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Al Marhum Sheikh Kassim bin Juma (1940 – 1994)
And the Dar es Salaam Pork Riots of 1993

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Introduction
In order to understand the mobilising force behind the Muslim agitation of 1990s against the government particularly in the years when the first Muslim president was in office one has to trace the life of Sheikh Kassim bin Juma bin Khamis the brilliant orator of Tanzanian mainland pulpit politics. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma will go in history as the only sheikh in the history of Tanzania to in a peculiar way serve two presidents diligently. He supported Catholic Nyerere knowingly or unknowingly helping him build a new political base alienating his former supporters - Muslims who had formed Nyerere’s mainstay in his early political carrier. In this process Nyerere with the help of Sheikh Kassim Bin Juma and few Muslims in Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) the party of independence, was able to weaken and completely severe the Muslim base, the link which not only had propped him into power in 1953 but was also the main force which ousted the British out of Tanganyika. The end result of this marriage was the formation of a new power house composed of Christians, mainly Catholics who not only came to control the government but also then TANU the only political party in the country. This power house manifested itself into the Christian lobby – the unseen hand which directs politics in Tanzania. Muslims were never to recover and gain the political domination which was their domain during the
struggle for independence; and from that period they were marginalised to the extent that they can now (to borrow the words of former President of Zanzibar Aboud Jumbe) be seen through their absence in all centres of power. In turn, probably as a reward to Sheikh Kassim bin Juma for his support Nyerere elevated Sheikh Kassim bin Juma to a higher status, making him among one of his very close confidants. It is said on Nyerere’s recommendation Sheikh Kassim was also attached to the State Intelligence as an informer. Sheikh Kassim remained in that powerful position throughout Nyerere’s tenure.

It was Sheikh Kassim bin Juma's sudden change from being a pawn of Nyerere to becoming a champion of Muslim rights, to use his own words, "usurped by a political system established by Julius Nyerere," which made his life history worthy of record. Sheikh Kassim who for many years was shunned by Muslim intellectuals not taking him seriously seeing him as a lackey, was by this sudden change caused this group to come forward to support him. Short of this transformation Sheikh Kassim's life would not have been remarkable. History would have remembered him as a Muslim scholar who sold himself to Nyerere and betrayed Islam. In order to understand the change in Sheikh Kassim one needs to trace his transformation from the time in 1985 when power changed hands in Tanzania.
The Rise of Sheikh Kassim bin Juma bin Khamis

Sheikh Kassim rose to prominence in early 1960s soon after returning from studies in Pakistan. While a student in Pakistan, Sheikh Kassim came into contact with the renowned Muslim scholar, Abu Ala Maudud and the Jamaat Islami. Sheikh Kassim ascendancy to popularity as a brilliant orator and champion mass mobiliser coincided with the political phase in Tanzania when Nyerere was conducting a silent purge against Muslim leadership in TANU as well as in the leadership in the Tanzania Branch of the East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS). Nyerere had during the formative years of TANU witnessed the power and spirit of Muslims in their stand against colonialism. During the struggle for independence Muslim symbols were very much in evidence in leadership of the party and membership drive. The early leadership of TANU came from Al Jamiatul Islamiyya fi Tanganyika founded in 1933. While Islam was used as an ideology of resistance to foreign rule the Church kept its distance. Nyerere felt unsafe to face Muslims in free Tanganyika organising themselves independent of the central authority. Nyerere perceived Muslim scholars as Sheikh Hassan Bin Ameir and independent Muslim organisation like the EAMWS, Daawat Islamiyya, and Al Jamiatul Islamiyya fi Tanganyika as threat to his own rule and authority. He thought Muslim sentiments against his government could be articulated through such Muslim organisations and personalities. The EAMWS had The Aga Khan as patron and Sheikh Hassan bin Ameir had resigned from politics and was now heading Daawat Islamiyya. Nyerere as a sure means of his own
survival and that of his government wanted all Muslim organisations and influential Muslims out of his way and out of politics.

Nyerere did not want to be seen to be working against these organisations or its leadership. Nyerere needed a Muslim to spearhead the attack while he worked behind the curtain. A crisis leading to the disarray of these organisations had therefore to be fomented paving way for Nyerere to intervene and in doing so would create an opening to overthrow the independent Muslim leadership and create his own leaders and a new Muslim organisation which he could manipulate and demand allegiance. The nucleus upon which to build his new base had to emanate within the Muslim fabric itself and the choice of the new leadership had to be perceived as emanating from main stream Muslims themselves. Nyerere had by then purged the party of its Muslim leadership and those remaining were mere cronies. He had in 1963 soon after independence in 1961 abolished the TANU – Elders Council an all Muslim body accusing the elders of ‘mixing religion with politics’ this in essence meant mixing ‘Islam with politics.’

