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AMB (ENG) MAHBOUB M. MAALIM

The Unsung Hero of the Horn of Africa

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History have had enough records stretching out from individuals' achievements, issue of clock or occasion to pass on through time. Our daily association with others obviously enables us to hear or get included with particularly unique kind of person or progressively champion people who have had creative thinking that caused impulsion to our everyday motivations. Through time, however, its tested certainty right that learned nit-pickers or sometimes as we call them “perfectionist” among us invoke stimulant by basically remembering the achievement of the extraordinary records of our past unsung heroes, heroine and title holders whose pertinent contribution and àpropos commitments have had constructive impact to individuals of our time. These very young perfectionist in our region (North eastern region- Kenya) yearning for nothing other than to ascertain out ethically moral and acceptable individuals within our larger social order. They don't give up in their pursuit of entities or personalities who surpassed challenges and excel life through moral excellence as a showcase. These genius and go-getters are very rear in any society, you hear about them, you feel their accomplishments but when you meet them they are very simple, humble and humorous.

These very type of people are identified through their candid and boldness in acting on, avoiding on or denouncing at all whosoever is not doing the right thing in the right place or otherwise acting in unfair style no matter how weirdly they may react to the moral opinions so spoken. Generally speaking, the dichotomous role of such progressively champion people of our time posit an instrumental teachings to every one of us; the first lesson could be their ethical dependability. Whereas the second aspect of their character is integrity; devoid from all filthy fouls and faulty vulgarism. Indeed the



consistency of their struggle to keep intrinsic worth and honest lifestyle propelled them to the highest level of life. In an ideal society acting onto impartiality will certainly hang on to this kind of individuals to epitomise them as an iconic proposition tantamount to role-play to others. As of the known chronicle in North-eastern province, quite few champions' historical records are recollected, perhaps for the reason of their heroic marathon in battlefield either defeating their enemies or defending their land from incursion. Such noble entities among other include; Haji Abdirahman Sh. Mursal alias Serinley, Abdi Ibrahim, Ahmed Magan, Madey Ali, Mohamed Magan, Olol Diinle etc. This kind of historical narratives have lived with us public, up until we developed psychological tendency to accept it true that unsung heroes are only those who could fight in a bloody battle. Numerous youngsters of today in North-eastern region of course feel that they have no ethically developmental heroes or heroines to take after in plain.

Their understanding scope of people who have had any kind of effect on the planet reaches out to only those alien celebrities, largely the game stars (sports), music stars or perhaps to someone in socio-politics affairs such as *Nelson Mandela, Kwame Nkrumah, or Malcolm X etc.* Commendable as some of these individuals might be, youngsters are by and large turn-off unconsciously the scope of achievement from the diverse fields of developments garnered by their own sons and daughters that can as well be viewed heroic accomplishment. Conspicuously more essential should be to those in their own society particularly in their own region, who actually have made a difference by standing up for, rescuing, or serving their people justly and honestly with exceptional expertise to cause influence, borne ideas beneficial to the society's developmental agendas, or even earn inter-country fame by being prototypical leader. Informatively speaking, if Malala Yousafzai now 20 years old who was born in the small *riverine* valley of Swat district in Pakistan, where her father in the remote village was simply pre-primary school owner through which she participated educational issues of her own family business. By simply sharing the dairy she maintained during the dark era of Taliban rule in Swat valley, just after she survived the brutal bus accident wined her the Pakistani National Peace Award. The secret behind was her village mate; they extolled and treasured through appreciating the little work she did as a girl child and endorsed the world to hear the self-same story; at her won capacity, she did no effort to let others know about her narrative account. Belief me, from 2011 to 2014 Malala Yousafzai won the following awards; *National Youth Award, Nobel Peace Prize, Sakharov Prize, National Malala Peace Prize, Glamour Award for The Girls' Hero, Simone de Beauvoir Prize, United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights, Mother Teresa Awards between 2011 to 2014.*

