rules:**

- 1- If you want to invent something, it must have been invented before 1700 (1700 included)
- 2- Your directive should make sense and should be compatible with reality
- 3- Your directives are official documents. So you should be careful about what you write.
- 4- Updates will be given according to your directives. Don't forget that the crisis team is not responsible for bad updates. Don't be mad at them please:)
- 5- You are allowed to use everything you have to achieve victory
- 6- You should have fun while destroying your enemy

## **Introduction to the Committee:**

### **Background of The War:**

#### **a. Politics and Past Conflicts**

#### **Regional Power Balance:**

At late 16. century there were three main powers in East Asia:

##### **Ming Dynasty(China):**

Ming China was the most powerful country between the big three, seen as the centre of the local order and taking tribute from the neighbouring countries.

##### **Joseon Dynasty(Korea):**

Korea was seen as the vassal of Ming. Was ruled by a Confucian order and hasn't been in a war for a long time.

##### **Japan:**

Because of the civil wars Japan was a teared apart country in the mid 15s. But **Oda Nobunaga** and after **Toyotomi Hideyoshi** got the country united again. This process made their politics and orders much more offensive to others.

In conclusion, in the 1590s Japan was a newly united, strong and aggressive country, Korea was peaceseeking and unprepared, while China was trying to secure its position.

### **Past Conflicts:**

Before The Imjin War started there were some **diplomatic disagreements and minor battles** between the sides.

### **Hideyoshi's Transition Plan:**

Toyotomi Hideyoshi sent ambassadors to Korea, he asked for permission to move his army across Korean territory to conquer China. Unfortunately for Hideyoshi, the Joseon government diplomatically rejected this request in order to preserve its ties with Ming China. This incident heated the tension between these two countries.

### **Pirates of Wokou:**

Between the 14. and 16. centuries, Japanese originated pirate groups were attacking Korean and Chinese borders frequently. These attacks hurt the trustship historically between these two countries. Korean people often identified Japanese with these pirates.

### **The Collapse of Diplomatic Missions:**

In the 1550s Japan sent a lot of diplomatic committees to Korea. However these committees were sent to hide Japan's war preparations and inspect the Korean army. Korean authorities didn't notice anything.

These events created **an atmosphere of growing distrust disguised as peace** between the sides.

## **b. Sides of the War**

### **Japan: Toyotomi Hideyoshi:**

Japan was ruled by **Toyotomi Hideyoshi** between 1537-1598 years. After he took over the empire Hideyoshi was able to ensure political union in the empire. His next goal was the control of China so he focused his resources on military technology. The army of the Japan Empire was exceptionally disciplined. He improved the existing matchlock rifles to a next level at his time, he had his own tactics of using them. Korea (which was not at its full potential) was on Hideyoshi's way to China and he viewed Korea mostly as a passageway to Ming China. However logistics was a big dilemma for him at the time because Japanese soldiers had to use a water supply line and it was exposed to attacks from the Korean navy forces. Although Hideyoshi's confidence and strategies were rock solid as the war exceeded its estimated time, Japan's army was experiencing challenges in supply and morality of theirs.

### **Joseon Korea: King Seonjo:**

Before the war, the Joseon dynasty was living in peace and wasn't prepared for that big of a war. Korea's defence structure was disorganized and they were already trying to get over the first Japan invasion. However both the army and the civilian population were dedicated to show resistance. One of the biggest advantages of Korea was the fleet commanded by **Admiral Yi Sun-shin**. Geobukson, armored ships known as the **Turtle Ships**, were going to be extremely useful with cutting the Japanese supply line. Even the strategical disorder and exhaustion of the main army Seonjo persisted to fight for Korean freedom and as the war dragged on Joseon managed to bring together the local guerrilla forces and get the support of Mings, By the end of the war his role played a huge role in the history.