The vacuum left by the Elders Council which was party within the party in TANU was filled by few hand picked Muslims in the powerful Central Committee of the party. These hand picked Muslims in the Central Committee paved the way for Nyerere to bring down the final blow - that of banning the EAMWS, Daawat Islamiyya, Al Jamiatul fi Tanganyika and other Muslim organisations. But in order for Nyerere
to achieve this he needed a person with charisma, intellect and oratory skills who would be able to publicly speak of the necessity of having a new Muslim organisation with indigenous leadership to replace the EAMWS leadership under the Shia – Ismaili Aga Khan. African Muslims in Tanzania Nyerere argued have to be led by African leadership because that is what *uhuru* was all about. Nyerere had set the bait it was now up to the mouse to nibble and trigger the trap.

Sheikh Kassim has never publicly spoken how he was incorporated by Nyerere into the EAMWS ‘crisis’ of 1968 and the only published work on the crisis¹ has never revealed his actual role in the dismembering of the organisation. It is public knowledge however that there was a group of prominent Muslims some in the party like Sheikh Abdallah Iddi Chaurembo, Rajab Diwani and Selemani Kitundu including some Muslims in the State Intelligence led by the late Rashid Kayugwa² who were involved in fanning the crisis. The crisis ensued threw Muslims in East Africa in a disarray unprecedented in their entire history. The crisis culminated in resignation of the Aga Khan as patron of the EAMWS, the banning of the organisation by order of the president, detention of some sheikhs and other Muslim notables, the scrapping of development projects in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda including the formation of the Muslim University in Dar es Salaam and the formation of National Muslim Council of Tanzania known by its Swahili acronym

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² Before his death Rashid Kayugwa confessed that the State Intelligence was involved in undermining the EAMWS.
as BAKWATA. But the biggest blow of them all to Muslims was the deportation to Zanzibar of Sheikh Hassan bin Ameir the Mufti of Tanzania. Nyerere could not detain Sheikh Hassan bin Ameir, the top most leader of Muslims, the only option open to him was deportation back to Zanzibar his home country.

Consequently the state machinery put Sheikh Kassim Juma on focus and lime light turning him into a ‘national sheikh’ of sorts, considered by all and sundry as government as well as Muslim mouth-piece in all affairs concerning Islam. Overtime his face became familiar in the print media and his voice recognisable in the only radio station. Nyerere put the government owned and controlled mass media including the state radio at the disposal of Sheikh Kassim for propaganda purposes. It was common to hear the voice of Sheikh Kassim delivering a *khutba* in the radio or see his photograph in the papers sitting at the high table with state leaders and other dignitaries. The media portrayed the young Sheikh Kassim as a progressive Muslim scholar capable to represent Muslim interests than the decadent and over spent sheikhs in the EAMWS, *Daawat Islamiyya* and TANU Elders Council.

**Sheikh Kassin bin Juma President Ali Hassan Mwinyi and Reverend Christopher Mtikila**

Man proposes and God disposes. Nyerere’s had his own strategy of succession which failed and attempts to remedy his plan met with obstacles. Nyerere wanted Edward Moringe Sokoine a fellow Catholic
to succeed him but Sokoine died prematurely. Nyerere had to do with a candidate not of his choice and so it passed that Ali Hassan Mwinyi a Zanzibari and an outsider from Nyerere’s circle of loyalists succeeded him. The stage was set for Sheikh Kassim’s exit from one kind of fame into another. When Nyerere resigned from leadership of the country he left the country firmly in the hands of Christian bureaucrats and relatively free from Muslim influence and sentiments. For twenty five years with Muslims denied to organise and confined to BAKWATA\(^3\) Nyerere felt secure and safe believing that the Muslim urge of demanding equal distribution of power between themselves and Christians articulated in the early years of independence has been contained and could never raise again to jeopardise their dominance in the country.

When President Ali Hassan Mwinyi came into power in 1985, he found Sheikh Kassim already firmly established with a great following and influence. Sheikh Kassim accepted and supported Mwinyi as he had supported and served former President Nyerere. For some time it seemed the status quo and Nyerere’s legacy would endure but one thing which Nyerere could not contemplate was the fact that Sheikh Kassim and President Mwinyi shared a common denominator - both of them were Muslims and therefore their relationship transcended beyond the immediate call of duty. After years of Muslims being

\(^3\) BAKWATA has been a stumbling block to Muslim progress as it has, particularly in the mainland prevented Muslims to carry out any meaningful development plans. While Catholics were free to organise under Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) and the Anglicans under Tanzania Council of Churches (TCC), Muslims have no independent organisation to represent them.
reduced to third class citizens the Tanzania polity had drastically changed, the country was confounded with religious animosity. Pressure had begun building up since Nyerere was in power and Muslims had begun agitating against the status quo. President Ali Hassan Mwinyi found himself facing a religious problem which he did not bargain for. Under such a political climate President Mwinyi could not augur well with a Christian dominated cabinet and the civil service as the bureaucrats in these institutions deep in their hearts had their allegiance elsewhere and resented a Muslim president. Soon opposition to Mwinyi’s rule within his cabinet and ruling party, the *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM) surfaced into the open.

