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### HAZRAT UMAR RA AS A ROLE MODEL FOR MODERN MUSLIM RULERS

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#### ABSTRACT

The present paper is the study of Hazrat Umar (RA), the second Caliph in Islamic history, as a role model regarding the rights and responsibilities of a successful Ruler. For this purpose, only this aspect of the period of Caliphate of Hazrat Umar (RA) comprising ten and a half year has been studied through the primary sources. The historical record and traditions bring to the fore that Hazrat Umar (RA) was very responsible Muslim Ruler who left a great model behind him for the Muslim Rulers to come. He strictly fulfilled his responsibilities as a Ruler towards the public together with introducing reforms in the state to face new challenges of the time. He was the first Muslim Ruler who started patrolling in the streets of the Capital Madinah to get firsthand knowledge of his subjects to resolve their issues and problems. To fulfil his duties and responsibilities as a Muslim Ruler, he went beyond the traditional line of thinking and used ijtiḥad so that modern challenges would be faced successfully. This paper argues that Hazrat Umar (RA) is proved to be the best model for modern Muslim Rulers in fulfilment of state responsibilities towards the rights of the subjects.

#### INTRODUCTION

After the death of Hazrat Abu kbar (RA), Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA) ascended to the throne of Caliphate and his period of Caliphate is from 22<sup>nd</sup> Jamadi-al-Thani 13 AH to 1<sup>st</sup> Muharram-al-Haram 24 AH. The Model of his Caliphate that he left behind him has been surely a beacon for the later Muslim Rulers.

The footsteps of Islam and the era of the Holy Prophet peace be upon him are adorned with brilliant and ambitious characters. Who is unaware of Farooq Azam's justice, patriotism, piety and best style of government? To put it bluntly, it would not be out of place to say that the sun of Islamic equality continued to spread the light of peace and tranquility in 2.2 million square feet in the era of Hazrat Umar (RA).

If we look at the political system, governance style of today's modern world especially the Muslim world, it seems that they are still too far away from the Model that Hazrat Umar left behind, which ultimately brought human welfare in a very short span of time. Governments today take pride in adopting the reforms of this great caliph for the welfare and wellbeing of human beings.

No historian or scholar of the world has been able to come up with the principle of cheap justice without ignoring the Model of Hazrat Umar (RA). The research paper in hand is the study of responsibilities of a Ruler in the light of the biography and character of Hazrat Umar (RA). It is also worth mentioning that it may be in one's mind that only the conquests of Hazrat Umar (RA) have been emphasized no attention has been paid to his reforms that he introduced during his period of Caliphate.

### *The Rights of a Ruler in the light of Hazrat Umar's Caliphate*

When the rulers hear the name of Hazrat Umar (RA), they are reminded of the whole history and the reality of what kind of ruler he was. In the light of the biography of Hazrat Umar (RA), we get to know as to what the rights of a Ruler over the public and what are the rights of the public over a Ruler. They may well be summarized as follows:

#### *Assistance In Good Deeds*

قَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: أَيُّهَا الرِّعِيَّةُ: إِنَّ لَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ حَقَّ النَّصِيحَةِ  
بِالْغَيْبِ وَالْمُعَاوَنَةَ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ

Addressing the gathering, Hazrat Umar (RA) once said: O people! We have a right to you too, keep our goodwill in our absence and help us in good deeds.<sup>1</sup> This tradition shows that the people should be kind to the ruler even in his absence, not to start calling him bad if he is not present, but also to remember him well and for his good deeds. They also must cooperate with him in his job.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, tarīkh al-Ṭabarī, Beirut: Dār al-Turāth, 4/224.

### *Guidance In Religious Affairs*

Hazrat Umar (RA) addressed the people and said:

فانه ليس لها لك هلك معذرة في تعمد ضلالة حسبها هدى، ولا في ترك  
حق حسب ضلالته، وان احق ما تعهد الراعى من رعيته تعهدهم بالذى الله  
عليهم فى وظائف دينهم الذى هداهم الله له

“It cannot be an excuse for a dying person that he has deliberately taken error as his guidance or left the right path perceiving it as an error. The Ruler should pay the utmost attention to the religious deeds of his subjects which are the right of Allah upon them and to which Allah has guided them.”<sup>2</sup>

### *The Responsibilities of a Ruler in The Light Of Hazrat Umar’s Caliphate*

#### *Concerning The Judiciary*

Devolution of power is essential for the management of the state. And there are numerous administrative departments for the government. For example, the Department of Education, the Department of Judiciary, the Department of Defense, the Department of Finance, just to name a few.

