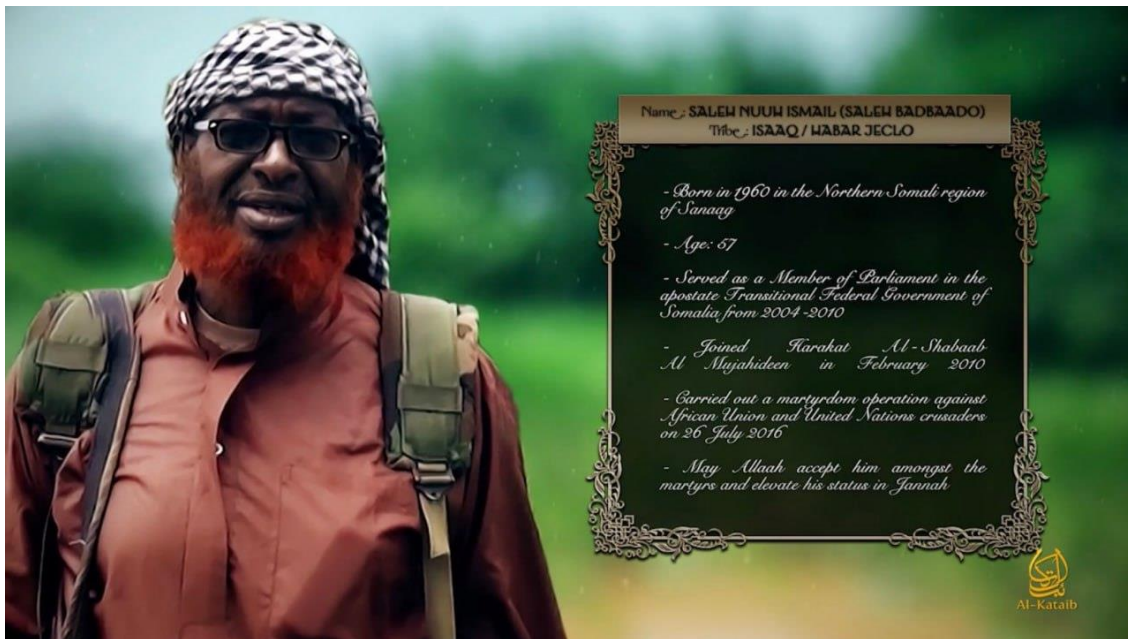


THE STORY OF THE SHINING KNIGHT



Salah Nuh Ismail , a former Somali MP and Martyr (Insha Allah)

“Indeed, Allah purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed...”[9:111]

From mid-nineties, Somalia was at the crossroads floating in a state of uncertainty, and the people were gradually growing out from the Jahiliyah cultures for the long-forgotten principles of Islam. To counteract Islamic awakening, the Western and the neighboring countries had erected a toy Transitional Federal Government (TFG) with mostly unlettered parliamentarians

to secure their interests, and with a constitution that utterly negates the of Islamic values. Consequently, the TFG was seen as a foreign government making it unpopular among the public.

One such MP was Salah Nuh Ismail (aka Salah Badbado), a familiar figure in Somalia's politics who unselfishly served the TFG as a Member of the Parliament (MP). Salah was born in 1960 at Sanag province and he belonged to Habar Jecllo tribe, a tribe that populate in the northern provinces of Somalia bordering Ethiopia. He had inner greatness, sense of righteousness, warlike potential, deep religious devotion and other wonderful traits.

As a MP, he was disturbed by the civilian casualties during the Ethiopian invasion, AMISOM's indiscriminate shelling, and the TFG's shameful silence about the barbarity. He was utterly dissatisfied with TFG's debauched administrative practices and that compelled him to reconsider his view. It became impossible for Salah to think other than quitting politics followed by a period of passionate soul searching. February 10th 2010, he surprisingly defected from the TFG to the Mujahidin controlled areas. Passionately speaking at press conference; long greying beard, big glowing eyes, white shirt and matching kufiyah, Salah said this about the regretful past, "...today I repent to Him from disbelief and I ask Allah that He accept my repentance, and as for the Somali Government, I deem them to be apostates who have rejected the religion." At ease, he was exuberantly pleased to be the right side of the gulley, and to be a part of a greater community called Mujahidin.