President Mwinyi did not help the situation because whenever he talked about the religious problem, his speeches were vague, middle of the road type. He eluded pointing at the source of the conflict between Muslims and government probably for fear of aggravating the volatile situation even further. A typical speech by Mwinyi would be reported by the government paper that he has declared war on ‘agitators’ and the ‘disgruntled’ and that they would not be allowed to divide the nation along religious lines.\(^4\) On the other hand Muslims insisted that the agitation against the Christian dominated government was not directed towards Christianity nor were Muslims struggling to establish *sharia* in Tanzania. The danger signs were on the wall for all to see and to take heed. But all said and done the political system

\(^4\) *Daily News*, 9 November, 1989
bequeathed from Nyerere was not yet ready to accept a Muslim president least of all a Zanzibari.

However the Muslim problem was treated as a case of few misguided ‘Muslim fundamentalists’ financed by external forces meaning Islamic republic of Iran and were a result of Mwinyi's weakness. The ruling party also was responsible for creating religious tension not so much by ignoring Muslim grievances but by meddling into them. On several occasions CCM had organised seminars purported to create understanding between the government, party and religious leaders on topics the government thought needed participation and support of religious leaders. Whereas these seminars were not a problem to the Church, they posed fundamental problems to Muslims. In reality these seminars were organised as a way to try and subjugate basic teachings of Islam. CCM organised seminars in which sheikhs from BAKWATA were invited. These seminars funded by Christian powers in Europe had a hidden agenda incompatible with Islam. The inclusion of sheikhs had purpose, first it was meant to improve the image of government in the eyes of Muslims and second, the inclusion of sheikhs was to act as rubber stamps to whatever decisions passed.

The Church working within CCM realising that Sheih Kassim was backing President Mwinyi circumvented him and made contact with new up coming mediocre organisations which the government had now allowed to register and operate as means to defeat Muslims who
were organising outside BAKWATA. In a show of good public relations the Catholic Church presented to Muslims the Pope’s message to mark the 25th anniversary of the World Peace Day. The message was delivered to ironically Tewa Said Tewa former president of the EAMWS by Pope’s ambassador to Tanzania, Monseigneur Agostino Machetto and the Secretary of the Apostolic, Father Gabriele Gaccia and Peter Smith, an expert propagandist and resource person in Muslim-Christian affairs in the Catholic Church. It is not difficult to understand why the Catholic Church could not dare come out openly and deliver Pope’s message of peace to BAKWATA. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma was never invited to these palavers, seminars and meetings. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma rose to the occasion and in his *Jumaa Khutbas* publicly criticised the government and party in meddling in Muslim affairs. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma’s face in the government papers became an endangered species. Sheikh Kassim owed allegiance to President Mwinyi and could therefore not as well serve the Catholic Church or Nyerere, his old benefactor. Sheikh Kassim was now considered an enemy. The government paper now carried the faces of other Muslim cronies. The new Christian leadership in Tanzania considered Sheikh Kassim a liability not ally it used to depend on times of crisis. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma was grouped together with Mwinyi as ‘nuisance’ to good function of the Church and government. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma soon enough realised war has been declared upon him.

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5There have also been contacts between the Catholic Church and hand-picked Muslim organisation like BALUKTA (Qur’an Recitation Council) and BAKWATA. See *Daily News*, 24 December, 1991.
**Intrigues against President Mwinyi**

Reverend Christopher Mtikila, Head of Full Salvation Church and Chairman of Democratic Party (DP) became an icon of the anti-Mwinyi campaign. He openly declared his mission as that of defending Christianity against Islam. Mtikila came to prominence in 1987 when he circulated a letter at the CCM Kizota Conference in Dodoma in which he accused Mwinyi of propping up Islam at the expense of Christianity. Mtikila’s party’s manifesto is to break the union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika and to expel Arabs, Somalis and Indians from the country. Conspicuously absent from his list of expulsion were Europeans. In his many speeches Mtikila showed outright contempt to religious tolerance, the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar and to the cherished ideals of Tanzania as a multi-racial society. In a daring and dramatic encroachment of the Church into politics, the Tanzania Press Club hosted Reverend Christopher Mtikila, secretary of Full Salvation Church. In that press luncheon Mtikila attacked Mwinyi’s government as being corrupt echoing Nyerere’s speech of February that year. Mtikila was not a new name in anti- Mwinyi campaign. In 1987 during the CCM-NEC conference in Dodoma he distributed a document which among many allegations against Mwinyi he accused him of supporting “Muslim fundamentalism” and slotting Muslims into important positions in his government. In reality Muslim cabinet ministers were negligible and