خَطَبَ النَّاسَ بِالْجَابِيَةِ فَقَالَ: " مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ عَنِ الْقُرْآنِ فَلْيَأْتِ أَبِي بِنِ  
كَعْبٍ، وَمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ عَنِ الْفَرَائِضِ فَلْيَأْتِ زَيْدَ بْنَ ثَابِتٍ، وَمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ  
يَسْأَلَ عَنِ الْفِقْهِ فَلْيَأْتِ مُعَاذَ بْنَ جَبَلٍ، وَمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ عَنِ الْمَالِ فَلْيَأْتِنِي؛ فَإِنَّ  
اللَّهَ تَعَالَى جَعَلَنِي لَهُ خَازِنًا وَقَاسِمًا

Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) while delivering a sermon to the people at Jabia, Syria, he said that anyone who wanted to ask about the recitation of the Holy Quran he should ask Mu’az b. Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) and whosoever wanted to ask for inheritance he should come to Zayd b. Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) and whosoever needed wealth he should come to me. Allah has given me treasure for wealth and made the distributor.<sup>3</sup>

وَهُوَ أَوَّلُ مَنْ اسْتَقْضَى الْقَضَاةَ فِي الْأَمْصَارِ. وَكَتَبَ النَّاسَ عَلَى قَبَائِلِهِمْ وَفَرَضَ  
لَهُمُ الْأَعْطِيَةَ مِنَ الْفَيْءِ وَقَسَمَ الْقُسُومَ فِي النَّاسِ. وَفَرَضَ لِأَهْلِ بَدْرِ وَفَضَّلَهُمْ  
عَلَى غَيْرِهِمْ. وَفَرَضَ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ عَلَى أَقْدَارِهِمْ وَتَقَدَّمَهُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ

Hazrat Umar (RA) was the first caliph to appoint judges in the cities, arranged the people according to their tribes, kept donations for them from the wealth of booties, and he bestowed on the people the best of things, and allocated the stipend for the people of Badr, and gave them a preference over others, and in

<sup>2</sup> Qaḍī Abū Yūsuf, Ya‘qūb b. Ibrāhīm, Kitāb al-Kharāj, Lahore: Maktabah Raḥmāniyyah, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Baihaqī, Aḥmad b. Hussain, al-Sunan al-Kubrā, Beirut: Dār ak-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 6/346.

the same way, he allocated the stipend for the rest of the Muslims based on their seniority in Islam and their loyalty .<sup>4</sup>

From the above-mentioned instructions and traditions, it may safely be concluded that Ḥazrat Umar (RA) has played his vital role in all matters of human welfare including education, finance which seem to be in the direct hands of himself.

### *Implementation of Criminal Law*

وَهُوَ أَوَّلُ مَنْ ضَرَبَ فِي الْخَمْرِ ثَمَانِينَ

He was the first caliph to punish a drunkard with eighty lashes.<sup>5</sup>

Blessed is the deed of Ḥazrat Umar (RA) that he punished the drunkard. It was the custom in those days to punish anyone who committed a crime. If the ruler implements Islamic criminal law strictly today and punishes the criminals, then the chances of committing crimes will certainly decrease. Today, crime is on the rise in the country because those who commit crimes are left in the lurch, which affects others and the rest become rebels. The ruling party should take stern notice of the crimes.

### *Expulsion of the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula*

And he is the one who expelled the Jews from Al-Hijaz and sent them in exile to Syria.

وَهُوَ أَخْرَجَ الْيَهُودَ مِنَ الْحِجَازِ وَأَجْلَاهُمْ مِنْ جَزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ إِلَى الشَّامِ

Ḥazrat Omar (RA) is the man who drove the Jews out of the Holy Hijaz and exiled them from the Arabian Peninsula to Syria.<sup>6</sup>

Because, the Holy Qur'an has mentioned about the Jews that not to befriend them, they are friends of each other, and you can never be friends with them. Therefore, Ḥazrat Umar (RA) also ordered the Jews to leave Madinah. Therefore, it is also important for the ruler who follows their path not to befriend the Jews, otherwise these Jews will never become your friends.

### *Registration of Public stipends and Financial Aid*

لما قدم على عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه جيش العراق من قبل سعد بن أبي وقاص رضي الله تعالى عنه، شاور أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم في تدوين الدواوين، وكان قد اتبع رأي أبي بكر في التسوية بين الناس

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Muḥammad b.Sa'd, al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā, Makkah: Maktabah al-Ṣiddīq, 3/214.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 3/313.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 3/214.

