Hassan Al–Banna and the Causes of His Nation – On the Anniversary of His Martyrdom



In a time when power maps are shifting, and the world's balance of power is being reshaped at the expense of the vulnerable and oppressed (peoples), the anniversary of Imam Hassan Al Banna's martyrdom comes to remind us that the battle for awareness is no less significant than the battle of 'inter¬human collision' and conflict, and that the project of renaissance does not die just because its owner has been assassinated.

Imam Al Banna was not a mere page in a bygone history, but rather an idea that was ahead of its time and is still waiting for its full realization. In the midst of what our nation is experiencing nowadays in terms of targeting its values and causes, the need is renewed to recall Al Banna's approach in combining faith and movement, and also in combining internal development with confronting global challenges.

Hence, talking about him is not just a recollection of a memory; rather, it is an analysis of a project that restores the nation's glory and pride. Hassan Al Banna (in Arabic 'the builder') was not only named as such but also described as such – as he was a builder; and his excellence and genius in building were among his most defining characteristics.

The man grew up in a Salafi environment, from which he acquired knowledge and jurisprudence, which helped him to choose the right thing from among a crowd of alternatives and noisy voices. He then joined a Sufi order, from which he gained the experience of taste and spiritual elevation, which helped him to undertake his duty and endure the torments of consequences with manliness, honor, comfort, and contentment.

Al Banna presented his nation with a mature ideology; it is the guidance brought by Islam as introduced by Prophet Mohammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) – where government is a part of it; and freedom is one of its obligations.

Thus, he presented to the nation a new generation known among their people for their special characteristics, in terms of righteousness and strength; their special merits of the ability to endure hardship and get used to tough conditions; in addition to their elevated conception of the spirit of struggle and sacrifice for the sake of their thought.

His life was a true reflection of what he believed in, what he was proud to belong to, and what he advocated. In difficult and complex circumstances, a remarkable personality emerged that surprised the Islamic world – that is Hassan Al Banna – who had a positive outlook and a realistic approach, despite his ability to imagine.

Al-Banna confronted the erroneous thought and managed to correct it, and then he presented it to his nation as a mature, revised thought, with every goodness that the nation hopes for and every perfection that it aspires to. All this was there in abundance, in addition to being freed from flaws and ambiguity as well – which cost him his comfort and even his life.

The man chose the best, the finest, the most complete, and the most faithful from among a vast, bright, and luminous heritage. He (may Allah have mercy on him) said: I was given a choice between true Sufism and what it entails in terms of contemplation and seclusion, and between teaching and guidance and what it entails in terms of mixing with people and frequenting their gatherings – So I chose the second option, after having followed the first option, because the action that does not benefit anyone beyond its doer is limited and insignificant; but the action that benefits the one who does it and others from among his people and his kind, then it acquires honor, seriousness, and glory.

Al Banna encountered a kind of religiosity confined to the places of worship only; so he sought to expand its scope and disseminate Islamic teachings, so they would tackle all aspects of life: religion and state, Quran and sword ... as well as sincere belief and correct worship at the same time.

He faced a generation spoiled by manifestations of effeminacy, recklessness, and cowardice. So, he helped them develop qualities of seriousness and made them abandon worldly pleasures. He faced a generation spoiled by the feeling of inferiority, and admiration of opponents, leading to imitating them in everything. So, he worked to divert their attention to following the guidance of the Prophet's legacy in all their aspects.

You can read in Hassan Al Banna's facial features, see in the sparkle of his eyes, and hear from his slips of the tongue what plainly indicates the clinging sorrow and hidden pain that is burning within his heart; and what his soul contains of high ambition, sincere determination, and a remote goal... That is the way of the Mujahideen, whether individuals or nations.