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Muslim principal secretaries are non-existing. Mwinyi like his predecessor Julius Nyerere ignored Muslims’ call for rectifying this imbalance. Mwinyi like Nyerere refused to equal Muslim-Christian power sharing. This is the source of Muslim agitation and is one single factor which cut across and unites all Muslims throughout the country. And as a jewel to the reverend’s crown on several occasions Mtikila’s followers went on rampage beating up Indians and Arabs. Sheikh Kassim in one of his *khutbas* was to mention that if an Arab or Indian is mentioned Muslims should be aware that it means Arab Muslim and Indian Muslims. Strange enough the state-radio provided air time to Reverend Mtikila’s outbursts.\(^8\) Mtikila was even invited to speak at the famous Nkrumah Hall at University of Dar es Salaam where he castigated Mwinyi and demanded in the conclusion of his speech that the Church must show the way.

Joining in this anti-Mwinyi anti Muslim campaign was the newly established free press controlled by the Christian lobby. The press picked on Muslims ministers scandalising them at will. Muslims in the governments were accused by the press for all sorts of offences from ‘building mosques in their offices’ to ‘selling the country to rich Arab Sheikhs’ from the Middle East. Even the vocabulary changed. People began to be refered to by the colour of their skins. The press began to identify people as ‘Arabs,’ ‘Indians’ and ‘indigenous Africans’ reminiscent of colonial days; with the exception that during colonial

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\(^8\) At that time more than ten private newspapers under Christian ownership were in circulation.
days Africans were then referred to as ‘natives.’ The press scandalised, ridiculed and poked fun at President Mwinyi with impunity, at times even questioning his appointments of Muslim functionaries. The press also insinuated on the dropping from the cabinet of Kingunge Ngombale Mwiru, Getrude Mongela and Joseph Warioba as being influenced by religious sentiments. Included in this war of words were selected Muslim Ministers. President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Prof. Kighoma Malima, Fatma Said Ali, Hassan Diria then Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation and Mustapha Nyang’anyi became favourite targets of ridicule by the private tabloids. It seemed the Christian lobby was irked that those powerful portfolios were in Muslims hands. This is a class which has been in power close to three decades and was used to privileges. The government and party owned media seemed to have lost allegiance to the government including loyalty to the president himself.

It was around this time that the Christian lobby in parliament organised itself into a group of 55 MPs to demand restoration of the government of Tanganyika within the union because Zanzibar had joined Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC). This threatened the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Unique with the G55 was that all of them were from a distinct group in the Parliament which had excelled and was known by Muslims throughout the country inside and outside the Parliament for its anti-Muslim stand. This was the

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first time that it became clear to Muslims that the Church was indeed in control of all instruments of power in the country. Although Zanzibar government denied having joined the OIC copies of official documents proving Zanzibar’s application and acceptance by the OIC were published in the press. It is believed that the letters which were published by the press which for the first time brought the OIC into public notice were stolen from a confidential file of the Chief Minister’s Office in Zanzibar.10

When Zanzibar admitted that it had indeed joined the OIC despite of all the denials and had in fact even attended one of OIC meetings, the Parliament threatened to impeach President Mwinyi for contravening the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania. Sheikh Kassim warned that if President Mwinyi is in any way made to vacate the presidency he would call upon Muslims to rise up against the government. The Christian lobby retracted and Mwinyi was saved. In 1950s when Muslims were in control of politics they never allowed Nyerere to be humbled by dissident Muslims. Sheikhs always rose up in unison to defend and protect the nationalist – secularist ideology of TANU. The history of TANU from its early days of formation from Tanganyika African Association (TAA) in 1954 to 1958 when Muslims for fear of being marginalised by Christians after independence formed

10 During Mwinyi’s government many confidential documents were stolen and exposed to general public through the press. President Mwinyi confided to close associates that he lived under perpetual fear of being bugged by his own security personnel. Indeed a conversation between Principal Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Ibrahim Msabaha and the Tanzania Embassy in Washington was bugged and transcript of the conversation published in the private press. Dr Msabaha went to court to contest the publishing of confidential government information and lost the case with costs.
the All Muslims National Union of Tanganyika (AMNUT) is full of incidences of Muslims backing TANU’s nationalist-secularist ideology. Such patriotism was not forthcoming from Nyerere or the Church. This made Sheikh Kassim to reflect how the country could have reached that stage.