When the Iraqi expedition came to Sa'd b. Abī Waqās (RA) to Umar b. Khaṭṭāb (RA), he sought the advice of the Companions of Muḥammad (PBUH) on compiling a regular register containing the details of stipends. Ḥazrat Umar (RA), following Ḥazrat Abū Bakr (RA), adopted the practice of giving equal share to all persons.<sup>7</sup>

### *Establishment of Tarāwīḥ prayer in a congregation*

وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّ لَوْ جَمَعْنَاهُمْ عَلَى قَارِيٍّ وَاحِدٍ لَكَانَ أَمْثَلًا، ثُمَّ عَزَمَ عَلَى أَنْ يَجْمَعَهُمْ  
عَلَى قَارِيٍّ وَاحِدٍ فَأَمَرَ أَبِي بِن كَعْبٍ أَنْ يَقُومَ بِهِمْ فِي رَمَضَانَ □

“I swear by Allah Almighty, I think it would be much better if all these people were gathered to offer prayers behind one leader. Then he ordered Ubay b. Ka'b to lead them Tarāwīḥ in Ramadan.”<sup>8</sup>

The responsibilities of the Ruler include taking special care of Ramadan and gathering people for Tarāwīḥ prayer. Therefore, he should arrange in his state a good reciter of the Qur'an to lead in congregational Tarāwīḥ for the Muslim community.

### *Appointment of the Judges and Muftīs*

ثم ولي عمر فكان يدعو هؤلاء النفر.....الخ

Then Umar took over the charge of Caliphate he used to call certain people...<sup>9</sup>

عن سعيد بن جبیر عن ابن عباس رضی الله عنه قال خطبنا عمر فقال علیّ  
اقضانا و ابی اقرانا

Sa'īd b. Jubair narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbās (RA) that Ḥazrat Umar (RA) delivered a speech and said:

Alī is our best judge and Uay b. Ka'b is the best reciter of the Holy Qur'an.<sup>10</sup>  
By this, Ḥazrat Umar (RA) has shown that one of the responsibilities of the ruler is to know the meritorious people and to appoint them on their rightful posts.

### *Advisory for alms and charity*

And those who are experts in it. That is to say, look at the merits of the people and not the recommendation of an elder.

<sup>7</sup> Qaḍī Abū Yūsuf, Op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Baihaqī, Aḥmad b. Hussain, al-Sunan al-Ṣaḡhīr, Karachi: Jāmi'ah al-Dirāsāt al-Islamiyyah, Ed. 1410 AH, 1/295.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Op.cit., 2/109.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Aṣbahī, Mālik b. Anas, Mu'aṭṭā, Abū Zabbī, Mu'assasah Zayed b. Sulṭān, Ed. 1<sup>st</sup>,

عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ حَارِثَةَ، قَالَ: جَاءَ نَاسٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ إِلَى عُمَرَ فَقَالُوا: إِنَّا قَدْ أَصَبْنَا أَمْوَالًا وَحَيَلًا وَرَقِيقًا نُحِبُّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَنَا فِيهَا زَكَاةٌ وَطَهُورٌ، قَالَ: مَا فَعَلَهُ صَاحِبَايَ قَبْلِي فَأَفْعَلُهُ. وَاسْتَشَارَ أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَفِيهِمْ عَلِيٌّ فَقَالَ عَلِيٌّ: «هُوَ حَسَنٌ، إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ جِزِيَةً رَاتِبَةً يُؤْخَذُونَ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِكَ

Some people from Syria came to Ḥazrat Umar (RA) and said that we have got a lot of horses and slaves. We want them to pay Zakat, which is a means of purification. Ḥazrat Umar (RA) said: In such a case, the order will be given according to the order given by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and Ḥazrat Abū Bakr (RA).<sup>11</sup>

It is important for the ruler that while he consults his friends about other matters, he should also pay attention to the matter of what expenses should be spent on charity etc. Who deserves more?

### *Justice For the People*

Although all the other duties and responsibilities of the Ruler are important, but the justice occupies the special place in the Caliphate of Ḥazrat Umar (RA). Therefore, many narrations about this have been recorded by Allāmah Ibn al-Jauzī in detail in his famous book "Sīrah of Umar B. Khaṭṭāb". One of these traditions is as follows.

Ḥazrat Umar (RA) once delivered a sermon and said: O people! revelation used to be revealed in the presence of the Messenger of Allah. Allah used to tell your words to His Prophet through revelation. Now we will recognize you if you obey orders. Guess the news about it and show love to it. Now, we will not have a good opinion about the one who has violated the order. We will not like it.

The matter of your inner self is the matter of you and your Lord. Yes, but through the signs we will think of its good and bad. Whoever recites the Holy Qur'an, we will understand that he is reciting it for Allah. Although some people want worldly things by reading the Qur'an. Recite and do your deeds for Allah. I do not send my servants to you to oppress you and to receive your good fortune. Rather, I send them to acquaint you with the religion and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Inform me if the agent takes any action other than these two. By Allah, I will deal with equality.