### **Ming China:**

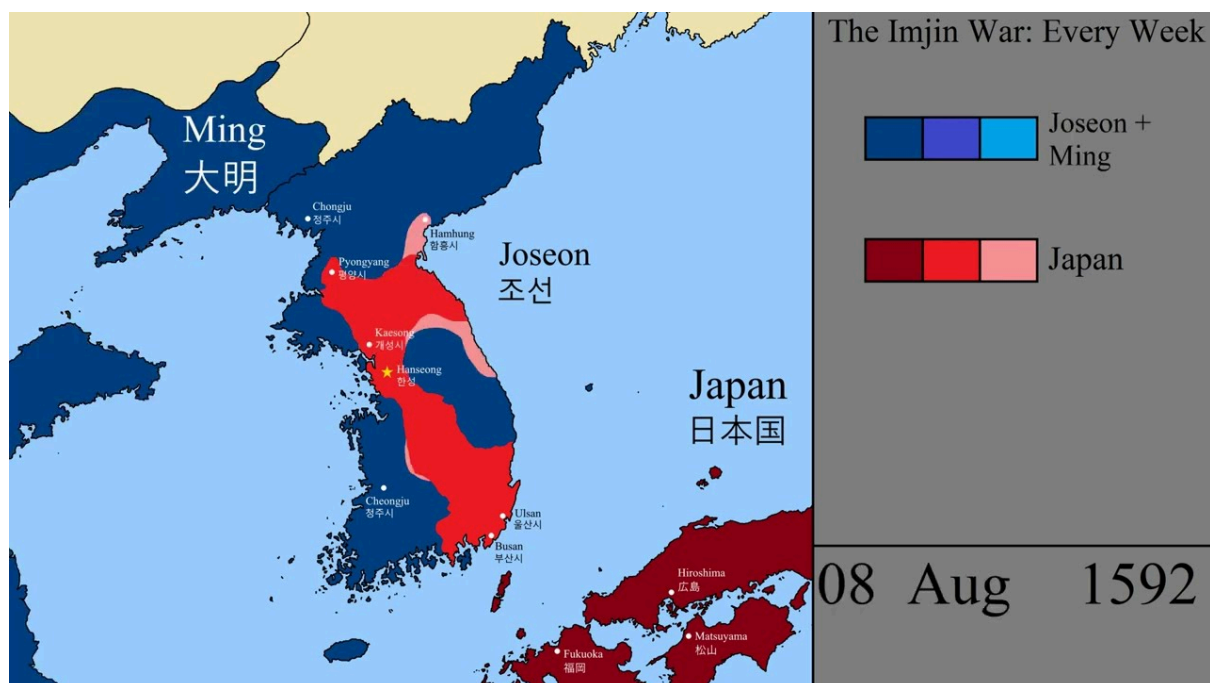
The **Ming Dynasty** was seeing Korea as a country to use as a tribute but also as an ally. As the Japanese invasion started, China saw a threat in its **northeastern borders** so they sent support to Joseon. The Chinese army was well organized and quite experienced, it helped Joseon to stop the Japanese. Nevertheless Ming China had some soft points too; the obligation to fight in wide plains, high cost of logistics and exhausted soldiers complicated China's struggle. Also the bureaucratic structure of The Ming made it difficult to make quick and efficient decisions in stressful crisis situations.

## **BATTLE PERIOD**

## a. How It All Started:

After ending the civil wars and reuniting the country, Toyotomi Hideyoshi wanted to exceed his control zone beyond the Japanese borders. His goal was to invade China through Korea and build a Japanese centered empire in east Asia. For this purpose he prepared an enormous army. With thousands of samurais and modernised firearms he was nearly unstoppable. He even created a navy from scratch. He didn't expect that much resistance from Korea and thought that he could move to China in a short time.

In the spring of 1592, Japan invaded first **Busan** (a Korean city) with an army of 150.000. This army was one of the biggest amphibian forces. Caught off guard, the Joseon Kingdom quickly retreated.



*The picture above shows the constant situation in Korea in August 1592*

Japanese forces managed to reach **Seoul** and **Pyongyang** from Busan in only 15 days, the capital (Seoul) fell and King Seonjo escaped. Korean people panicked. While the courtiers (people that live in the palace) were escaping, villagers burned their houses down and started guerilla defence. This resistance is now called the “**Uibeyong**” (volunteered armies) and it is one of the biggest civilian actions of the war. Since they wouldn't be able to defend the country with only 20.000 soldiers, Korean King Seonjo had to move his castle to the north and requested immediate support from Ming China. With the Ming support the Korean navy was able to stop them because most of the Japanese army was supplied only by naval supply lines. This battle was one of the biggest international battles in east Asia to that day. The Korean navy exceeded the expectations in this battle and made history.

