

Obituary



Omar Yusuf Buh (Professor Buh)

He was the son of a local qur'an teacher, and spent his early childhood near the town of Kalabaydh and died in Hargeisa (1.5.2021).

Educated at the elite Sheikh School and lived in Jeddah, KSA for many years. He was central to the expat community there and hosted many people performing Hajj and Umra over the years.

Professionally he worked for commercial banks in the early years, most notably at Saudi Hollandi Bank where he eventually retired from after his move to post-war Hargeisa. In a life marked by public service and quiet dedication to his principles he declined a move to Europe and a more comfortable life. He would later become a founding pillar of Hargeisa University with the likes of the late Muuse Abdi Elmi and others, teaching Economics with a distinct level of professionalism attested to by his former students.

One such story being that the poet Mohammed Hashi Dhamac was ill and the students wanted to skip class to visit the ailing poet. Not wanting to dampen their desire for visiting the sick and also maintaining his duties to his students, he proposed that they all visit the poet together after the class – employing the sound pedagogical technique of accommodating learners. The lesson ended at noon, at which point learners were given the option to visit the poet or go home, but either way the professor wryly pointed out that he had met his obligations. In essence he ensured that his students carried on learning and balanced their obligations to the community, thus teaching a crucial life lesson – service to self AND community. He would steer clear of politics of division focusing instead on consensus and good governance.

His latest role in the Central Bank meant that he worked hard to build consensus while leading a crucial institution under successive governments. His dedication and flexibility helped others and made relationships rather than cause friction (as is common in politics). The current governor Md. Ali Ibrahim Jama (Baghdadi) praised his knowledge and dedication to his people during the freedom struggle as an SNM member, post war nation-building phase as the Dean of Economics at Hargeisa University and most recently as the Deputy Governor at the Central Bank for over a decade.

In many ways he left an impressive legacy and a shining example for expatriates, citizens, teachers and officials alike, living a life that combined the roles of an activist, diligent educator and a competent civil servant unencumbered by designs of higher office or accumulating wealth and accolades – rare attributes across Africa and beyond.

He leaves behind a wife, 6 children and 2 grandchildren as well as countless students and beneficiaries of his stewardship at both Hargeisa University and The Central Bank. He also leaves a legacy that was punctuated by service, humility and immense dedication to his countrymen and family. May Allah have mercy on h and grant his family and nation the patience and faith to bear his loss.