

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Inter-Personal Relations and Interactions

The Eid Moon

Uqba bin Farqad was the Governor of Azarbaijan. It was the month of the Ramadan. When 29 fasts were over the faithful gathered to sight the Eid moon, but no moon was seen. Uqba bin Farqad accordingly ordered that the fast should be kept for the thirtieth day of the Ramdan as well.

The next day Uqba kept the fast, and went on tour in the interior of the country. The Governor said the noon prayers and then retired to rest. When he woke up, he was told that the new moon was visible in the sky. Uqba went out and he saw that though there were yet a few hours for the sun to set, the moon was visible in the sky.

On sighting the moon, the Governor summoned the Ulema and sought for their opinion about the observance of the fast ud the Eid. The concensus of opinion was that after the noon had been sighted the observance of the fast was not lawful. In deference to this opinion Uqba broke the fast before sunset and other Muslims did likewise.

A difficulty, however, arose about the celebration of the Eid. It was so late in the day that Eid could not be celebrated hat day. After consulting the Ulema Uqba decided that trough the fast was to be broken, the Eid was to be celebrated he following day.

As the issue involved an important question of religious aw, Uqba referred the case to Umar for the final verdict in matters concerning the sighting of the moon in daylight and the celebration of the Eid.

When the case was referred to Umar, he gave the following decision:

"When you see the moon in the earlier part of the day you should break the fast and celebrate the Eid. A moon appearing in the earlier part of the day is indicative of th fact that it actually appeared on the horizon the previous night, but for some reason could not be seen. When you see the moon in the later part of the day keep the fast an celebrate ibe Eid on the following day. Sometimes the moon is bigger and it becomes visible before the evening but it is not a moon of the previous day. It is really for the day to follow. Moon seen in the earlier part of the day belongs to the previous day and the moon seen in th later part belongs to the following day."

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