**Catholic Bishops and Pastoral Letters**

The Church should have risen to condemn Reverend Mtikila but it did not do so instead Catholic Bishops of Tanzania through the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) began to issue what came to be known as *Pastoral Letters* which was very critical of Mwinyi’s rule accusing his government of every ill in the country from incompetence to corruption.\(^{11}\) The *Pastoral Letters* were echoed by the media and the state - radio. *The Pastoral Letters* were the last straw which broke the camel's back. It was now evident that the Catholic Church was mixing politics with religion to the detriment of the country, the aim which was to destabilise President Mwinyi and undermine his confidence. Nyerere also joined in attacking Mwinyi publicly accusing him of religious bigotry.\(^{12}\)

Sheikh Kassim convinced that President Mwinyi as well as other Muslim ministers were targets for attack because of their faith and nothing else, stood up to defend Mwinyi’s presidency. Not having the instrument of power under his full control because the Christian dominated bureaucracy had their allegiance elsewhere, President


Mwinyi could not influence public opinion nor could he control the state administrative machinery. For the first time Sheikh Kassim's oratory skills which two decades ago were placed at the disposal of Nyerere, were now put to defend not only President Mwinyi but Islam as well and to publicly attack Nyerere. Sheikh Kassim's Friday *khutba* changed assuming militant posture full of political rhetoric attacking the press and Christians whom he accused of undermining Mwinyi's rule simply because the Church could not stand a Muslim head of state. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma in broad day light and with loud speakers blaring full blast at his Mtoro Mosque more than once mentioned Julius Nyerere, the former president, by name as an enemy of Islam.

Muslims were thrilled by Sheikh Kassim's *khutbas* and his sudden change against the establishment and Nyerere, his former benefactor. Muslims in thousands now thronged the Mtoro Mosque to come and listen to Sheikh Kassim's Friday *khutbas*. Mtoro Mosque overnight became the centre of resistance against forces opposing Mwinyi's rule. Sheikh Kassim called upon Muslims to rise up and over-throw the Christian dominated government which had oppressed them since independence. Sheikh Kassim's *khutbas* were recorded in cassettes and distributed by the *Ansar Sunna* movement throughout the country. It was at this stage that Nyerere summoned Sheikh Kassim to his residence and asked him why he was reviling his name. In a tense encounter my informant told me that Sheikh Kassim told Nyerere point...
blank that he was not insulting him but speaking the truth. The die was cast. A reason had to be found to clip the wings of Sheikh Kassim bin Juma and that came in the form of the pork riots of 1993 on a Good Friday in April 1993.

**The Pork Riots of 1993**

In the city of Dar es Salaam alone there were twenty nine pork butcheries. There occurred incidences where Muslims have been sold pork either by design or by fault. This created animosity between Muslims and Christian butcher owners. Muslims had for many years complained to the government about selling of pork in Muslim populated areas but the authorities had ignored them.\(^{13}\) The problem of pork butcheries was even referred to the Prime Minister and Vice-President John Malecela but nothing was done to solve the problem. This was after Muslims had seen the Dar es Salaam Regional Commissioner, Mustapha Nyang’anyi. The riots came after an abortive meeting between *imams* of five prominent mosques in the area and the District Commissioner Wilson Mkama failed to resolve the nuisance of pig butcheries. In no uncertain manner short of an ultimatum the *imams* requested the District Commissioner to close down the butcheries.\(^{14}\)

The District Commissioner was contemptuous at the *imams* and he impressed upon them that the butcheries were legally licensed and the

\(^{13}\) For a detailed account of the pork crisis see Umoja wa Wanafunzi Waislam Chuo Kikuu Dar es Salaam, 15 April, 1993 “Kauli ya MSAUD Juu ya Sualala Ngururuwe.”

\(^{14}\) Barua yaMaimamu wa Misikiti ya Kagera, Mwembe Chai, Makuti Tandale, Manzese kwa Mkuu wa Wilaya Kinondoni, 18 March, 1993.
government was duty bound to protect them from being molested by few ‘Muslim fundamentalists.’ It was this government reaction which broke the camel’s back. On Easter Friday while Christians were observing the crucifixion of Christ a group of Muslims in Magomeni, Tandale and Manzese in Kinondoni District went on rampage and demolished pork butcheries owned by Christian traders. In an operation on that Easter Friday afternoon a group of Muslims youngsters like well trained commando squad moved swiftly through Kinondoni District demolishing pig butcheries amidst chants of \textit{Allahu Akbar}. This was the first ever physical attack by Muslims on Christian property justified by religious belief since independence. In taking the law into their own hands Muslims had fired their first warning shot. When news of the attack became known the government held its breath.

President Mwinyi who was in Zanzibar on official engagement unwisely and driven by the fear that the country was moving towards the dreaded clash between Muslims and Christians, issued a hurried condemnation of the attack and ordered that all those responsible for the attack should be made to feel the full weight of state power. By that statement a simple case of few frustrated young Muslims hotheads driven to action by insensitivity of the government to genuine grievances, was blown out of proportion into a national crisis. The government and party media including the state radio warned of the dangers of ‘Muslim fundamentalists in Tanzania.’ The Christian
lobby saw in Mwinyi’s statement a blank cheque to crash all Muslims it considered dangerous to their interests. The Prime Minister and Vice-President John Malecela issued a strong statement condemning the attack.  