Same is true to Alice Munro, she essentially mastered the learning of contemporary short story which later impelled her to win the Governor General's Awards before proceeding to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2013. Alice Munro's society glorified, treasured and spoke volume for the world to hear, see and escalate their daughters 'talent to a point of

global outlook. Alice became the first Canadian and the 13th woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature. To what extent the society can be central stakeholder? Prerequisite prescriptions are costless but modestly consists three inseparable dosages; firstly, encourage, stimulate and provide platform for those uncommon small numbers of us who can conclude tremendous achievement in their rendezvous field of specialization, secondly, there should be the intuitive bravery to accept, laud and value the unique [morally upright] strength of mind and the endeavours of our sons and daughters subsequent to their exceptional outcome in their work. Finally, from my own opinion conclusion, expressing genuine inclination when our genius/brilliant sons and daughters accomplish something typically exceptional, obviously in a skilful way. Thus by simply sharing their talent with others who may not know them is fundamental point of reference that gather high rank for their brain power faculty. I wonder how we tolerate self-*centredness* to jeopardise or repudiate or negate the talent of our sons and daughters. Why it become acceptable to act in prompt to display unreceptive emotions towards the great success of our men and women in the society? Who else are we expecting to tell the great contributions of unsung heroes?

My dear friends and foes of a shared values, to whom do we expect to convey on our behalf or re-count the real test of intelligence our great champions. Who will be in a proxy position to talk people like Amb (Eng) Mahboub M. Maalim who like other unacknowledged heroes or heroine of our society in the Horn region brought pronounced fame and tremendous triumph in his diverse leadership designations.

Maybe many of us may know Amb (Eng.) Mahboub Maalim in terms of his professional capacity and achievements, but may perhaps not know him in terms of his particular personal background. Strange is how much you have to know about others before you identify how little you know about them.

Eng. Mahboub Maalim hailed from humble religious household, where he was the second born in a family of 12 siblings. He grew up like any other classical Somali pastoralist's boy, earlier on he maintained an opportunistic herding span. He was morally coached at home where his ethical behaviour was defined at the height of subjective responsibility—this influenced his life's work, both in setting and sensibility. He began his primary education in Primary school where he graduated to Wajir High school for his secondary education. Later on Amb (Eng.) Mahboub earned M.Sc in Structural Designing/ Civil Engineering in 1992 at Texas A & I College in USA where he had already gained his BSc degree in Civil Engineering/ Structural Building. Before going to contemplate undergraduate study in the USA, he was trained on water Technology for three years in the Kenya Water Institute and completed in year 1978. His professional life began in June 1978 to June 1979 when he received his first assignment as an inspector of water responsible for water supplies, planning, construction, and operation and maintenance in Kenya, before being elevated to the position of District Water Engineer. In which position he served in urban towns in Kenya

between 1979 and 1985. After earning his MSc in Civil Engineering, Eng. Mahboub Maalim's career quickly changed over the next six years to executive level and expanded far beyond that of engineering field to become coordinator in multinational projects among them World Bank's financed project known as “The drought Recovery Project in the arid lands of Kenya” for two years from 1994 to 1996— this gave him experience in planning, budgeting, financing and implementing multi-sectoral development programmes.

On completion of the World Bank project he oversaw the success of yet another major project as a Deputy National Project Coordinator as well as National coordinator, Arid lands resource management project for another seven years between 1997 and 2003. From September 2003. Amb (Eng.) Maalim's career once again accelerated in the subsequent five years to another level of senior civil servant position of Permanent Secretary (PS) in two of Kenya's Ministries; Permanent Secretary Ministry of State for Special Programs, Office of the president from July 2004 to August 2005 and later Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

