

The "Battle of Togoruba" 15 March 1964

Martyr fighter Muhammad Ali Idris (Aburjela)



Togoruba - It is located west of the city of Aqordat and north of Tesseney and north-west of Barentu. In this place occurred a fierce battle between the nascent Eritrean Liberation Army and the Ethiopian enemy forces, which came from Haikota.

The Battle of Togoruba took place on **15 March 1964**, and was the first battle of the Eritrean War of Independence which involved the Ethiopian formal army instead of police units as was the case before. In the battle, an Eritrean Liberation Front unit led by leader and fighter Mohamed Ali Idris (Aburjela) was able to defeat the Ethiopian Army which was greatly outnumbering the heroic fighters in number and type of ammunitions and armaments.

In this battle **84** officers and soldiers from the enemy side were killed, and **22** were seriously wounded who most of them died shortly thereafter. From the brave Eritrean army **18** fighters were martyred and **3** others were wounded.

The defeated and coward Ethiopian army tampered with the corpses of the brave martyrs in public domains until they were rotten and mutilated. The corpses of **6** martyrs were hanged in **Aqordat**, **6** in **Keren**, **3** in **Barentu** and **2** in **Haikota**.

From September 1, 1961 till the Battle of Togoruba, March 15, 1964, there has never been a combat in the field, which was engaged between Eritreans and Ethiopian army personnel (tserawit). The first combat that shattered the ice in Eritrea was the Battle of Togoruba. In this battle the gallant fighters of Eritrean Liberation Front attacked the well-armed Ethiopian infantry for the first time in the history of Eritrea.



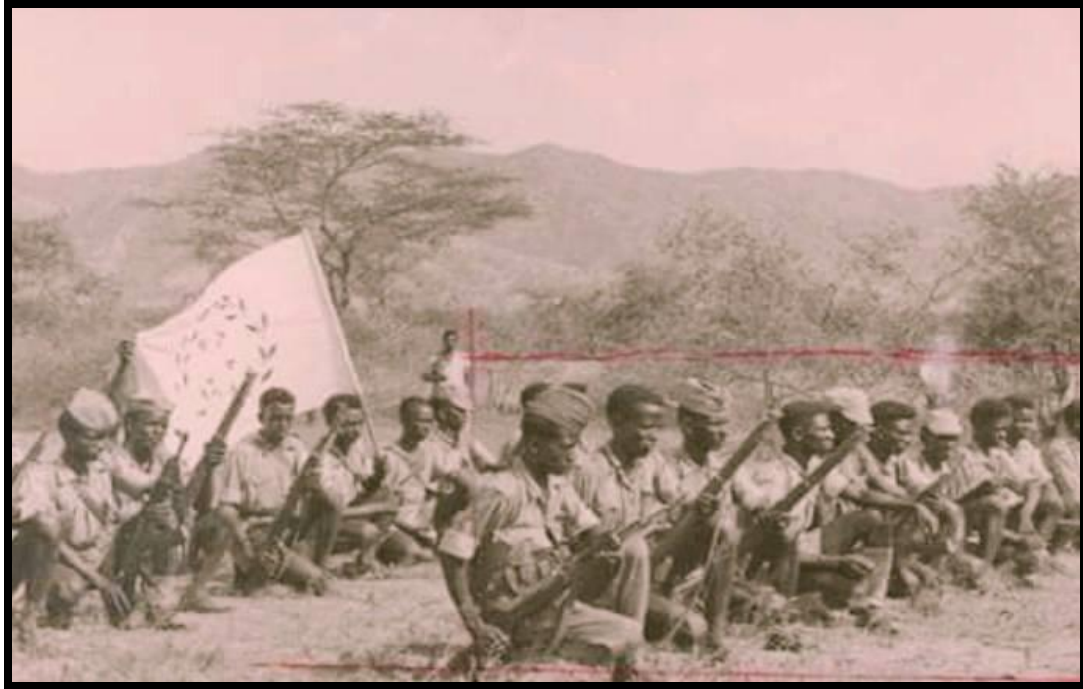
The battle of Togoroba is celebrated yearly by the Eritrean people for its historic significance because it was the first lesson to the enemy to challenge and defeat the forces with little number of fighters with limited armaments and ammunitions. The difference was between those brave and heroic fighters who fought to defend their rights, land and freedom (just cause) and between those soldiers who fought for salary (money), had no just cause and justification to die for a lost cause and case.