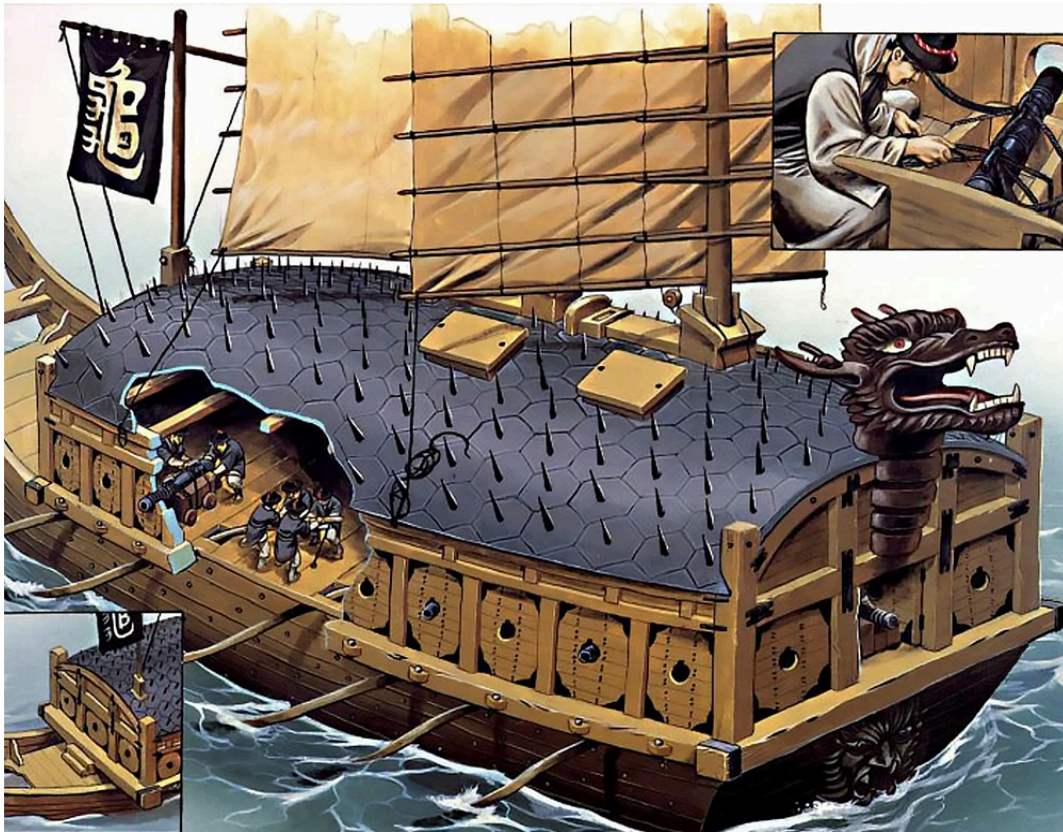


## **b. Major Events**

### **Yi Sun-shin and Navy Victories:**

Admiral Yi Sun-shin reorganized the navy forces in South Jeolla with the latest strategies and technologies. Reinforced the navy ships with heavy armors and powerful cannons. He called them “**The Turtle Ships**” and these ships became the first armored ships of its time and paved the way for today's armored ships (we can say that Admiral Yi was like Fatih Sultan Mehmet for the Korean people).

The main reason for the Korean victory was actually the naval dominance that was established by Admiral Yi Sun-shin. Yi targeted the Japanese supply lines. Yi's strategy was brilliant because the Japanese navy was quite weak and insufficient in the high seas. Japanese ships were designed to move as many soldiers as possible, so they were not that good with cannons. Yi noticed that and attacked them in tight gorges with fast maneuvers. With the **Okpo, Hansado and Busan Bay** wars, Hideyoshi stopped the marching because of the huge losses caused by Admiral Yi. The Hansando war was considered as one of the biggest naval victories of Korean history. The armored design of the Geobukseon Ships broke the maneuvering superiority of Japanese ships. These victories blocked the supply chain of the Japanese land armies and led to changing the course of the war inevitably.



*The iron spikes on the geobukseon protected Korean sailors and marines from small arms and incendiary fire. Additionally, the spikes discouraged the invading Japanese from grappling the enemy.*

*In the picture you see the **Korean Turtle Ships**.*

## **The Ming Intervention:**

After seeing the unstoppable march of Japanese forces to north Korea(northern lands of Korea), King Seonjo called Ming China for help. At first Chinese emperor Wanli was skeptical about helping but after seeing Japanese at their borders they directly sent their army. In 1593 chinese **General Li Rusong** and his army entered Korea and united with the Joseon forces. Together they got **Pyongyang** back and pushed the Japanese back to south Korea. In this period Korea started gathering itself back, the navy was securing dominance at the sea and guerilla defences were getting stronger everyday. However the factionalism in the palace was still going on. For that moment Ming support prevented the Japanese invasion but at the same time ended up with huge economic damages to the Ming Dynasty, in the upcoming years these damages led the dynasty to fall weak.

## **Diplomatic Ventures and The Era of Firearms:**

With the big Pyongyang defeat in 1593, Hideyoshi paused the war for a short period of time and started diplomatic meetings with the other side. Toyotomi Hideyoshi wanted to be seen as an equal monarch to Ming, he called himself as an emperor (Wanli got offended by this), for him Korea was just a pathway to China that he controlled. After all Ming Dynasty saw Japan as a vassal country that pays tributes and made insulting offers under the name of “**Peace Gift**”. This conflict has brought the diplomatic process to a deadlock. While the Korean side was focusing on reconstructing the country and gathering up its army, the Japanese side was using these peacemeetings to save time. By the year 1596 all the meetings completely failed and sides once more prepared for war.

