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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ANALYSIS OF GOVERNANCE IN THE ERA OF THE CALIPHATE OF UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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Abstract

Governance is a priority in a ruling system. Effective governance requires leaders who are capable of shouldering the responsibilities well and have high integrity in carrying out the duties of governing the country. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was a great figure in the history of Islam and he was highly regarded by the whole world for bringing about many reforms in his administrative system. The system practiced by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was also followed by his successors after him. From previous studies, it was found that no research touched on the administration of governance implemented by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab but only stated the branches of governance. Therefore, this research aims to study the biography of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab and to identify the methods of state governance during the time of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab as well as to analyse the contribution of state governance under the rule of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. This study used a qualitative method approach through historical study and content analysis. Collected data were analysed via external and internal criticism. The results of this study found that his becoming the leader of Muslims was timely and Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was the first caliph to be given the title of Amir al-Mu'minin (Leader of the Believers); as opposed to his predecessor Caliph Abu Bakr who was called the Caliph of the Messenger of God. During his reign, the shura system was widely implemented. It was clear that Umar's steadfastness in carrying out Islamic administration was to achieve the ultimate goal of Allah's pleasure. The administration and approach taken by Caliph Umar which provided much service to the state and led to many successful Islamic conquests in subduing non-Islamic governance systems that existed at that time should serve as a reference and guide today.

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Introduction:-

His full name was Umar ibn al-Khattab ibn Nufayl ibn ‘Abd al-Uzza ibn Riyah ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Qurf ibn Razah ibn Adi ibn Ka‘b ibn Lu‘ay ibn Ghalib al-Qurayshi. Caliph Umar shared a common ancestry with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through Ka‘b ibn Lu‘ay . He was also famously known as Abu Hafsa and al-Faruq. Born 13 years after the year of birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Umar was a handsome and physically big and tall man who was assertive and brave. This made him as a young man as someone who was feared and respected during the Age of Ignorance (Jahiliyyah). Raised in a noble family among the tribe of Quraysh, his mother was a relative closest to the family of ‘Amr ibn Hisham (Abu Jahl), a Jahiliyyah-era nobleman infamously known to oppose Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). ‘Amru Khalid Umar came from a prominent of the ‘Adiy clan within the Quraysh tribe. Umar had extraordinary intelligence and was even said to be able to anticipate matters that will happen in the future. Umar was chosen as an emissary for his clan during the Jahiliyyah period, being the focal person sent to resolve and reconcile should there be any dispute among the clans. This study embarked upon the study by Nurul Aini (2022) which stated that the expansion and strengthening of Islamic power was more prominent and rapid during the time of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab.

After the year 635 AD, soon after the Byzantine army was defeated in the Battle of Yarmouk, the whole of Syria fell into the hands of Islamic power. This expansion continued to Egypt under the leadership of Amr al-Ash and to Iraq under the leadership of Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqas. Later, the attack continued to the capital of Persia and within the same year al-Mada’in was conquered and soon after that the Moghul fell into the hands of the Muslims. During the reign of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, the administrative system was based on the principle of separation of powers. In addition, qadis or judges were also given the freedom to carry out their duties without having to fear the political forces. Caliph Umar was also very wise in organising the structure of his government while being open to accepting other people’s opinions even if he did not agree. In terms of the economy, Caliph Umar established Bayt al-Mal (State Treasury) and the main financial source of the state at that time was collected from zakat or ‘ushr, which is zakat on crops. In land administration, Caliph Umar eliminated the extortion of landlords against farmers. Therefore, it can be clearly seen how strict, fair and trustworthy Caliph Umar was in managing his government. Based on justice and constantly taking care of others even if they were non-Muslims was the da’wah done by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. He loved his people so much that he always prioritised his people first in any situation. The objective of this study is to study the biography of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, identify his style of state governance and analyse the contributions of the state governance under the rule of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab.

Methodology:-

In completing this study, the researcher had taken the approach of qualitative research. According to Ismail (2006), qualitative research contains its own form and method of data acquisition. The researcher chose to conduct this study through a data collection method that included a form of document analysis. According to Ahmad Munawar and Mohd Nor Shahizan (2012), qualitative data are descriptive in explaining something such as verbal utterances, document references and writings related to human behaviour or observations at the research site or venue. In collecting relevant data and information to the study, the researcher used an approach of historical research data collection of the Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab era.

1. Bibliographical Study

In bibliographical study of this research, the researcher attempted to gather relevant data and information related to Islamic governance in the era of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. Therefore, the data were obtained from academic books, journal articles, theses, dissertations and project papers. In addition, the researcher obtained reading materials from libraries and websites which are useful for collecting accurate and relevant information and data to be read, studied, recorded and utilized. Using this method, the researcher was able to find and obtain the accurate materials and resources within the brief period of time to do the analysis. As this study has not yet been thoroughly researched by previous researchers, there are not many relevant resources. Also, the researcher used methods of analysing, drawing conclusions and synthesizing relevant information to arrive at new research findings.

