

A GLIMPSE ON A NEWSLETTER  
REGARDING THE ISSUE OF

*TAPAAQEEH*

A few moments ago one of my honourable friends by the name of *Hafidh* Firdaus gave me a newsletter in which a claim had been made that the *Masnoon* way of performing *Taraaweeh* is to pray twenty *raka'aah*.

*Hafidh* Firdaus requested me to refute this claim by replying in a scholarly manner, with evidence. Therefore, this summarized/concise refutation is presented to all those who are just when evidence is presented to them.

The saying; *Hadeeth* No.1:

“*Ibn Abbas* (may Allah be pleased with him) said, ‘Verily the messenger (peace be upon him) prayed Twenty *raka'aah* in the month of *Ramadhaan* finishing with the *Witr*’.<sup>1</sup>”

Answer:

This *Hadeeth* is fabricated (*Mawdhoo*).

This narration has been transmitted with the following chain: “*Ibrahim Bin Uthmaan* narrated from *Hakam* who narrated from *Muslim* who narrated from *Ibn Abbas*<sup>2</sup>.....”

Imam *Zai'laee Hanafee*<sup>3</sup> has said the following regarding the narrator *Ibrahim* in this chain of narration:

“Imam *Ahmed* said that he would (used to) narrate rejected *Ahadeeth*<sup>4</sup>”

Imam *Zai'laee Hanafee* has declared one of the *Hadeeth* narrated by *Ibrahim* as being weak<sup>5</sup>.

Imam *Zai'laee* has narrated from *Al-Bayhaqi* that *Ibrahim* is weak<sup>6</sup> (“*Wahuwaa Daeef*”).

Imam *Zai'laee* has also narrated on the authority of *Abul-Fatah Saleem Bin Ayub Ar-Raazee Al-Faqeeh* (regarding *Ibrahim*)<sup>7</sup>: “There is a consensus upon his weakness”.

Imam *Ainee Hanafi* states: *Shaubah* has declared *Ibrahim Bin Uthman* a liar, and *Ahmed*, *Ibn Ma'een*, *Bukhari*, *An-Nasa'ee* and others have declared him

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<sup>1</sup> *Musanaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, Volume 2, page 393.

<sup>2</sup> *Musanaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, Volume 2, page 394.

<sup>3</sup> Died 762 A.H.

<sup>4</sup> *Nasbur-Rayaah*, Volume 1, page 53.

<sup>5</sup> *Nasbur-Rayaah*, Volume 2, page 66.

<sup>6</sup> *Nasbur-Rayaah*, Volume 2, page 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Nasbur-Rayaah*, Volume 2, page 153.

as being weak. And *Ibn Adee* has narrated this *Hadeeth* (of *Ibrahim Bin Uthman*) in his book "*Al-Kaamil*" asserting it with the rejected narrations."<sup>8</sup>

Imam *Ibn Humam Hanafee*<sup>9</sup> and *Abdul-Hay Lucknowi*<sup>10</sup> have made criticism on this *Hadeeth*.

*Anwar Shah Kashmiri Deobandi* writes the following regarding the *Hadeeth* of *Ibrahim Bin Uthman*: "So the narration regarding *Twenty-raka'aah* attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been reported with a weak chain and there is consensus regarding its weakness."<sup>11</sup>

Apart from the above Hanafee scholars mentioned, many other Hanafee scholars have critically analysed this narration and its narrator (*Ibrahim Bin Uthman*). For example refer to *Muhammad Zakariyyah Khandehlavi Hanafee Tableeghee's 'Awjazul-Masaalik'*,<sup>12</sup> etc.

To see the severe criticism that has been done by the Scholars of *Hadeeth (Muhadetheen)* on *Abu Shaibah Ibrahim Bin Uthmaan* refer to '*Mizaanul-I'tidaal*'<sup>13</sup>, '*Tahdeebut-At-Tahdeeb*',<sup>14</sup> etc.