### c. Late Period of The War

#### Dismissal of Yi Sun-shin:

In the early months of 1597 factionalism gained power again at the Joseon Palace. The fake intrigues created by Japanese spies damaged the palace's trust to Yi Sun-shin. By the time passed a Japanese spy fooled Joseon with an insidious plan and convinced the palace that Hideyoshi was gonna attack from the west. Yi noticed that the intelligence could be a trap since it was not logical, and didn't obey the order given by King Joseon. The palace considered this as “**disobedience**”. Yi got arrested, tortured and demoted. They placed an inexperienced admiral **Won Gyun** in his position. Under his command, the navy made an unplanned attack and nearly got fully destroyed (this war is called the **Chilcheollyang War**). This was one of the biggest defeats of Korea.

Unfortunately, the Japanese were unable to capitalize on this victory for long. Because Ming's military intervention was still involved in the area and while Hideyoshi was preparing for a second invasion Yi Sun-shin got back in admiral position.

#### Yi Sun's Return and Myeongnyang Victory:

Yi, reconstructed the navy **with only 13 ships**. In the fall of 1597, the Japanese navy marched to **Myeongnyang Gorge** with **130 ships**. Yi took advantage of the strong currents in the strait, Japanese ships got stuck and couldn't maneuver and the Korean Admiral Yi Sun-shin took all of them **one by one** (I have to say that's beyond impressive). This victory changed the course of the war not only martially but also psychologically and brought back the “**invincible**” belief of Korea.

## **Second Japanese Invasion (Keicho Invasion):**

Hideyoshi still had not given up on his dream of bringing China down on his knees. After the unsuccessful meetings and fake diplomatic messages in 1596, Hideyoshi decided to attack one more time. The second invasion in 1597 wasn't as big as the first one in 1592 but Toyotomi was still able to gather a big army. This time Korea and Ming China were much more organized compared to the first attack because they knew it was coming. Japanese forces were able to get small victories in coastal areas (like the **Namwon Birdthrowing**) but they couldn't get into inner lands. War wore out the Japanese army, they were continuously fighting with diseases and hunger. Korean people were planning well organized guerilla attacks like nearly every village. The end wasn't looking so bright for the Japanese King.





*This is an old drawing about the **Keicho Invasion** (1597).*

## Hideyoshi's Death (End of an Era):

By the year 1598, Hideyoshi had gotten old (a man in sixties was considered old for his time) and his health was getting worse every other day. The Korean campaign had become a huge burden for Japan: the economy had collapsed, soldiers were exhausted and people were sick of war. Hideyoshi knew that this war would keep going if he didn't end it and was afraid that the country's order would break down after his death. In order to protect his little child he established the “**Five Elders Council**”. This management would be in power until the rightful heir **Hideyori** gets old enough to rule the empire. One of the members of this council was no other than **Tokugawa Ieyasu** (I highly recommend you to search about this man).

With the defeat news coming from Korea, Hideyoshi fully lost his hope. Before his death he commanded the withdrawal of all the forces and ended the war. He died on September 18th 1598 but his death wasn't reported to the soldiers in Korea for a period of time because the retreating was still continuing.

Hideyoshi's death created a huge power gap in Japan. Tokugawa Ieyasu took the opportunity, betrayed his ancestors. After winning the **Sekigahara Civil War** in 1600, he created the **Edo Shogunate** and with its new ruler Japan gave up the foreign conquest politics and entered a closed period that would last approximately 250 years. Toyotomi Hideyoshi's death was not just a leader's end, it was also a milestone that changed the power balance of East Asia from its roots.



*In the picture above you can see **Tokugawa Ieyasu**, fighting against his own people in the **Sekigahara Civil War**...*



## **Noryang Naval Battle (The Last Battle):**

On a cold December morning in 1598, **the final act of the Imjin War** was started in the **Noryang Gorge**. Japanese armies had already started retreating on the lands but still there were thousands of soldiers and ships in the south shores of Korea. The Japanese general had to find a way to somehow bring those units back to Japan safely otherwise they would all get destroyed.

The legendary commander of the Korean Navy, Admiral Yi Sun-shin and the Ming Navy commander **Chen Lin**, were dedicated to stopping the Japanese from going back to their country. Yi was great at short straits and strong currents. His plan was to get the Japanese ships to Noryang Gorge and destroy them with cannonfire.

On the night of December 17th the Japanese fleet, under the command of **Konishi Yukinaga** and **Shimazu Yoshihiro**, entered the Noryang Gorge. The battle started with the daybreak. Yi's fleet was lined up at the front and Ming ships were supporting from the back. Strong cannonballs of Korea, destroyed the front line of the Japanese fleet in the first minutes.