He wanted to pursue a venturesome expedition by emulating the pious predecessors but he has realized that knowledge is a prerequisite for such route. After the customary vetting process, he was allowed to attend a military training (Mu'askar). Harakatu Shabab Mujahidin (HSM) has rigorous training program, and having desirable traits like patience, obedience, and good intentions will certainly be helpful. Here is Salah's diary about some of the training experience.

My campaign led me to a camp where a draft registration was in progress. I clearly knew what I was signing up for. I have never been prouder, more resolute, and more certain than any dealings that I had ever engaged in. I was getting into a new sphere of life that forced me to morally question my past life and its ethical validity. Though I was within the radius of the black banner, I was wrapped up in foreign culture as well as its intellectual attitudes and the core concepts of its civilization.

I have to admit the training was tough; food, water and sleeping hours were kept at minimum, and a rigorous time-table was in place that was possibly meant to arouse men's unused dormant force. Nothing shapes a man's spirit, polishes the rough edges of his personality so wholly or catches him up the way Mu'askar does with its strictness. Its volume of asperity makes a man to count the days to graduation in an extreme accuracy. It has the bountiful impel to strip a man from the fairytale dreams that deceive him not to abide by His Creator's commands fully, exciting the inborn thoughts that lead to nowhere but Him. It was very tough experience, so much absorbed by the thoughts of jihad and the temptation of graspable objective has made the brothers resolute, besides, the idea was to prepare for something that was soon to come. It is not easy to capture the Mu'askar's factual nature in plain sentences but only with inaccurate vagueness that gives the reader a blurred image.

And of course, having large number of men in a camp cannot be without breaches, humor, and quarrels. There were those who shrewdly exploited loopholes of the system, at times, their daring confidence bared fruits, and sometimes, it yielded disciplinary measures. In this place, trouble is avoided at all cost.

The activities that went on at any given day within the perimeter of the Mu'askar were nothing short of an industrial complex in production mode as far as the commitment goes. Like an assembly line, people were pressed with time; hardly any time for idle talk and nobody walked leisurely except with sense of urgency. Either they were in assembly discussing forthcoming events, marching, at classes studying key knowledge dictated by a necessity, cooking to meet a biological need, or at the shooting range. Nothing was done for the sake of doing it but rather everything was meticulously and wittingly devised to meet a certain purpose. They were different aspects of the same complementing each other like the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle which produces a beautiful image upon completion.

Much of diary's entries were omitted due to confidentiality reason.

The graduation day was full of emotions as it encompassed the joy of achievement and the sorrow of being late from a divine assignment, and we were delighted to be official members of HSM. The ceremony was attended by renown dignitaries like Sheikh Xyz who delivered a stimulating speech, and tears were dripping wet on cheeks as the hearts had recognized the Haqq (the truth). Though the Messenger (PBUH) was not present among us but his message was there unadulterated like fresh spring water; it felt like back to the ancient past of Islam. We felt rejuvenated with new energy, an energy that is indispensable to protect and to propagate the 'practical Sharia' in a world of polytheism and paganism. And being part of a journey of such importance where the soul is sacrificed for Islam excited me beyond words. I undoubtedly see the sword of Islam beyond its current borders.

After military training, Salah attended Abdallah Azzam Academy Institute of Islamic Studies where he learned many subjects including Fiqi (jurisprudence) of Jihad. He had since realized the nobility of establishing the Allah (SWT)'s law on earth and how the doers of such dignified duty are destined for greatness. Speaking at mass gathering in Kismayo, " ...I have come to realize now after arriving in the Islamic Wilayat that the Government of Allah is already established and that these other governments are illegitimate and out of place! " knowing that knowledge evaporates if it lacks piety and sincerity as a base, he dedicated all his efforts to the frontlines, different departments of HSM including the martyrdom brigade, and educating the Muslims about the danger of democracy, and what was simply a cautionary message became a personal quest.