The hero and martyr Aburjela, commander of the “Battle of Togoruba” in an interview said:

“Finally, the historic battle of “Togoruba” was the first direct confrontation against the formal Ethiopian army troops which came back from the wars in Congo and Korea. Despite the great superiority of the enemy force, we were able to defeat and dispel their dreams of eliminating the Eritrean revolution at its infancy and completely destroying and shattering our dreams of freedom, independence and emancipation from the Ethiopian yoke. In this heroic and historic battle, we taught the enemy lessons in heroism and self-asceticism. The enemy forces lost

more than eighty soldiers and dozens were wounded and were compelled to withdraw to the town of Haikota. The occupation defeated army, took with them the bodies of our martyrs, which were hang in most towns of western and central Eritrea.

The names of the 18 Martyrs of the “Battle of Togoruba” are:



- 1- Idris Adam Foujaj
- 2- Osman Afa Idris Humed
- 3- Idris Mohamed Ali Humed
- 4- Osman Mohamed Ali Affadada
- 5- Ahmed Mohamed Abdella Anter
- 6- Al-Hassen Harirai Hajj Humed
- 7- Mohamed Abdella Wed-Himbol
- 8- Nazir Idris Mohamed Ali Daffout (Qoud aab Nazer)
- 9- Sharif Sharbot
- 10- Ismail Kanna
- 11- Osman Mohamed Al-Hassen
- 12- Lebab Mohamed Lebab
- 13- Osman Mohamed Nour
- 14- Al-Hussein Idris Mohamed Sharif
- 15- Saleh Nour Hamde
- 16- Ali Idris Jamie Kheir

17- Humed Saleh Ukud

18- Mahmoud Omer Mahmoud

Who is martyr Muhammad Idris Ali (Aburjela)?



He was born in Endraib, south of Aqordat around 1923.

Martyr Aburjela joined the ELA army on 17/02/1962, together with many others who resigned from the Sudanese army known as the “Eastern forces”. Martyr Hamid Awate was very happy upon their arrival, because they came with arms and were well trained. He knew that they can add a lot to the development and progress of the newly formed ELA. Aburjela was the leader of the battle of Togoruba, which was the first great battle against the occupation forces where they had great losses, learnt great lessons and knew that the Eritrean revolution is there to stay until the final victory and it is not composed of bunch of bandits “shiftas” as the Ethiopian media and government were trying to portray it.

The battle of Togoruba boosted the morale of the ELA fighters and learnt that the “mighty” Ethiopian army can be defeated, because they are the trespassers and fighting against the will power of the Eritrean people, although few in number and not well equipped with arms and ammunitions.

Can you image the situation! It is incomparable the Ethiopian army to the brave ELA fighters??? The Eritrean heroic fighters, were equipped with will power, determination, just

cause, ready to scarify their lives for the sake of freedom and independence of their people and country, self-asceticism, national dignity and pride. On the other hand, the Ethiopian soldiers were fighting in foreign land and environment, fighting an unknown and unjustifiable war for salary. Sometimes even conscripted by force and were taken from their farms to fight an unholy war to occupy and enslave Eritrean people.

Ethiopian army was supported by the west, mainly the US, UK and Israel also inside Eritrea supported by the Andnetists (the Ethiopia wei mot supporters). It was a very challenging situation which required self-asceticism, courage, principle, sacrifice and strong and unparalleled love of country... patriotism and nationalism.

Thanks to all our Eritrean heroic martyrs, Eritrean land liberation was possible. It is our responsibility to acknowledge, remember, honour and write about their splendid and heroic history. They burnt like a candle to enlighten Eritrean future, to free Eritrean land from the yoke of Ethiopian occupation.

Today, the Eritrean land is liberated from occupation thanks to our brave and heroic martyrs but the Eritrean people still are lingering under the yoke of the tyrant DIA and his criminal and illegal PFDJ party. It is the responsibility of every Eritrean, to fight consciously until the Eritrean people are free, live in a just, constitutional, lawful and advanced progressive country.

Long live the historical Battle of TOGORUBA

15 March 1964

Glory and Eternity to all our heroic martyrs

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