The Japanese, with the turbid fog, tried attacking a few times, moreover some ships tried to get close and get into a close fight. But the narrow waters were not the place for this kind of a tactic, this led to chaos in the Noryang. At the most critical moment of the battle Admiral Yi gave the order to not retreat. Korean ships took a crescent formation and literally melted them with cannons.

The battle lasted for hours. While the Japan fleet was trying to retreat, Yi Sun-shin was fighting in the front line on his own ship. At that moment something so unlucky happened. A bullet hit right at his chest. Mortally wounded, Yi quietly said **"Do not tell anyone before the victory"** and died on the battlefield.

The soldiers kept the secret and hid his body; tried to keep the morale the same. Chen Lin executed Yi's plan perfectly and as the sun appeared on the horizon most of the Japanese fleet were sunk down. Hundreds of Japanese ships burned and the waters were covered in flames. The remaining Japanese soldiers managed to escape.

The Noryang Naval Battle became the symbol of the final victory of Korea and Ming. Despite the fact that he died on the battlefield, his vicious victory saved his country and made him a legend that is still remembered.



*There is an illustration of one of the most intense moments of the battle.*

## **Military of The Era**

Below, we've organized the military structure of the Imjin War into four main topics: Land, **Military**, Navy, **Weapons Used** and **Case Studies**. Each subheading contains detailed information for Japan, Joseon, and Ming China, for you to fully understand the circumstances of the era and imagine it in your mind easier.

### **a. Land Military**

#### **Japan / Land Forces**

Japanese land forces, forged with the experience of the Sengoku Era, were extremely disciplined and aggressive structures.

**Organization:** The forces provided from the **daimyōs** (feudal lords) were coordinated around the central command of Hideyoshi. Large expeditionary forces were composed with a lot of independent units.

**Main Types of Units:**

**Ashigaru (Infantry):** Light infantry units with **arquebus (tanegashima)** and **spear/katana** combination.

**Samurais:** Heavy, well trained soldiers; effective for both cavalry and close combat.

**Cavalries:** Mostly for shock operations and fast maneuvers.



*In the picture above you see the Japanese land forces using **arquebus**.*





*Above, you see an illustration of the Japanese cavalries.*

**Special Strategies:** Weakening the enemy lines with **volley fire** (mass fire shooting), fast close combat attacks; beneficial for sieges and fast moves (**blitz**).

**Logistic Weakness:** Dependent on long amphibic supply lines; dependence on naval support is its biggest weak point in the long run. Also this made it harder while building big fronts.

**Armor and Equipment:** Lamellar/covered plate armors, designs that are designed to ensure mobility.

## **Joseon (Korea) / Land Forces**

The Joseon land forces were a peacetime army, run by a centralized bureaucracy; initially weak but quickly recovered.

**Organization:** Central royal army + regional garrisons + people's militia (**uibyong / righteous armies**).

### **Main Types of Units:**

**Traditional Infantry:** Professionalized on archery and spear throwing; as the technology developed they increased the number of artillery and firearms.

**Uibyong (people's militia):** Local guerilla, providing logistics and intelligence.

**Special Strategies:** Defensive focused; securing the castles, resisting sieges; cooperated strategy with the naval support.

**Logistic Weaknesses:** At first unprepared army, coordination problems due to the factionalist politics; but with the Ming support, land forces grew stronger.

**Armor and Equipment:** Traditional Korean armors + increasing artillery supported defence.



*There is the full clothing of a Korean soldier in the 1590s.*

## **Ming China / Land Forces**

Ming's organized army was convenient for large scaled battles and a power that depended on artillery and discipline.

**Organization:** Central empire army (divided into units / commands), professional units + local garrisons.

### **Main Types of Units**

**Heavy Infantry and Artillery:** The main elements of sieges and landline wars.

**Cavalries:** Maneuver and chasing missions; especially effective in open lands.



**Special Strategies:** Artillery supported slow, coordinated march; sieges, line defences and counter attacks.

**Logistic Weaknesses:** Huge manpower advantage but heavy logistic costs; economic attrition during long deployments.

**Armor and Equipment:** Chinese artillery and various heavy siege machines were decisive.

## b. Navy

### Japanese Navy

Japanese naval power was mostly focused on **troop transport**; rather than large naval battles it was suitable for mostly coast operations.

**Ships:** Transportation focused boats like **Sekibune** / **Atakebune**; heavy artillery capacity was limited.



*The Atakebune Ship.*



*In the picture above you see the **Sekibune Ships**.*

**Special Strategies:** Coast landing; attacks with close contacts and pedestrian commandos; less reliance on mass naval gunfire.