Ḥazrat 'Amr b. Al-'Aās! Would you take revenge if a government official punished his subjects to teach them etiquette? Ḥazrat Umar (RA) said: I swear by the One in whose possession Umar's soul is, I will take revenge from him. And why should I not do so when I have seen the Messenger of Allah himself taking revenge on himself. Listen! Don't kill Muslims to humiliate them, never neglect their rights. And do not push them towards destruction.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Al-Shaibānī, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad, Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, Ed. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1/244.

<sup>12</sup> Al-Aṣfahānī, Ibn al-Jauzī, Umar b. Khaṭṭāb, Shākir Publications, Ed. 2014, p. 154.

These types of the rulers have showed great principles of living in the society. If the government is run in this manner, then there will be justice otherwise the poor will continue to starve in the streets.

### *Establishment Of Treasury*

Ḥazrat Nafi' narrates that Ḥazrat Umar (RA) says that once a lot of wealth came from Iraq. So Ḥazrat Umar started distributing it. Then a man stood up and said: O Amīr al-mu'mīnīn! What would have happened if you had set aside some of this wealth for the enemy and for some natural disasters? Then Ḥazrat Umar said: O master of the murderer, Allah has spoken these words to the devil. God is enough for me. Allah Almighty has fulfilled their need through me. By Allah, today's wealth cannot be accumulated till tomorrow. I will distribute it as the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) distributed it.<sup>13</sup>

### *Introducing Etiquettes for Governors*

أَنَّ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ، كَانَ إِذَا بَعَثَ عَمَلًا اشْتَرَطَ عَلَيْهِمْ: " أَلَا تَرَ كَبُوا بِرِدُونًا،  
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا نَقِيًّا، وَلَا تَلْبَسُوا  
رَقِيْقًا، وَلَا تُغْلِقُوا أَبْوَابَكُمْ دُونَ حَوَائِجِ النَّاسِ، فَإِنْ فَعَلْتُمْ شَيْئًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ حَلَّتْ  
بِكُمْ الْعُقُوبَةُ، ثُمَّ يُسَيِّعُهُمْ

“It is narrated on the authority of Ḥazrat Umar Farooq (RA) that when he sent his officials, governors, he used to ask them not to ride a Turkish horse, not to eat flour bread not to wear thin clothes and not to close doors to people in times of need (remember!) If you do not follow these, you will be punished in this world and in the hereafter.”<sup>14</sup>

This makes it clear that Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (RA) whenever he appointed a governor he gave him such advice as if it is a message for the rulers to come that if you want peace and tranquility in the hereafter, then cooperate with the poor here.

### *Patrolling in the Capital of Medina*

Narrated by Ḥazrat Aslam that one night while patrolling with Ḥazrat Umar, I got tired. It is past midnight. So, I leaned against a door. A woman's voice came from the house. She was saying to her daughter: O my daughter, get up and mix water in the milk. The daughter said: O my mother, do you not know who is the ruler nowadays? The mother asked, "What is it?" The daughter said: It has been announced today that no one should add water to milk. Her mother said: O daughter, get up and mix water in the milk. The daughter said to the mother: By

<sup>13</sup> Al-Kāndhilawī, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, Ḥayāt al-Ṣaḥābah, Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, Ed. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2/489.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Qazwīnī, Umar b. Abd al-Raḥmān, Shu'ab al'Imān, Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, Ed., 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9/493.

Allah, I will always obey him and will not disobey him. Ḥazrat Umar asked Aslam to remember the address of this house<sup>15</sup>.

### CONCLUSION

From the above data and discussion, the duties and rights of a Muslim ruler in the light of the Caliphate of Ḥazrat Umar (RA) came to the fore. How Ḥazrat Umar (RA) dealt with the Ummah as a ruler during his Caliphate is worthy of being written in golden words. He strictly fulfilled his responsibilities as a Ruler towards the public together with introducing reforms in the state to face new challenges of the time. He was the first Muslim Ruler who started patrolling in the streets of the Capital Madinah to get firsthand knowledge of his subjects to resolve their issue and problems. To fulfil his duties and responsibilities as a Muslim Ruler, he went beyond the traditional line of thinking and used *ijtihad* so that modern challenges would be faced successfully. This paper argues that Ḥazrat Umar (RA) is proved to be the best model for modern Muslim Rulers in fulfilment of state responsibilities towards the rights of the subjects.

Therefore, whenever a person becomes a ruler in the Muslim Ummah and the affairs of the Muslims are entrusted to him, it is necessary for him to study the biography and character of Ḥazrat Umar (RA) so that may get guidance and methodology for him to face modern challenges and to resolve them amicably.

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<sup>15</sup> Al-Aṣfahānī, Ibn al-Jauzī, *Op.cit.*, p.142.