

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

Stipends For Children

When Umar opened the register for public allowances, and allowed stipends for children as well, he laid down the condition that the children were not to get any allowance until they were weaned.

In their desire to get allowances for the children, the parents cut down the period of weaning.

One night Umar went on his rounds as usual. As he was patrolling a street, he heard the voice of a baby crying. Umar stood outside the house for some time, but the baby did not stop crying.

Umar knocked at the door and was admitted inside the house. He saw that a woman held a small baby in her lap and the baby continued to cry.

Umar turned to the lady and said, "What sort of mother you are. The baby is crying, and you do not feed it with you milk."

The woman said, "Go and ask Umar as to what sort of Caliph he is He has ordained that a child would not get a stipend until it was weaned. In order to secure the stipend for our child we are trying to wean it."

Umar argued that it was cruel to wean a baby at such an early age.

The woman retorted, "The blame for such cruelty rests on Umar who has created artificial distinction between child and child. Justice demands that every child should get a stipend, weaning or no weaning."

Umar said, "All right. Feed your baby with your milk, and rest assured you will get the stipend for your baby even though it is not weaned."

The following day Umar passed orders that stipends would be allowed for children from their date of birth. These orders were given a retrospective effect and the previous orders were rescinded.

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Source : *Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History*