**Pros / Cons:** Strong in troop landing and transportation; disadvantages in the open sea and narrow waters.

**Command:** Naval tradition was local and under the daimyō control; coordination was problematic at times.

## **Korean Navy**

Joseon naval force was the **most critical element** in the Imjin War; both the ship designs and the tactics changed the course of the war.

### **Ships:**

**Geobukseon (Turtle Ships):** Closed deck, heavy armored, a lot of artillery positions; safe crew, gunfire was the focus.



*A Geobukseon Ship*

**Panokseon:** Used in most of the battles, multipurposed battleship; artillery and row power combination.



*A Paneokseon Ship*

**Special Strategies:** Ambush in narrow bosphorus, pressing with the artillery bombardment, maneuver advantage; targeting naval supply lines.

**Pros / Cons:** Strong naval artillery and geographic knowledge; could be a disadvantage in open seas.

**Command:** Admiral Yi Sun-shin's powerful centered command and tactical innovations were decisive.

## **Chinese Navy**

Ming's naval power was local and in a supportive role; ensured artillery support in the sea by cooperating with Admiral Yi.

**Ships:** Big Chinese ships (**called as the Junks**) and artillery units; Ming ships were influential in united operations.

**Special Strategies:** Coordinated gunfire, outnumbering and blockade actions; operating with Korea.

**Pros / Cons:** Powerful in land, was able to give a little support in the seas; wasn't powerful as the Joseon Navy.

### **c. Weapons Used**

#### **Japanese Key Weapons**

**Tanegashima / Arquebus (matchlock):** In the 16th century Japanese armies' main fire power; attacks with volley (quickfire) tactics. It was a big advantage with the short refill time.



*A picture of an Arquebus.*

**Yari (spear):** A must for short distance fights and shock attacks; influential in infantry formations.

**Katana and short sword:** A samurai's priority in close combat.

**Small gun/ram:** Limited naval gunnery; siege guns were used but limited.

**Tactic of landing and approaching troops on ships:** In naval warfare, close attack was preferred over artillery.

## **Korean Key Weapons**

**Geobukseon guns & Panokseon artillery:** The main fighting force of Korean ships; ranged bombardment.

**Hwacha:** Multiple-shot arrow/rocket launching weapon system—area suppression against dense infantry concentrations.





*In the picture, you see a real life **Hwachha**.*

**Chongtong / Korean guns:** Artillery of various sizes, used both on ships and on land.

**Arrows and spears, increasing use of firearms:** A hybrid weapon set between traditional and modern.

**Ship armor/enclosed decks:** Design that protected the crew played a vital role in combat.

## **Chinese Key Weapons**

**Heavy siege artillery (large cast cannons):** Effective for destroying castles and defending against fixed lines.

**Musket/Arquebus variants:** Firearm variants were also used in China, especially for infantry-supported fire.

**Cavalry and spear combination:** Mobility in open terrain and a shock attack.

**Fortress and siege machines:** Combination of traditional siege machines and gunpowder artillery.



**Naval artillery (combined Ming and Joseon firepower):** They overwhelmed the Japanese navy with their combined artillery pressure.

#### **d. Case Studies:**

This part of the guide is written to explain to you about all major fights and battles between the sides, and show you the mistakes and tactics that are used in the war.

***Note:** Some estimates of strength/numbers vary by source; reliable historians generally provide reasonable ranges and tactical details.*

##### **1) Busan Landing (1592)**

The Busan Campaign, the start of the Imjin War, was the first big landing that Japan made to Korea. On May 23th of 1592, under the leadership of **Konishi Yukinaga**, Japanese forces first landed on Busan Bay. The local Korean commander **Jeong Bal** had a small garrison and couldn't hold up against Japanese firearms (especially the "**tanegashima**" rifles). The Japanese, with the quickfire tactic, easily collapsed the Korean defence and captured Busan. This victory showed the speed that the Japanese have on land and completed the first step of Hideyoshi's road to Ming. However with the fast moving army, Japanese had to widen their naval supply lines; this ended up with a strategic weakness in the next months.

##### **2) The Fall of Seoul (1592)**

Just two days after the fall of Busan, the Japanese armies directly marched north to Seoul. Two army units commanded by **Konishi Yukinaga** and **Kato Kiyomasa**, effortlessly arrived at the capital breaching the defence lines. King Seonjo had to **escape to Pyongyang** because of the army's disorganization. The fall of Seoul completely collapsed Korea's central authority. The Japanese used the city as a strategic base, but because of the resistance of the local people and logistic problems they couldn't establish a permanent order in the city. This period showed the unmodernized build of the Korean army and the vulnerability of Korea; moreover quite damaged the morale of the public.