During my days in Jihad, I have met many virtuous brothers the likes of Jarrah, Zubayr, Abu, Ahmed, many others but I particularly remember a gracious tall figure named Salah. He was struggling to reconcile a desire and a bewildered soul; a desire that craves the 'glitter and glamour' and a soul that needed salvation. Though the mud had caught him up at first, he had unleashed the shackles unscathed with the help of Allah (SWT) acquiring in the process invaluable experience, a broader sense of imagination, and the divorce was final and irreparable. Out of repentance, he was operating in 'reverse mode' undoing what he did in the past hoping to

use that 'negative energy' as catalyst. And like all of us, he has fallen short of what was expected of him but fulfilling the promise was always deeply seeded in his hearts. Nothing was more precious to him than the proximity of His Creator but His Creator was "...nearer to him than [his] jugular vein..." [50:16].

In a pre-recorded farewell audio message, Salah wanted to be a human missile that destroys the falsehood, and in such battles, the truth always prevails. "Nay, We hurl the Truth at falsehood so that the Truth crushes falsehood, and lo! it vanishes. Woe to you for what you utter!" [21:18]. Advising the Muslims, "...Islam does not need fans [but men with actions] ... at the time [of Prophet (PBUH)], there was no such thing as elders whose religious duties was simply to advise nor scholars whose responsibilities was merely to give speeches at mosques ...both the elders and scholars should be shining examples for the youth by engaging the enemy at the frontlines and martyrdom operations." He warned about waiting till old age overtakes where one needs help in moving limbs. He detested life under such circumstances preferring the express route to Heaven: martyrdom operation. Jihad gave him an adventure with a profound sweetness, a religious valor that does not differentiate between life and death, and he had the wish to have discovered this religious crusade sooner than he did.

I usually get a blended feeling of sadness and happiness when I hear the martyrdom of Mujahidin. I feel sad because the departure of loved ones whose memories will always linger and a longing that will find no fulfillment in this world; I am happy because they had fulfilled (Insha Allah) their covenants with Allah (SWT). Though they were distinct in physical appearance but underneath the outward differences, they had unconditional love for Allah (SWT), and Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), and shared a deep passion for Paradise. They knew their destiny; they will always have the wish to be at the battlefield again even though the eternal Paradise that awaits the martyrs is far more superior to anything that this world has to offer. May Allah (SWT) accept them as martyrs and raise them at company of "...those whom Allah has bestowed His grace: of the prophets, the Siddiqeen (the truthful servants), the martyrs and the righteous..." [4:69]



Car bombs driven by former MP and a colleague exploded on July 26, 2016 at the UN's office in Mogadishu, Somalia.

On July 26th 2016, according to HSM press release, " Two brave warriors from the martyrdom brigade carried a heroic operation against UN base of Halane which is the largest Crusader headquarters in Mogadishu and Somalia as a whole." Salah and a colleague had detonated Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED)s at pre-designated targets. According to VOA, "A former member of Somalia's parliament who joined the Al-Shabab terror organization in 2010 was the man behind a suicide bombing that killed 13 people in Mogadishu Tuesday" and causing destruction at huge scale. Lastly, Salah said this before operation, "... This task we are going to [do] is for the sake of Allah and it is a religious duty. We have chosen to please Allah and to harm the infidels more than they have harmed the Muslim nation," By matching sincere words with sacrificial deed, he had written a history with lifeblood inspiring many people and stirring dreams. The knight has descended but his legacy lives on.

Who can stop a Mujahid who is equipped with the love of Allah (SWT) and the love of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) as a weapon, hurriedly speeding to obliterate the adversaries? The West calls such operation as an act of 'terrorism' to portray the Mujahidin as purposeless lunatics who blow themselves up as a sport, deliberately concealing the religious impetus behind the attack. The Mujahidin (the armed wing of the Muslims) are fighting for Sharia law and in the absence of this heavenly constitution, Allah (SWT) has commanded his servants to remove all obstacles that are impediment for Sharia to shine by applying this verse: "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you terrorize the enemy of Allah and your enemy" [8:60] As for non-Muslim, this is understandably madness. The West is on intellectual platform, and we, Muslims, are on different theological conviction and standards; our inspiration is divine and hidden beyond intellectual acquisition, one needs 'Islam' to understand this spiritual odyssey.

Abu Maryam

