

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Arbitration Agreement

The Umpires

After the arbitration deed had been drawn up, the arbiter to represent Ali had to be appointed. Ali wanted that his cousin Abdullah b Abbas be appointed as the arbiter. The rebels said that they could not accept this nomination as Abdullah b Abbas was related to him and he was apt to be partial. Ali said that in that case let Malik Ashtar be appointed as the arbiter. The rebels vetoed this suggestion as well on the ground that Malik Ashtar had participated in the war and could not take an impartial view. The rebels said that they would nominate Abu Musa Ashari a former Governor of Kufa in this behalf. Ali pointed out that he had no confidence in Abu Musa Ashari as he had deposed him from the governorship of Kufa. The rebels said that Abu Musa Ashari was known for his neutrality, and they could not agree to the nomination of any person other than Abu Musa Ashari as the arbiter. So helpless had Ali become that he had to give way on this point as well and Abu Musa Ashari was appointed as the umpire to represent Ali when Ali had no confidence in him. On the side of Muawiyah, 'Amr b Al-Aas was appointed as the arbiter and no one objected that he had participated in the war and had developed certain prejudices.

[View Page](#)

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