### 3) Battle of Pyongyang (1593)

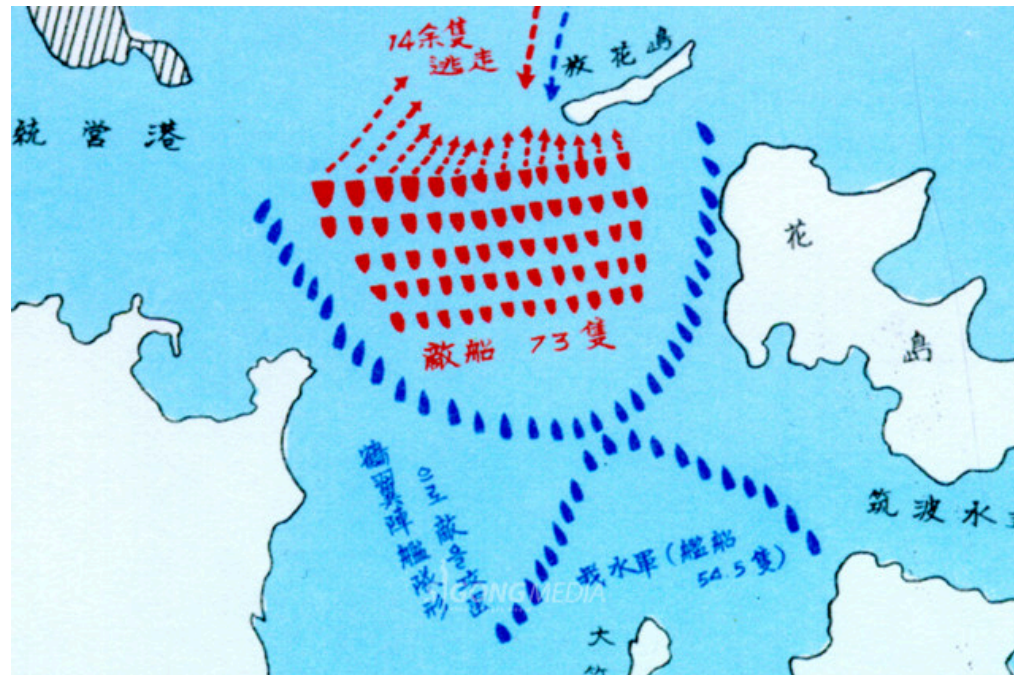
The Battle of Pyongyang was the first big battle that Ming China actively involved in the field. **Konishi Yukinaga's** forces had captured Pyongyang by the end of 1592, but in the beginning of 1593 the Ming armies, under **General Li Rusong's** command, took action to get the city back. Chinese artillery launched a heavy bombardment on the Japanese fortification defenses. Although the Japanese established a trench system within the city, they were forced to retreat in the face of Ming firepower and superior numbers. This battle was the first major victory that halted the Japanese advance and effectively led to the establishment of the Sino-Korean alliance.

### 4) Battle of Jiksan (1593)

Japanese troops retreating from Pyongyang attempted to stop the Ming army's advance by establishing a defensive line at Jiksan. The battle is significant for demonstrating the defence capabilities of the Japanese armies. Under Katō Kiyomasa's leadership, the Japanese inflicted heavy losses on the Korean and Chinese spear-wielding units, using their rifle units as cover. However, the Ming's numerical superiority and the Korean terrain advantage forced the Japanese to retreat. This battle demonstrated Japan's vulnerability for a prolonged war in Korea and ultimately paved the way for a temporary ceasefire.

### 5) Hansando Naval Battle (1592)

The Battle of Hansando, one of the Korean navy's greatest victories, was the result of Admiral Yi Sun-shin's brilliant tactical mind. The Japanese navy was planning to create another supply line to support its troops in Korea. Yi Sun-shin surrounded the Japanese fleet off Hansando Island with his "Crane Wing" formation. This maneuver limited the Japanese ships' mobility and exposed them to the wide-angle fire of Korean artillery. As a result, the Japanese navy suffered heavy losses and completely lost naval dominance. This victory paralyzed Japan's supply capabilities, radically changing the course of the war.



*The “Crane Ring” formation.*

## 6) Battle of Byeokjegwan (1593)

The Battle of Byeokjegwan was one of the occasional Japanese victories in history against the Ming army. The Ming army launched an attack to take back Seoul. However, the Japanese forces, led by **Konishi Yukinaga**, quickly prepared and repositioned for defence. Japanese samurai and spear infantry (yari ashigaru) were positioned in the narrow passes by **Yukinaga**, exposing heavy losses on the Ming army. However, this victory did not bring about a strategic shift; the Japanese were still under pressure to retreat. Nevertheless, Byeokjegwan proved that the Japanese army's discipline and coordination remained strong as always.

