

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Situation in Madina

Uthman's address at the Prophet's mosque

On the following Friday, Uthman addressed the congregation in the Prophet's mosque. After praising God and the Holy Prophet, Uthman said:

"It has come to my notice that many false things are being said against me and my administration. You know after the Holy Prophet, Abu Bakr became the Caliph and after him Umar became the Caliph. I served both of them, and they were happy with me. After Umar I was chosen as the Caliph. I swear

by Allah that I did not covet the office. You know I was already very rich and the office of the Caliph could not be a matter of any material advantage for me. You know Umar was harsh and stern. He was not hard with the people alone; he was hard with his own person. May God bless him. His services to the cause of Islam cannot be forgotten. When I became the Caliph, I felt that the people wanted some change in policies. I consequently followed liberal policies and relaxed some of the harsh measures that had been in force in the time of Umar. I increased the stipends of the people. I withdrew the restraints that had been imposed in the time of Umar. The rule of any Imam is to be judged on the basis of the prosperity of the people. Look around you and say honestly whether you are not more prosperous today than what you were at the time of my succession. The Muslim dominions today are much more extensive than what they were twelve years ago. The people now are wealthier and richer than what they were before. As a result of military operations there has been much of booty. All such booty has been distributed among the people according to the formula laid down by the Holy Prophet. After such distributions there are ample funds in the Baitul Mal to meet our future needs. I have served the people to the best of my ability. It is however a matter of regret to note that instead of appreciating the good that I have done, a malicious propaganda is being carried out in some quarters to malign me. I chose to be kind and liberal. I tried to be a benevolent ruler. It is very unfortunate that undue advantage has been taken of my liberality and my kindness has been mistaken for my weakness. It is given out that I am weak and fickle, that I am led by others around me. It is true that I have some persons around me who help me in State affairs, but it is not correct that I play into their hands. I take all decisions myself. It is said that such and such persons are my evil genius who are leading me on the wrong path. Every person has the right to choose his own advisers, and if I have to my own satisfaction chosen certain persons as my advisers, it is not for any one to say that I should not have appointed such and such a person as my adviser. You merely cavil at persons; you do not bring out in specific terms what wrong has been done. You take pleasure in distorting facts. You give currency to rumors and do not care to verify facts. You say that I gave one lakh dirhams to Harith b Hakam out of the Baitul Mall I have married my son to his daughter and I gave him this money out of my pocket for financing the marriage. The money was not paid out of the Baitul Mall You say that I gave one lakh dirhams to Marwan b Hakam out of the Baitul Mall This is sheer falsehood. I have married my daughter to a son of Marwan and I gave one lakh dirhams in dowry. This money was paid out of my pocket and not from the Baitul Mall It is said that I paid Abdullah b Khalid 3 lakh dirhams from the Baitul Mall He has taken this money as a loan from the Baitul Mal and he will repay it according to the terms of the loan. It is said that I deposed Abdullah b Arqam from his office of the custodianship of the Baitul Mal because he had protested against my grants from the Baitul Mall There is no truth in this allegation. Abdullah b Arqam had held this office for the last twenty-five years, and being old he has retired of his own freewill. Again it is said that I have diverted funds from the Baitul Mal for the construction of private property. This is a tissue of falsehood. I have constructed my private property with my own money, and all know that I have ample resources of my own. It is alleged that I have gifted the entire surplus money in the Baitul Mal to Zaid b Thabit the new Treasurer. This is again a sheer lie. After distributing the money in the Baitul Mal, there was a surplus amount of 1,000 dirhams in the Baitul Mall I asked Zaid b Thabit to utilize this amount for some public purpose, and he utilized this amount for the repair of the

Prophet's mosque.

O people I exhort you to fear God, and not to indulge in false propaganda. All the Muslims are one community. Do not create dissension among the Muslims. If you are tired of me, you may rest assured that being an old man, I do not have long to live. If you want me to abdicate, let you know that this is duly assigned to me by God, and I would never run away from duty whatever the pressure used against me. If you think of employing any force against me, you should be beware that I have my supporters who will support me through thick and thin. I appeal to you not to be misled by false rumors. I assure you of full justice. I expect justice from you. Do not be unnecessarily critical. If you have any legitimate grievance I will certainly redress it; if you are swayed by imaginary grievances, that would lead to mere confusion "

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