

28 JANUARY 2016

GUANTANAMO DETAINEE PROFILE

Detainee ISN: YM-838

Detainee ISN	YM-838
Detainee Name	Shawki Awad Balzuhair
Detainee Aliases	Abu Malik
Nationality	Yemeni
Date of Birth	July 24, 1981
Arrival at Guantanamo	October 2002

Shawki Awad Balzuhair (YM-838) was a low-level Yemeni militant who traveled to Afghanistan in mid-2001, received basic training at an al-Qa'ida camp, and served on the frontlines before 9/11. Following the onset of Coalition operations, he fled to Pakistan where he met senior al-Qa'ida figures who were arranging his return to Yemen. YM-838 is one of the Yemenis arrested during the 11 September 2002 raids in Karachi, Pakistan, later labeled the "Karachi Six" based on concerns that they were part of an al Qa'ida operational cell intended to support a future attack. We judge that this label more accurately reflects the common circumstances of their arrest and that it is more likely the six Yemenis were elements of a large pool of Yemeni fighters that senior al-Qa'ida planners considered potentially available to support future operations. YM-838 was probably awaiting a chance to return to Yemen when he was arrested at the Karachi safehouse.

YM-838 has been highly compliant with the guard force at Guantanamo Bay detention facility since his arrival in October 2002 and has committed a low number of infractions compared to other detainees, according to Joint Task Force-Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO). Early in his detention, he provided information of moderate value about the activities of al-Qa'ida leaders; however, he has also admitted to lying to interrogators based on his allegation of mistreatment and rarely participates in interrogations, suggesting he sees little value in cooperating.

YM-838 has provided little insight into his views of extremism or violence, hindering our understanding of whether he would pursue extremist activity after detention. He has not expressed or demonstrated any sympathy or support for al-Qa'ida, its global ideology, or other radical Islamic views, probably judging that this may improve his chances of release. Early in his detention, YM-838 expressed hatred toward the US and said that he was being held unjustly. YM-838 has not expressed a clear plan for how he would support himself if he left Guantanamo, and we judge he would struggle to acclimate to civilian life because he has admitted to dropping out of school and appears to lack vocational skills.

YM-838 does not appear to have any direct associations with at-large extremists. He probably would prefer to be transferred to Yemen to be close to his family, but they probably are experiencing financial hardship because of Yemen's ongoing conflict and we do not know if they would be able to support him financially.