2. Historiographical Study

The researcher used this method to do some analysis on the life chronicle and reign of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab through the process of data collection, research of past historical sources in theses, project papers, journal articles, and scientific books. In addition, this research also uses the interpretation of historical events that critically describes the entire truth of the events or facts regarding the history of problems that occurred during the rule of Caliph Umar

ibn al-Khattab and the development of Islamic politics and the expansion of Islamic territory. A comparative method was used to analysis the data from the references of the first and last 10 years. This method is used to establish that every phenomenon or event follows the same rules. This comparison will develop into a theoretical basis with the aim of providing a theory that can help explicate the study being carried out in this research (Othman 2009).

Literature Review:-

Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab is known as one of the great figures of the Caliphate in the history of Muslim civilization. He was a companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who later became the caliph after the death of the Prophet. M. Al Qautsar Pratama (2018) in his article titled, 'Kepimpinan dan konsep ketatanegaraan Umar ibn al-Khattab' (Leadership and the concept of statehood of Umar ibn al-Khattab) expresses the greatness of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. Umar ibn al-Khattab was an army commander who was directly involved in the Battles of Badr, Uhud, and Khaibar. During his 10 years of leadership as the Caliph, he succeeded in expanding the territory of Islam into Roman territories (Syria, Palestine and Egypt), and into the territories of the Persian Empire including Iraq with a systematic ruling over the areas he conquered. The leadership of Caliph Umar led Muslims towards progress in the aspects of religion, education, culture, socio-culture and politics.

According to Nurul Aini (2022), Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was a capable and just ruler in carrying out his duties. In deciding any sentence on offenders who were found guilty, he never considered their status or lineage. An example of this can be clearly proven in an incident involving a ruler in Syria namely Jabala ibn Ayham Ghassani who was of a royal descent who had embraced Islam. During his tawaf around the Ka'bah, his robe was accidentally stepped on by an ordinary citizen. He then slapped the man and the man responded by slapping him. Unable to contain his anger, he later went to complain to the Caliph, but Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab did not entertain him and said that the man had given a befitting response. Therefore, based on this event and many others, it can be clearly seen that Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab prioritized justice during his rule regardless of the person's status or rank.

Nurul Aini (2022) also stated that the first da'wah approach used by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was the da'wah bi al-hikmah approach which is placing something in its rightful place according to the suitability of the target of the da'wah. Preachers need to have knowledge, patience, justice, wisdom, gentleness, understanding, truth and experience. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab paid attention to the lowest of his people so much so that he himself went to meet his people face to face having heart-to-heart conversation with his people to find out their needs so that they could be met properly.

Suwandi and Mohd Syakir (2021) stated that education during the time of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was the delivery of teachings through his leadership, being exemplary, practicing, grooming just and wise leaders, providing motivation, and creating a safe social environment to support the implementation of the vision of the formation of an Islamic nation. Personality is a form of education . History records that Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab had many successful different roles in life. Not only was he a leader, but he was also the head of state, an educator, an army general, a strategist, etc. Many researchers were then interested in studying the life history of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab from many different perspectives.

Aan Jaelani (2015) explained that Khalid al-Walid suggested the use of the institution of diwan (office or registry). He was reportedly said to inform Umar of the Syrian authority use of the diwan model. The Caliph accepted Khalid's suggestion, by introducing the Diwan al-Hurmuzan. Tithes ('ushr) and land tax (kharaj) were the main sources of revenue. The levy system inherited from the Persian government in a form of land tax (misahah) was adopted by Caliph Umar after assessing the situation and examining the land and productivity. The following are some economic policies of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab:

- The Islamic State takes common property fairly, and does not take kharaj or fay' property (property obtained from dhimmis in peace) that Allah SWT has granted except through specified mechanisms.
- The state grants property rights in general, and there are no expenses except according to their rights, and subsidies .
- The state does not receive the wealth of gross revenue. A ruler does not take public property except for orphans who have debts to pay.
- The state uses its wealth properly.

Solving the country's problems in the economy is the goal of a leader. Among the effects of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab's legacy were the expansion and major reforms of the administrative structure of the Islamic State. At that time, the Islamic State was to become a major political power. The key to Caliph Umar's personality was his faith in Allah SWT and his preparation for the Hereafter. This was what caused him to be constantly humble, and there was a balance in his personality. Therefore, his strength does not make him deviate from his justice, power and wealth.

Ermy Azziaty and Zamri (2015) wrote on the era of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (13-23H/634-644 AD). The legacy of Islamic leadership was continued by Umar ibn al-Khattab who took over the Caliph position after the death of Caliph Abu Bakr. During the reign of the previous caliph, Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, only a modest part of the Roman and Persian colonies could be captured by the Islamic army. Therefore, Caliph Umar's first action was, in addition to defending the sovereignty of the existing Islamic area, to position the Islamic armies to continue futuhat missions more holistically by entering the entire region of the two empires. The missions, which were recorded as perfect futuhat, had a two-pronged strategy. In addition to ensuring the development of Islamic da'wah continued to flourish unhindered, it also aimed to preserve the peace and security of Muslims who lived near the border so that they were free from being threatened by the greed of these two superpowers. Therefore, Caliph Umar al-Khattab's mission was to complete the Islamic and territorial expansion into areas under the control of Persia and Rome which had been initiated during the previous Caliph Abu Bakr until completion and also to carry out some new futuhat into Egypt and non-Arab countries (Ajam countries).