In an interview with the BBC Swahili Service, Malecela referred to the imams and other Muslims who were arrested as a result of the pork conflict as ‘hooligans whose aim is to acquire power through religion.’

The Minister of Home Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister Augustine Mrema, issued a statement saying that he was convinced the act was precipitated by an outside Muslim power to destabilise the country. The Secretary General of the CCM Horace Kolimba giving the position of the party said that those who attacked the butcheries were not Muslims but hooligans whose aim was to overthrow the government. It was not explained how unarmed ‘imam hooligans’ could overthrow a government. A total of forty Muslims activists including Muslim Bible scholars were arrested. Among those arrested was Salum Khamis the Chairman of Baraza Kuu (a rival Muslim organisation formed by Muslims to counter BAKWATA), Sheikh Yahya Hussein Chairman of BALUKTA (Tanzania Council of Qur’an Reading) and Sheikh Salum Rajab leader of the Ansar. Sheikh Salum Rajab was arrested on charges of bomb making. The news of the arrests of Muslims by the state security agents triggered Muslim anger.

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15 Mzalendo, 11 April, 1993.
16 BBC Swahili Service interview of 12 April 1993.
17 Uhuru, 15 April, 1993.
In 1960s when Sheikh Hassan bin Ameir was arrested Muslims were least concerned. Times had now changed drastically. On Easter Sunday after the arrests of imams became known a relatively small crowd of Muslims went to the Central Police Station were the imams were detained to bail them. The police arrested and anyone who went to the front desk to enquire about the arrested imams. Meanwhile other Muslims assembled outside the police station not knowing what was taking place inside the police station. When it was the time for L’Asr prayers the crowd performed their prayers outside the police station. This act infuriated the policemen. Some of them wanted to come out and disperse them with tear gas but sense prevailed when some of Muslim policemen objected arguing that those people had assembled peaceful and there was nothing wrong if they decide to offer their prayers in open space. Late in the evening the crowd decided to leave after they were told that the people they had chosen to represent them to the police were also arrested. This infuriated Muslims even further.

What followed on Easter Monday was unprecedented in the history of Tanzania. After the arrests of the imams the previous day at the Central Police, Muslims from all corners of Dares Salaam assembled at the Mtoro Mosque to discuss their next step. Muslims were informed that Sheikh Kassim bin Juma who was in Arusha enroute to Nairobi for medical treatment was also arrested on orders of Augustine Mrema the Minister of Home Affairs. It was at the Mtoro Mosque with rain
falling that Muslim in thousands chanting *Allahu Akbar* began to march towards Central Police Station where thirteen *imams* were detained to demand their release. Muslims were out into the streets to demonstrate and register their anger against the Christian dominated government. For the first time since independence riot police in full battle gear clashed with Muslims in the streets and further arrests were made. Muslims totalling 70 were remanded at Ukonga Prison. They were denied food from home and medical attention. It was only after 11 Muslims fell seriously sick that the Ministry of Home Affairs allowed them medical attention. In the interrogations at the police station the arrested Muslims were more quizzed on the problem of Muslim Bible preaching than on the alleged participation in demolishing the pork butcheries. At that time there were a lot of conversions of Christians reverting back to Islam through open air preaching by Muslim Bible scholars.

After his arrests Sheikh Kassim was detained at a military camp in Monduli, a few miles from Arusha town and was later flown back to Dar es Salaam under heavy escort. Sheikh Kassim was to reveal to his close confidants that his captors were under instructions to torture him. At the military camp in Monduli he was to witness many horrifying scenes. While in remand he was put under solitary confinement and denied medical attention. When he was brought back to Dar es Salaam from Monduli Sheikh Kassim was received by the Field Force Unit like a dangerous criminal and escorted to his house in
Upanga where his house was searched. While the police were conducting the search and going through his library they took that opportunity to ridicule him by uttering degrading words. The police found nothing but took away his *Jumaa Khutbas* which they claimed were subversive.\(^{18}\) Sheikh Kassim was brought before the court and charged for 'inciting religious animosity between Muslims and Christians.'\(^{19}\) The government began to unleash a psychological war on Sheikh Kassim. The government and party press began to make up dirty stories about his social life and published them in newspapers to undermine his confidence. The government and party press which for years had built up Sheikh Kassim's image and personality now became his worst enemies.