Imam *Suyuti* has extremely criticised the narrator (*Ibrahim Bin Uthman*) of this *Hadeeth* and has said: "This *Hadeeth* is extremely weak, and cannot be used as supporting evidence."<sup>15</sup>

*"Hathal Hadeethu Daeefun Jiddan, Laa Taqumu Behee Hujah."*

Therefore there is no room for persuasion of acceptance gained from the above weak argument, in fact, we find many major scholars like *Hafidh Dhahabee*, *Imam Zai'laee*, *Imam Ainee*, and *Imam Ibn Humam* (Allah's mercy be upon them all) who have refuted this narration. So to deceit the common folk with such narrations is an extremely derogatory act.

The saying; *Hadeeth* no.2:

"The *Hadeeth* of *Yahya Bin Sa'eed*: *Yahya Ibn Sa'eed* said that *Umar Ibn Khattab* (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded a man to lead the people praying *Twenty Raka'aah.....*"

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<sup>8</sup> '*Umdatul-Qaree*', Volume 1, page 128.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to his book '*Fathul-Qadeer*', Volume 1, page 333.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to his '*Fataawaa*', Volume 1, page 354.

<sup>11</sup> '*Al-Urfus Shazee*', Volume 1, page 166.

<sup>12</sup> Volume 1, page 397.

<sup>13</sup> Volume 1, page 47 and 48.

<sup>14</sup> Volume 1, page 144 and 145.

<sup>15</sup> '*Al-Haawee*', Volume 1, page 347.

Answer:

The chain of this narration is disconnected (منقطع) .

Nimawi Hanafee (died 1322 A.H.) says: “ I say the narrators of this narration are trustworthy, but Yahya *Bin Sa’eed Ansaree* did not meet Umar.”<sup>16</sup>

To present a disconnected narration as evidence in such a delicate and important matter, after all, what type of service is this regarded for Islam?

The saying; *Hadeeth* no.3:

“Imam Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded the people..... And he would lead them by praying Twenty *Raka’ah*.” (Reference given in the newsletter as ‘*Sunan Abee Dawud*’).

Answer:

This is a white lie. We have a copy of ‘*Sunan Abee Dawud*’, and this narration cannot be found. However, in Volume 2, page 136, a narration can be found and the wordings are “He lead them in prayers for Twenty nights.....”

Imam Bayhaqi has also narrated the above narration from Imam Abu Dawud and also that narration is with the wordings of Twenty nights.<sup>17</sup>

Also in ‘*Mishkaatul-Masaa’beeh*’, ‘*Tauhfatul-Ashraaf*’, etc, the narration of Abu Dawud that has been narrated can be found with the wordings of Twenty nights.

Imam Zai’laee Hanafee has also narrated in ‘*Nasbur-Raayah*’<sup>18</sup> that the *Hadeeth* found in Abu Dawud regarding (عشرين ليلة) the Twenty nights. And apart from this there are many other references in support of the narration regarding Twenty nights. For those who desire justice than this is sufficient. And the curse of Allah is upon the liars.

The saying; *Hadeeth* no.4:

“Yazid *Bin Ruman*’s saying that in the era of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) the people would pray Twenty-three *raka’ah*”.

Answer:

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<sup>16</sup> Marginal notes of ‘*Athaarus-Sunan*’, page 253.

<sup>17</sup> Volume 2, page 498.

<sup>18</sup> Volume 2, page 126.

This narration is *Munqateeh* (disconnected), as clarified by Imam Ainee Hanafee in his book '*Umdatul-Qaree*'.<sup>19</sup>

Molvi Nimawee Hanafee has said: "Yazid *Bin* Ruman did not encounter (did not live during) the era of Umar *Ibn* Khattab."<sup>20</sup>

The saying; *Hadeeth* no. 5:

Sa'eed *Bin* Yazid (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "In the era of Umar and Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with them both), people would pray Twenty *raka'aah Taraaweeh*."