From the literatures, even though limited in number, it can be concluded a number of research themes have been covered such as such as issues in government, governance style, differences in government systems, the appointment of a caliph, strategies for dealing with national issues, policy conflicts, ijthihad of leaders, military expeditions and the political system of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab's era.

Results and Discussion:-

Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was the second of the Rightly-Guided (Khulafa' al-Rashidin) who succeeded the government of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). In fact, he always accompanied the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in spreading Islamic da'wah and defending him in every matter. In analysing the governance of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, there are several approaches which were taken, which are the personality approach of Caliph Umar himself, identification of his style of governance analysing the contributions of his state governance (al-Mawardi 1993).

1. Contribution in Education

Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab attached great importance to an organized and systematic education system. Under his administration, the study of al-Qur'an and other knowledge disciplines were planned. Schools were built in virtually every corner in every city. The role of mosques was added to include serving as teaching centres whereby the structure and functions of mosques were raised to a level where all imams and muezzins were to mobilize the activities of the mosque for which they were given salaries. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab also decreed that all Muslim civilians and soldiers should learn at least five surahs (chapters) of the al-Qur'an, namely surah al-Baqarah, al-Nisa', al-Ma'idah, Hajj and al-Nur. The objective and purpose of this learning process was to make the Muslim community at that time have a solid understanding and to make them adhere firmly to the teachings and commands found in the verses of al-Qur'an. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab pioneered the awarding of scholarships to those who wish to study and deepen their knowledge of al-Quran. Allocations and fundings for this were fully given.

2. The Process of Appointment of Umar ibn al-Khattab as Caliph

A unique phenomenon within the Islamic political framework is that it has its own special feature and differs from other political systems which are not based on religion. In Islam, the absolute power authority belongs to Allah SWT alone while humans (leaders) are mere representative or vicegerent of Allah SWT on earth. Thus, all sources of power in Islam are derived from al-Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), unlike other political systems such as democracy for instance which states that the source of power and sovereignty are in the hands of the people who give the leaders to carry out a mandate based on the mandate given by the people through a mechanism such as an election process. According to analysis of transition of leadership and power during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (Khulafa' al-Rashidin), that unique feature is the selection process of electing a caliph. Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was elected to be and appointed as the Caliph through a shura process (Anwar & Amalin 2023). A deeper analysis will result in that leadership, according to Islam, is very much different to that defined by western scholars. The privilege of being a leader (Caliph) in Islam is considered to be vicegerent of God on earth, while leadership in western terminology is a form of the nature and process of power in which religion is

of little or no value and does not relate to God's law. Appointing a leader in Islam, meanwhile, is a process of applying God's law, whereby a caliph must be someone who has extensive religious knowledge so that he does not have doubts to make decisions and establish laws related to worship, muamalah or other social aspects.

3. The Leadership Value of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab

After he was sworn in and pledged allegiance as the second caliph of the Muslims, Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattab expressed his desire to lead the Muslim army in the war against the Persian and the Byzantine armies. Since the 12th Hijri year, several areas in Iraq had already been conquered by Islamic forces under the strategy of Khalid al-Walid. As a result of an order from Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Khalid al-Walid brought part of his successful army in Iraq to help the Islamic army in Syria (al-Baladhuri 1987). Among the important aspects that need to be understood in the leadership of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab is that he was a pious leader with a high level of taqwa and obedient to the orders of Allah SWT. Night prayer was habitual to him and there were times when he was seen praying overnight while crying to Allah SWT, causing his beard to look wet. Also, at dawns when he read or listened to the Qur'anic verses surah that mention the Day of Retribution and the Hellfire, he would be seen to cry until his entire beard was soaked in tears. Through this exemplary, we can see that such are the values brought and practiced by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab in his leadership. He was also very cautious in administration matters for fearing that in the afterlife he would later be questioned as to his duties, responsibilities and leadership.

Conclusion:-

In analysing the government in the era of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, this research can make certain conclusion for the discussion with respect to the process of governance and administration of Caliph Umar. This study had focused on the history of the governance by Caliph Umar, giving particular emphasis on governance theory. Emphasis on the contributions made by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was also given from the aspect of education, the practice of the shura concept of shura through which he was appointed to assume the duties of a caliph, and his leadership values by which he was famed to be very cautious and trustworthy in administrative matters of administration as he was a pious leader fearful of being questioned by Allah SWT in the afterlife as to his responsibilities and leadership. It is clear that the style of governance of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab was so immense that it is still being used until today.

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