## 7) Myeongnyang Naval Battle (1597)

The Myeongnyang Naval Battle is considered as one of the most sensational defensive victories in Korean history. Admiral Yi Sun-sin had been unrightfully discharged and tortured because of some bullshit rumors around the Joseon Palace, but was returned to position after the catastrophic defeat at Chilcheollyang. Armed with only 13 ships, he fought bravely for the Myeongnyang Strait against **over 130 ships** of the Japanese fleet (never acknowledged tho). Using the strong currents to his advantage and fast maneuvers, he forced the Japanese ships into collisions in the narrow waters

and destroyed them with special Korean artillery that he **improved himself**. This victory crushed the Japanese army's morale and ended their last hopes of a real victory.

## 8) Noryang Naval Battle (1598)

The last major part of the Imjin War a.k.a. The Battle of Noryang, was the final act of the Japanese withdrawal from Korea. Yi Sun-sin, supported by the Ming Admiral Chen Lin, ambushed the Japanese fleet in the Noryang Strait. Japanese forces were already in retreat, however a joint Korean-Ming fleet captured them under heavy cannonfire. The battle finally ended with a glorious Korean victory, even though Admiral Yi Sun-sin got shot and died in the final moments of the battle. This battle marked the end of the Japanese invasion and led to a huge naval superiority in Korean waters.

## Conclusion

The Imjin War stands as one of the most convoluted and transformative conflicts in the history of East Asia, a war that reconstructed the political and military balance of the late 16th century. To be honest the main reason for the war was actually the ambitious vision of Hideyoshi to conquer Ming China at any cost. This inaccessible goal evolved into a devastating continental war that pushed the limits of the resilience and unity of all three nations. **For Japan**, this war showed the vulnerability and the power of faith of its fresh unified state: while the samurai forces displayed exceeding discipline and military innovation, the expansionist ambitions punished the Japanese with the logistical problems. **For Korea**, the invasion created catastrophic damages however it also embraced the Korean people and improved the Korean military totally. The destruction it caused forced the Joseon Dynasty to modernize its defenses, reorganize its bureaucracy, and re-evaluate its dependence on traditional military structures. The unbelievable devotions of commanders – or heroes – such as Admiral Yi Sun-sin also forged a lasting symbol of national resistance and the power of a strategic mind.

From Ming China's perspective, the war reaffirmed Ming's status as the regional hegemon and dominance but at an unbelievable cost. The massive mobilization required to resist Japan drained Ming resources and accelerated the empire's internal collapse, indirectly paving the way for the Qing rise in the following century. Diplomatically, the Imjin War marked as one of the first large-scale multinational wars in East Asia, where alliances, communications, and strategic coordination played as crucial a role as direct combat. It showcased how fragmented personal ambitions and miscommunication could prolong conflict, yet also how unified resistance and naval supremacy could alter the course of war.

Ultimately, the Imjin War was more than just a bunch of battles — it was a long learned lesson in the balance between ambition and vanity, unity and disharmony, tradition and innovation. Its legacy endured for centuries till to this day, shaping East Asia's military doctrines, interstate political relations, and collective public memory. The conflict still remains as a reminder that even in the face of overwhelming destruction, the resilience of nations and the leadership of a few individuals can completely redefine history itself. We hope that this guide was enough to help you to understand the mechanism and order of the world and shape your future with it.

### Further Research Notes:

<https://youtu.be/5TA5gb1beqo?si=e3F9yt8DwaTTyIMd> (Kings and Generals channel all in one long video)

<https://youtu.be/Qk9DSwjINXE?si=yB3IjnnEdpR92iSS> (Shogunate channel pt1)

[https://youtu.be/jHpl7uoXwq4?si=B0\\_lKA-abEM-Ults](https://youtu.be/jHpl7uoXwq4?si=B0_lKA-abEM-Ults) (Shogunate channel pt2)

<https://youtu.be/Q-hKwuR3O2M?si=OVgKFHJpr-af8A5e> (Shogunate channel pt3)

<https://youtu.be/Tg9EnDVauug?si=HdDUu-qTRQbEyYD0> (alternate scenario)

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLItiSOXjLRZkCoobMYehP1Jns2wkWmhQp&si=dbMmenBiP8Zvt6s> (Chronologically Imjin war part by part)

[https://youtu.be/NmkVqZFISNA?si=sMXroj18fomPcOx\\_](https://youtu.be/NmkVqZFISNA?si=sMXroj18fomPcOx_) (how the battles looked like, scene from the film)

<https://youtu.be/ZBePT5KqCCM?si=HGQBUCCZ6CWtnpwj> (The battle changed the medieval East Asia)

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