Answer:

May the curse of Allah be upon the liars. In '*Bayhaqi*',<sup>21</sup> the above wording "In the era of Uthmaan the people would pray Twenty-*raka'aah*", can definitely **not** be found. Therefore this is a white lie upon Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) by the writer of the newsletter.

Secondly, one of the narrators of this narration Ali *Ibn* Al-Jaad has been disparagingly criticized with Shi'ism. He would criticize our leader Muawiyah and other companions (may Allah be pleased with them)<sup>22</sup>.

How then is it possible to present a transmitted narration from such a person regarding whom there are so many objections, in comparison to the authentic narration that can be found in the '*Muwatta*' of Imam Malik?

The saying; *Hadeeth* no.6:

"Abu Abdur Rahman As-Salamee narrates that Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) in the month of *Ramadhaan*....."

Answer:

This *Hadeeth* is extremely weak.

In '*Bayhaqi*',<sup>23</sup> a narrator of this narration by the name of Hammad *Bin* Shuaib can be found regarding whom Imam *Ibn* Maeen, Imam Nisa'ee, Imam Abu Dhar'aah and others have classified him as being weak. Imam Bukhari has labeled him as a rejecter of *Hadeeth*, and has said "Leave narrating *Hadeeth* from him".<sup>24</sup> Nimawee Hanafee has also criticized Hammad *Bin* Shuaib.<sup>25</sup>

Ataa *Bin* As-Saeed another narrator that can also be found in this narration was confused and disordered. Imam Zai'laee Hanafee said about him: "But in the end of his life he had become a victim of confusion. And all those that

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<sup>19</sup> Volume 11 page 127 published by Darul-Fikr.

<sup>20</sup> Athaarus-Sunan Marginal notes page 253.

<sup>21</sup> Volume 2 page 496.

<sup>22</sup> Refer to Tahdheebut-At-Tahdheeb etc.

<sup>23</sup> Volume 2, page 496.

<sup>24</sup> Refer to '*Lisaanul-Mizaan*', Volume 2, page 348.

<sup>25</sup> Refer to '*Athaarus Sunan*', page 254.

have narrated from him, narrated from him after the commence of his confusion, except Shu'bah and Sufyan."<sup>26</sup>

To lead the people astray by choosing rejected, weak, and fabricated narrations and publishing them in the newsletter is a very big crime. After all don't we realize that one day we shall all have to die? What answer have we thought of that we shall give on Judgement Day?

The saying: *Hadeeth* no.7:

"Abul Hasanaa narrates that Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded that....."

Answer:

The chain of this narration is also weak. Abul Hasanaa is unknown.<sup>27</sup> Hafiz Ad-Dhahabee<sup>28</sup> said: "He is not known."

Molvi Nimawee Hanafee has also said: "He is not known"<sup>29</sup>

The saying: *Hadeeth* no.8:

Imam Husain (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded that Twenty *raka'aahs* should be observed....."<sup>30</sup>

Answer:

This is a fabrication and a white lie. For the writer of this newsletter to present evidence as an argument from the "*Musnad Zaid*" which has been fabricated by the *Shias* is extremely astonishing and a fatigue thing to do.

The narrator of this '*Musnad*' is Amr *Bin* Khalid Al-Wasatee, whom the scholars of *Hadeeth* have declared to be weak and a liar, with a consensus. Imam Ahmed, and Imam *Ibn* Ma'een and others have said: "A Liar"<sup>31</sup>, he would narrate fabricated *Hadeeth* from *Zaid Bin* Ali".<sup>32</sup>

The other narrator of this '*Musnad*' is Abdul-Aziz *Bin* Ishaq *Bin* Al-Baqqaal who was is weak and an extremist *Shia*.<sup>33</sup> This '*Musnad*' contains so many fabricated *Hadeeth*. For examples, refer to the pages 405 of this book etc.

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<sup>26</sup> '*Nasbur-Rayah*', Volume 2, page 58.