Al Banna encountered a degraded society; with souls not fit to undertake serious work, so he actively sought to get them up, strengthen their bonds and boost their brotherhood through activation of 'acquaintance and intimacy' among them, to discover the depths of greatness in the souls of his men and women as well, and know who of them was ripe to rely on in undertaking tasks, and who of them needed more time in getting ready for undertaking tasks.

He was preoccupied with guiding the whole world and spreading the message of Islam. He wanted the Islamic nation to prepare itself for this through rapprochement and reconciliation: because the path whose beginning is where we are now, and whose end is the whole world, requires the nation that wants this, or is trying to do it, to declare its readiness to correct the flaws, and to exert itself to the utmost of its ability.

Some others may follow in its footsteps and achieve even more than it could do. From the perspective of faith, this is a status beyond compare, with encompassing all people in this vast world. He also wanted the Islamic nation to prepare itself (for this duty) through mutual support and solidarity, because sheer poverty makes spiritual growth difficult. How can someone whose body is naked and whose stomach is empty truly grasp the meaning of honor and dignity?

When the man departed, he left behind a righteous nation, with acceptable supplications and straight and sincere tongue – a nation that leads but is not led; influences but is not influenced; guides but is not guided by others. In just a few short years, there were those who chanted his name and risked their lives for him.

The ordinary man in the street came to know the truth of his existence through Al Banna's call; he also knew the purpose of his life, and then cried out from the depths of his heart: "Allah is our goal, the Messenger is our role model, the Qur'an is our constitution, Jihad is our path, and death in the name of Allah is our highest aspiration."

The concerns of Al Banna's nation were deeply present within him, permeating his soul gradually, without intrusion or strain. He used to say: Wounded Palestine is threatened with partition; emerging Pakistan is threatened by armed pagan aggression; Muslim Indonesia is suffering and being deprived; and Tripoli and Cyrenaica, for which the traps of the referendum are being prepared, and only Allah knows the consequences of that...

Southern Italy, Sicily, the islands of the Mediterranean Sea, and Islamic Andalusia – those regions that were blessed by Islam for a time, then were struck by misfortune and that light receded from them. We are pained to see them wavering between what her enemies wanted for her, a distorted and deformed social situation, and what her Lord wants for her, a sound social situation based on the teachings, guidance, and direction of Islam.

And brotherly Sudan is southern Egypt; while Egypt is northern Sudan – both of us are (living on) the Nile Valley, where the Nile's waters flow in our veins and our bodies grew from its clay and silt. Meanwhile, Islam continues to find its way there (in Sudan) despite the destructive efforts made to prevent it.

We will not remain silent in this situation, even if it costs us our comfort and our lives. With our call we will get to new stages and goals, with slogans and skills, until we reach the horizons of the earth and subdue every tyrant. And they may say, "When is that?" Say, "Perhaps it will be soon".

For this reason, the man awakened the nation's consciousness, mobilized the masses, and waged war for his nation's great, immediate, just, and compassionate causes, despite the wounds it suffered and the martyrs who fell around him. And those who survived, their faces were stained with blood! Yet we still raise our banner high, fluttering on the horizon!

Therefore, the West did not remain idle before Al Banna, and there was no way to stop him except by removing him through assassination, which actually happened. Nor could the East hold onto the treasure in its hands for long, and so it also was!! The man fell, covered in his blood, on the roadsides, struck by treacherous bullets!! On a dark, wintery, and sad night!!

A thousand speeches and sermons from the deceased could not have stirred in the soul what that pure, spilled blood has stirred! And it will not be long before clean history has its say about him! And the truthful narrator will one day tell his story!

The man passed through the history of Egypt like a fleeting, unrepeatable specter. He was a word ahead of his time, indeed, a word yet to come! May Allah have mercy on him and reward him abundantly.

Allah Almighty says: ﴿...Thus Allah presents [the example of] truth and falsehood. As for the foam, it vanishes, [being] cast off; but as for that which benefits the people, it remains on the earth. Thus does Allah present examples.﴾ (Al-Ra'd: 17)

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