Sheikh Kassim was brought before the court and charged for 'inciting religious animosity between Muslims and Christians.' Sheikh Kassim was refused bail and remanded in Keko prison for forty days. In total defiance to the government and in show of solidarity to the arrested *imams* Muslims in thousands braved the drizzle and converged at the Resident Magistrate Court to hear the case of the arrested Muslims. Muslim symbols in form of dress, mannerism and outright objection to the government was very much in display outside the court. An interesting act which incensed the court was when Muslim prayed before the grounds of the Resident’s Magistrate Court, Kisutu. Since the place was small Muslims had to move up to the road facing the

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\(^{18}\) *Bahari*, 11 Februari, 1993.  
court to pray. The afternoon rush hour traffic had to stop for a while to allow Muslims complete their prayer.

This act came to be presented by the Magistrate as a reason for not allowing bail because there still was tension since Muslims were assembling before the court and offer prayers on its grounds. Among those in remand prison were three Muslim boys who were attending primary school. When the police raided the house of Sheikh Salum Rajab leader of the Ansar to search for bombs, they also arrested the three boys. All attempts by lawyers to ask the court to release them from remand pleading their innocence as victims of circumstances and for their tender age were refused.  

Muslims formed an ad hoc committee which was to deal with the case and to mobilise and apprise Muslims of the current political climate in the country. The committee appeared in mosques in Dar es Salaam and presented the plight of Muslims in Tanzania. The committee organised *itkaf* (night supplication). In all these gatherings the message was: the government was anti-Muslim and pro-Christian,

\[20\] As luck would have it a few months after the arrests of these young Muslim boys, student of Tambaza Secondary School were involved in a brawl with a bus conductor and they beat the conductor to death. The boys were arrested and put under custody. All the boys involved in the case were Christians mostly from middle-upper class families. The Christian lobby went into action. The case was rushed through the court and all the boys released and the case dismissed. The reason given was that the students were leaders of tomorrow they are released so that they go back to school and do their examinations. As those boys walked away scot-free even after causing death the Muslim boys were languished in remand prison and when the case kept on being mentioned for a very long time because the bombs which were allegedly made by Sheikh Salum Rajab and members of the Ansar and those boys could not be produced as exhibits in court. The Christian lobby is everywhere it knows where justice should prevail and to what kind of people justice should be denied.

\[21\] *Kamati ya Kupigania Haki za Waislam.*
Muslims beware. The government and the Christian lobby were frightened by these events. The emergency cabinet meetings chaired by President Mwinyi discussed everything about the Muslim problem but its source. The government seemed to be satisfied in chasing the shadow of Muslim fundamentalism bogey.

BAKWATA’s response to the pork crisis dropped upon Muslims like a bomb shell. The Grand Mufti the late Sheikh Hemed bin Jumaa bin Hemed advised the government to make sure that Muslims who were remanded for allegedly demolishing pork butcheries get long prison sentences because they were dangerous people who after this would go to attack churches and breweries. There was no message from him to the government to reconsider its policy and stand or to re-examine by laws on pork rearing for the sake of national harmony. After several appearances the case being on mention the charge was withdrawn and Sheikh Kassim was set free after the court ruled out that his arrest and remand was unlawful. Out of remand prison, Sheikh Kassim continued to inspire Muslims in their demand for equal power sharing with Christians in all centres of authority and re-examined his relationship with President Mwinyi. Sheikh Kassim was arrested and charged once again as previously. On his second arrest security in broad daylight officers went to Mtoro Mosque to arrest Sheikh Kassim in the sight of his followers. Soon after Sheikh Kassim was released and charges withdrawn as before.

Khutba ya Sheikh Mkuu wa BAKWATA Hemed bin Juma aliyotoa kwenye Baraza la Maulid Mwanza 31 August, 1993.
The Last Days

Out of prison for the second time those close to him could not fail to notice that his health was failing. With his health failing Sheikh Kassim continued to inspire and mobilise Muslims with the same zeal. The establishment and the political system he had served for almost half of his adult life now alienated sheikh Kassim bin Juma treating him as a renegade. At this juncture Sheikh Kassims khutbas were melancholy and sad at times mentioning the names of Muslim patriots who had supported Nyerere during the struggle for independence but their roles have not been requited. He also mentioned Muslims who have betrayed fellow Muslims selling themselves to the government. In one of his memorable and most popular Jumaa khutba which his supporters have labelled as Leo Nitataja Majina (Today I Will Mention Names) Sheikh Kassim bin Juma talked about the patriotism of the late Abdulwahid Sykes and his support to Nyerere and TANU. He told his audience how upon the death of Abdulwahid he was asked by the family to prepare his body for burial which he did together with Maalim Matar. Maalim Matar was a victim of the Detention Act detained. Maalim Matar was in no way involved in politics. He was known in Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar for his piety and love of the Prophet SAW and for teaching Qur’an. In any Maulid he attended Maalim Matar would be given the honour recite the fatha signalling the beginning of Maulid. Maalim Matar was a sufi and a very likeable character. He always carried a tasbih for dhikr. He never indulged
himself in politics but was nevertheless detained by Nyerere seemingly for no apparent reason.