<sup>27</sup> '*Taqreebut At-Tahdheeb*', of *Ibn* Hajar Asqalani, page 401.

<sup>28</sup> '*Meezanul-Itidaal*', Volume 4, page 515.

<sup>29</sup> Marginal notes of '*Aatharus Sunan*', page 255.

<sup>30</sup> '*Musnad Zaid*', page 139.

<sup>31</sup> Tahdeebut-Tahdeeb etc

<sup>32</sup> Tahdeeb, Meezaanul Al-Itidaal volume 3page 257 etc

<sup>33</sup> Refer to *Lisaanul-Meezaan* volume 4 page 25, *Tareekh Baghdad* volume 1 page 458.

The saying: *Hadeeth* no. 9:

“Abdullah *Ibn* Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him) would pray Twenty *raka’ah*.”<sup>34</sup>

Answer:

The chain of this narration is disconnected.

The above narration can be found on page 200 in the edition of ‘*Qiyamul-Lail Lil Marwazwee*’ that we have without the *Isnad* (chain), narrated on the authority of Aa’mash. In ‘*Umdatul-Qaree*’<sup>35</sup> the narration can be found narrated on the authority of “Hafs *Bin* Ghiyaath (عنه) who narrated from Al-Aa’mash”. Abdullah *Ibn* Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him) died in the year 32 or 33 A.H. in the city of Madinah. Aa’mash was born in they year 61 A.H. and he is a famous, trustworthy *Mudalas*<sup>36</sup> narrator. Abdullah *Ibn* Mas’ood died many years before Aa’mash was born. Therefore to be dependent upon disconnected narrations is baseless. And the example of the evidence presented above can be compared with a proverb of the Urdu language, which follows:

“ *Drowning straws cannot be saved*”

Therefore to be dependent upon disconnected narrations and to attempt to save drowning straws cannot be done. In the *Isnaad* (chain) of this narration Hafs *Bin* Ghiyaath is also *Mudalas*<sup>37</sup> and is narrating this narration with the word (عنه).

The saying: *Hadeeth* no. 10:

“A’taa states that he witnessed the people **only** praying Twenty *raka’ah* *Taraaweeh* concluding with three *Witr*”.<sup>38</sup>

Answer:

- 1) This is not the *Qur’aan*, *Hadeeth*, nor the Consensus. Neither is it the action of the rightly guided caliphs or the other companions.
- 2) The word **only** that has been added to the translated is incorrect.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The reference given in the newsletter is *Qiyamul Lail of Marwazee* page 91.

<sup>35</sup> Volume 11 page 127.

<sup>36</sup> Is a reporter who conceals the identity of his Shaykh, and there is uncertainty in the transmission of the narration which makes it unclear. [TN]

<sup>37</sup> Refer to the above footnote [TN]

<sup>38</sup> *Ibn* Abee Shaibah Volume 2 page 393.

- 3) The action of unknown people cannot be used as an Islamic jurisdiction and argument.
- 4) The action of the unknown people (as mentioned above by the writer) is contrary to the command of the rightly guided caliphs, as it shall be explained.
- 5) The people of Madinah would pray 41 *raka'aah* as mentioned by Imam Tirmidhee<sup>40</sup>; can this action of theirs be regarded as an Islamic jurisdiction and argument?

All praise is due to Allah, my review and concise refutation upon this newsletter has come to an end. Now let us have a glimpse at some of the evidence presented by the Ahlul-*Hadeeth* with the permission of Allah!

