

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Conquest of the Island of Cypress

Conquest of Cypress

When Uthman became the Caliph, Amir Muawiyah reported his proposal to undertake a naval expedition and conquer Cypress. Muawiyah advanced detailed arguments in favor of his proposal. Uthman agreed to the proposal, but laid down the condition that only such persons should participate in the naval expedition who volunteered themselves, and no person should be forced to join the expedition against his will.

Muawiyah fitted a strong naval fleet under the command of Abdullah b Qais. Another fleet was sent by Abdullah b Abi Sarah from Egypt. Muawiyah raised a force of volunteers. Among other persons, the volunteers included eminent companions like Abu Dhar Ghifari, Ubadah b Samit, his wife Umm Haraam, Abu Darda and Shaddad b Aus.

The Muslim force landed on Cypress in 649 C.E. There was only a small Byzantine garrison on the island which was overpowered without any difficulty. The islanders submitted to the Muslims, and agreed to pay a tribute of 7,000 dinars per year.

The conquest of Cypress was the first naval conquest of the Muslims. When the conquest of the island was reported to Uthman he felt satisfied with the result of the first naval expedition. That made Uthman feel that the fears of Umar about naval warfare were unfounded, and that in future the Muslims would have to conduct campaigns on the sea as well as the land. He accordingly permitted Muawiyah as well as Abdullah b Abi Sarah to build up strong navies in Syria and Egypt.

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Source : Alim.org-Uthman History