Being the first Somali Permanent Secretary to Ministry of Water and Irrigation in Kenya in 2005. The first day in office, Eng. Mahboub courageously assigned to himself the task of solving once and for all Garissa county water crises. From day one, he collected all available annals of Garissa water file where he found enormous unsettled debt liabilities that was stumbling block to water crisis solution in Garissa. In order to steadfast pertinent answers to the crisis he had to clear all standing enterprises and other private water companies liabilities. What turned out to be heroic patriotism was the decision he took to clear it up all debtors amounting to KSH 91 million equivalents to \$1.5m (according to 2005 rate) to ADLER Company water project—a white elephant project for nearly 20 years. This occurred within the first two weeks of his appointment and in a span of six months, he initiated and operationalized Garissa Water and Sewerage and Company (GAWASCO). The company has made weighty strides in its efforts to connect every household in Garissa town and its environs with piped water. GAWASCO Company had more than 10,000 metered consumers by 2012 with clean water running virtually into every household in Garissa town and beyond to Korkora, ADC village, Modika (Juma mrefu) substantially outside of Garissa town. What happened then? As soon as the county government operation began under the leadership of Governor Nathif Jama in 2012, availability of water quality that ought to meet its environmental values turned out to be misery, not only that, but the amount of water provision to meet the populations demand sadly slackened the quality standards of ideal water as set by WHO.

Amb Mahboub who repeatedly proven his ability to lead through diverse and challenging situations led elevated him to win some of the most prestigious National and International awards and Honours, which includes: The order of Grand Warrior of Kenya (OGW) and

Chief of Burning Spear of Kenya (CBS-Kenya). In 1979, Eng. Mahboub got the designation of Authority to Incur Expenditure Holder (AIE).

As an excellent agent of change and with a documented track record of accomplishments, he has equally been recognized by the academics, developmental and UN institutions status of courtesy. Eng. Mahboub Maalim in his recent capacity as the Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has conscientiously availed him the transformative commitment of IGAD Member Nations, UN and International community. This is reflected in the increased funding opportunities and portfolio of approved projects and programmes. Some of these programmes is in the field of resilience development, peace and security, infrastructure development as well as in the areas of countering all sorts of violent extremism, economic or political migration, and empowerment of youth and women in development. With vast decision making, direction and administrative experiences he has built over the time, he open up collaborations with diverse developmental actors; United Nations, International NGOs, National NGO's and other civil society groups. What is more, he unceasingly furthered co-currently his career trainings that strengthened his certified professional accomplishment. Presently, the briny or the ocean task of Mr. Mahboub is to steer the Organization towards regional integration so as to play its role as a building axis of the African Union.

In 2013 Eng. Maalim was appointed as an Ambassador and retained at IGAD. Amb Maalim maintained a candid character which allowed him not to be reluctant in telling what is right whenever is appropriate. The Ambassador strongly believed the fact of the hadith of the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) that says; 'Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is oppressed.' The teaching behind the Hadith is, if your Muslim brother or sister is oppressor you restrain him/her from committing oppression, which is the finest help you can offer, just by telling him/her mistake boldly. The recent Kumade tribe convention which was helped in Garissa on the 15th of this month was the brainchild of Amb Mahboub Maalim. His intention was to unite the polarized entire Kumade tribe with sole interest of safeguarding integrity that long lost in the county.

As the saying goes; the eyes cross the river before the body, Eng. Mahboub foresaw that another five years to come under the leadership of Nathif Jama will be a doomsday for the entire generation. According to Ambassador, saving the young generation from absolute desolation was much more concern than clan affiliation that tightly exist between him the current Governor of Garissa County. Due to his desires to bring about positive political revolutionary for better change, as Kwame Nkrumah once said; "revolutions are brought about by men, by men who think as men of action and act as men of thought, he has never been hesitant in his search of society devoid from all vices. Thus, one of his factual tests of decency is the blunt refusal to be bargained corruption over integrity. Engineer Mahboub's historic speech at the ground of Kumade concession for Ali Bunow's endorsement

as Garissa County gubernatorial contender have touched the deep souls and the serenity of everyone in the county. Everyone who works work with Ambassador Mahboub confirms one of his unique features, that is, they say that “He does not give the impression of worrying about reputation or personality rather he put emphasis in building up is character”. In that, character is what will remain with the real nature of the person and can’t be ruined unless you accept to be ruined, in that, confidence is not a matter of techniques, tricks, or tools but of character.

“We’re sentimental people. We like few kind words better than millions of dollars giving in humiliation way” Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

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