Evidence no. 1

Narrated on the authority of Abu Salama *Bin* Abdur Rahman that he asked Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her): "How was the *Salat* (prayer) of Allah's Messenger in *Ramadhan*?" She replied, "He did not perform *Salat* (prayer) more than Eleven *raka'aah* in *Ramadhan* or in any other month. He used to perform four *raka'aah* let alone their beauty and length- and then he would perform three *raka'aah* (*Witr*)." She added, "I asked, 'O Allah's Messenger! Do you sleep before praying the *Witr*?' he replied. 'O Aishah! My eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep.'<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Please note that the word *only* is translated in the Urdu language as "Hai" and the writer of the newsletter made an addition of this word when he translated the narration of A'taa in the Urdu language. [TN]

<sup>40</sup> Sunan Tirmidhee Volume 1 page 166

<sup>41</sup> '*Saheeh Bukhari*', Volume 1, page 269; '*Umdatul-Qaree*', Volume 11, page 128, 'Book of Fasting', 'Book of Taraweeh', Chapter, 'The superiority of Praying (Nawafil) at Night in *Ramadhan*'. English Translation: 'The Book of *Taraweeh*', page 135, *Hadeeth* no: 2013.

Narrated on the authority of Jabir *Bin* Abdullah Al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him): “The Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed Eight *raka’ah* with us in the month of *Ramadhan* and finished with the *Witr*”.<sup>42</sup>

It must be remembered that Esa *Bin* Jaariyyah (*rahimahullah*), according to the majority scholars of *Hadeeth* is trustworthy and truthful (*Thiqqa, Sadooq*) as I have proved in my book “*Noorul-Masaabeeh Fee Masalateet-Taraaweeh*”<sup>43</sup>

It has been narrated on the authority of our leader Ubay *Ibn* Kaab (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: “In the month of *Ramadhan* I prayed eight *raka’ah* and the *Witr* and informed the prophet of Allah upon which the prophet did not make any comment.” Hence this became an approved *Sunnah*.<sup>44</sup>

Imam Noorud-Deen Al-Haythami (died 807 A.H.) said regarding the above *Hadeeth*: “The chain of this narration is sound”<sup>45</sup> (وأسناده حسن).

Our leader, Chief of the Believers, Umar *Ibn* Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) commanded Ubay *Ibn* Kaab and Tamim Ad-Daramee (may Allah be pleased with them both) (in the nights of *Ramadhan*) to pray Eleven *Raka’ah*.<sup>46</sup>

Numerous scholars have graded this narration as authentic. The famous Hanafee scholar Muhammad *Bin* Ali Nimawi (died 1322 A.H.) writes the following about the above narration: “The chain of this narration is authentic.”<sup>47</sup>

It has been narrated in ‘*Musanaf Ibn Abee Shaybah*’<sup>48</sup> (died 235 A.H.) that: “Indeed Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) gathered the people together with Ubay *Ibn* Kaab and Tamim Ad-Daramee (may Allah be pleased with them both). Both of them lead the people in prayer by praying Eleven *raka’ah*.”

The chain of this narration is completely authentic, and Imam Umar *Bin* Shaybah (262 A.H.) has narrated this narration in ‘*Tareekhul-Madeenah*’.<sup>49</sup>

Sa’eeb *Bin* Yazid (may Allah be pleased with him) has narrated: “In the era of Umar *Bin* Khattab we would pray Eleven *raka’ah*.”<sup>50</sup>

Regarding the above narration Imam Jalaalud-Deen Suyootee (died 911 A.H.) said: “The chain of this narration is at its utmost degree of authentication”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> ‘*Saheeh Ibn Khzaimah*’, Volume 2, page 138; ‘*Saheeh Ibn Hibban*’, Volume 4, page 62 and 64.

<sup>43</sup> Refer to the English translation: EVIDENCE NO. 3, third objection, page 11.

<sup>44</sup> ‘*Musnad Abee Yalaa*’, Volume 3, page 336.

<sup>45</sup> ‘*Majmauz-Zawa’eed*’, Volume 2, page 74.

<sup>46</sup> ‘*Muwatta Imam Malik*’, page 98.

<sup>47</sup> ‘*Athaarus- Sunan*’, page 250.

<sup>48</sup> Volume 2, page 391 and 392.

<sup>49</sup> Volume 2, page 713.