The mention of Maalim Matar was therefore not without meaning. Sheikh Kassim was in the game for too long not to have known that his *khutbas* were being monitored and Nyerere was listening in. Sheikh Kassim wanted purposely to embarrass Nyerere. Nyerere after being in full control of the country he severed his tie with Abdulwahid Sykes and other patriots who founded TANU. Nyerere did not want to recognise nor honour the contribution of Sykes in the founding of TANU although the party can be traced from his father who was the founding secretary of the African Association the predecessor of TANU. Sheikh Kassim was in other words defying Nyerere. Sheikh Kassim knew Nyerere’s psychology. The mention of Abdulwahid associating his name with Nyerere’s rise to power was like a sword piercing through Nyerere’s heart. Nyerere never mentioned the patriots who were in politics before him because he wanted the people to adore him and him alone as the founding father. It was clear that Sheikh Kassim was exposing him to Muslims as a swindler and an ungrateful guest who after enjoying the hospitality of his host spit on his face. In the last days of his life Sheikh Kassim was a person tormented and in deep anguish. His mind was reflecting of where he had come from and needed to undo certain memories. Sheikh Kassim knew he had dented the government and Nyerere’s reputation and confidence before the
eyes of Muslims. Sheikh Kassim bin Juma had built a very strong case against Nyerere, Church and government.

It was during this time that Sheikh Kassim's health deteriorating drastically was admitted into a mission hospital. The press could not resist the innuendo reporting that Sheikh Kassim was admitted in mission hospital in Dar es Salaam. The insinuation was there for all to see. Sheikh Kassim did not publicly reveal what actually happened to him when he was under police custody. 23 Sheikh Kassim was discharged and went to Mombasa where he died on 15 January, 1994. It was only after his death that a Swahili weekly paper Baraza reported that Sheikh Kassim was refused medical attention while under police custody. The paper accused the Minister of Home Affairs Augustine Mrema for causing the death of Sheikh Kassim. The government acted swiftly, the issue was rounded up in a single swoop and the newspaper banned.

Muslims in Dar es Salaam gave Sheikh Kassim funeral which will remain in their memory for many years to come. Just as they had for the last two years flocked his Mtoro Mosque to listen to his inspiring khutbas, so in thousands they came to morn his death. The government was fully represented at the funeral. President Mwinyi and the Prime Minister John Malecela came to be with Sheikh Kassim in his last journey. Nyerere was absent. Realising the political benefits to be

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23 Sheikh Kassim conferred to close confidants that he was tortured while in custody and denied medical attention.
reaped on Sheikh Kassim's funeral the state propaganda machinery was put into full gear. Muslims, Sheikh Kassim's friends and relatives were hushed and pushed back and propagandists hijacked the funeral turning it into a semi-state function. Conspicuously absent from the funeral were Christian cabinet Ministers and Augustine Mrema, the powerful Minister of Home Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister who had vowed to crush all ‘Muslims Fundamentalists’ in Tanzania.

**Conclusion**

Sheikh Kassim could have risen to greatness even without the support of Nyerere or state machinery because he had charisma. But Nyerere could not have succeeded in his plans to ban the EAMWS, arrest and detain his Muslims ‘enemies,’ deport Mufti Sheikh Hassan bin Ameir without the support of Sheikh Kassim bin Juma. Kassim Juma’s role and support was crucial to Nyerere in his effort to create a new solid power base he could trust. Nyerere’s creation of a new era went hand in hand with conceited efforts to re-write the political history of Tanzania wiping out completely the role of Muslims in the struggle for independence. The history of nationalism and that of TANU is today synonymous with the biography of Julius Kambarage Nyerere ‘The Father of the Nation.’

If President Mwinyi was aware that it was Sheikh Kassim who saved him from being impeached and toppled from power, he did not show any sign of appreciation, not towards Sheikh Kassim nor towards Muslims. If Sheikh Kassim thought he would in reciprocation receive
support of president Mwinyi in the cause he was fighting for, that support never came. Sheikh Kassim although he had supported President Mwinyi he had become a political pariah in the process and Mwinyi kept his distance. The state knew Sheikh Kassim had already crossed the floor to be counted and be identified with Muslims in their struggle against an unjust system. It is for this and nothing else that Muslims turned out in thousands to mourn the passing of Sheikh Kassim bin Juma bin Khamis. If President Mwinyi knew and his appreciation was the semi-state funeral, nothing could be more insulting to Sheikh Kassim's memory than that. But what is unique in the story of Sheikh Kassim in comparison to his fellow conspirators in the EAMWS crisis of 1968 is the fact that all of them died miserably suffering silently regretting their role in subverting the unity of Muslims in Tanzania in particular and East Africa in general. It was only Sheikh Kassim bin Juma bin Khamis among them all who paid Nyerere in his own coin and in broad daylight.

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