<sup>50</sup> ‘*Sunan Saeed Bin Mansoor*’, with the reference of ‘*Al-Haawee Lil Fataawaa*, Volume 1, page 349; also on the Marginal Notes of ‘*Athaarus-Sunan*’, page 250.

<sup>51</sup> ‘*Al-Masaabeeh Fee Salaatet Taraweeh Lis Suyootee*’, page 15; ‘*Al-Haawee Lil Fataawaa*’, Volume 1, page 350.

"بسند في غاية الصحة"

Our leader Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Indeed the person who stands in the night prayer with the Imam, then spends the rest of his time away (from the night prayer), for him shall be written (in his records) the deed of performing the night prayer for the whole night."<sup>52</sup>

Imam Tirmidhee has graded the above *Hadeeth* as sound, and authentic.

It must be remembered that Twenty-*raka'aah* Taraweeh is not authentically established (with definite proof) from the prophet (peace be upon him).

Molvi Anwar Shah Kashmiri Deobandee (died 1352 A.H.) states:

و لا مناص من تسليم أن تراويح عليه السلام كانت ثمانية ركعات ولم يثبت في روايه من الروايات انه عليه السلام صلي التراويح والتهجد عليه في رمضان

There is no other escape but to accept that indeed the taraweeh of the prophet (peace be upon him) consisted of Eight *raka'aah*. And it has not been established with the support of a single narration that the prophet (peace be upon him) in the month of *Ramadhan* prayed *Tahajjud* and *Taraweeh* separately....."

وأما النبي صلي الله عليه وسلم فصح عنه ثمان ركعات وأما عشرون ركعه فهو عنه عليه السلام بسند ضعيف وعلي ضعفه اتفاق

And Anwar Shah Kashmiri also says: "So what is authentically established from the Prophet (peace be upon him) is eight *raka'aah*, therefore the narration regarding Twenty-*raka'aah* attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been reported with a weak chain and there is consensus regarding its weakness."<sup>53</sup>

Twenty-*raka'aah* *Taraweeh* has not been authentically established (with a chain of narration that is adjoining) on the authority of the rightly guided caliph, our leader Umar *Ibn* Khattab. What ever the opposition party presents is either a narration that is disconnected or a narration that has no evidence to support that it was the action, saying or approval of Umar *Ibn* Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him). Therefore to present such weak narrations, irrelative arguments and the actions of unknown people as a proof against the authentic adjoining narrations and established command of Umar *Ibn* Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) is an astonishing and reprehensible act.

### The Superiority of Praying at Night in *Ramadhan*

Our leader, the Jurist, Imam, the Mujahid Abu Hurairah Ad-Doosee (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Whoever performed Salat (prayers) at night in it (the month of *Ramadhan*) with sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his past sins will be forgiven."<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> 'Tirmidhee', Volume 1, page 166.

<sup>53</sup> 'Al-Urfus-Shizza', Volume 1, page 166.

<sup>54</sup> 'Saheeh Bukhari', Volume 1, page 269.

And it has also been narrated: “Whoever fasts in the month of *Ramadhan* with sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his past sins will be forgiven.”<sup>55</sup>

## Intention

Intention is known as an aim and purpose. There is a consensus amongst the intellectual people that the place of intention is the heart and not the tongue.<sup>56</sup>

To make an intention to fast by the tongue in the month of *Ramadhan* with the following words:

و بصوم غدا نويت من شهر رمضان

“I intend to fast one of the fasts of *Ramadhan* tomorrow” is definitely not established.

May Allah the exalted give us all the ability to follow the Qur’aan and Sunnah!  
Ameen!

**Shaykh Muhadith Zubair Ali Za’ee Hafidhullah**

*Translated by:  
Zulfiker Ibrahim Al-Atharee*

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<sup>55</sup> ‘*Saheeh Bukhari*’, Volume 1, page 255.

<sup>56</sup> ‘*Al-Fatawaa Al-Kubraa*’, Volume 1, page 1, ‘*Musanaf Ahmed Bin Abdul-Haleem Al-Hiraanee*’.