



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

CITATION ON

**MR. HASSANALLY MOHAMEDALLY RATTANSI**

ON HIS CONFERMENT OF

THE HONORARY DOCTOR OF LETTERS

(D.LITT.)

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

AT

**NAIROBI, KENYA**

ON

**30TH NOVEMBER, 1998**

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## CITATION ON

### MR. HASSANALLY MOHAMEDALLY RATTANSI

Mr. Hassanally Mohamedally Rattansi was born in Nyeri on 14th March, 1921. His father, Mohamedally, had settled in the newly-established boma of Nyeri after walking all the way from Nairobi at the turn of the Century.

Young Hassanally started his early education in a makeshift school in Nyeri. In 1931, Hassanally completed whatever schooling Nyeri could offer. He then enrolled in the Government Indian Senior Secondary School, now Jamhuri High School, in Nairobi. He passed his London Matriculation Examination in 1936 and hoped to study medicine or pharmacy in the United Kingdom. But his parents moved to Nairobi and left him and his elder brother to look after their Nyeri business. This abruptly cut short his ambitions for further education.

From these humble beginnings, he has had an illustrious career as a sportsman, businessman, civic official and philanthropist. Over the years, he has played a leading role in the development of sports in Kenya as a sportsman or sports administrator. He has held various elected positions in sports organizations dealing with cricket, lawn tennis and badminton. For example, he was Chairman of the Asian Sports Association in 1958-59, Kenya Table Tennis Association in 1962, and Kenya Lawn Tennis in 1965. He also served as Treasurer of Kenya Cricket Association in 1965 and the Kenya National Sports Coun-



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cil between 1966 and 1984. And between 1994 and 1997, he served as a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Kenya National Sports Council.

Equally, he has represented Kenya in the international arena. For instance, he was player-manager of the First East Africa Cricket Tour of South Africa in 1957, and team manager of the Kenya table tennis team to Cairo in 1962, and lawn tennis team to the first African Games in Brazzaville in 1965.

His love of sports is exemplary. It is this life-long commitment to sports that has led the Rattansi Educational Trust, of which he is a long-standing Chairman, to offer financial support to a variety of sporting bodies as well as purchasing sporting equipment for many educational institutions.

His civic duties have been multi-faceted. They include serving as a Councillor in the Nairobi City Council (1960-65) and being a member of the Board of Governors of Highway Secondary School, Kenya High School, and St. Theresa's Secondary School. He has also served as a member of His Highness The Aga Khan Nairobi Provincial Council and Nairobi Hospital Board.

But it is in the field of education where his contribution has been most significant. His parents established the Rattansi Educational Trust in 1956. Hassanally became the Chairman of the Trust in May 1962. Over the years, he has developed it into one of, if not, the leading chari-

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table organizations supporting post-secondary education and youth programmes in Kenya. In order to effectively do this, he sold his own business in 1987 in order to devote his energies and talents to the Trust. He has done this free of charge and on a daily basis for the last eleven years.

Like his father, he strongly believes in social justice and that education is vital for the advancement of individuals and Kenya as a whole. For this reason and since its inception, the Trust awards bursaries to deserving Kenyans drawn from polytechnics, teacher training colleges and local and overseas universities. For example, in 1998 alone, it has awarded bursaries of over sixteen million Kenya shillings. In this regard, University of Nairobi received one million shillings. Indeed, University of Nairobi has benefited from the Trust since the inception of cost-sharing policy in 1990-91 academic year.

The Trust has contributed to the education of many prominent Kenyans. To mention only a few, these include: Raju Batavia (Batavia Enterprises Ltd., Mombasa), the late Justice J.M. Gachuhi (Court of Appeal), Mohamed Hyder (Former Professor of Zoology and Principal, College of Biological and Physical Sciences, University of Nairobi), J.B. Karugu (former Attorney General), B.E. Kipkorir (former academic and Kenya's Ambassador to the United States) and Sadru Ramji (Wyco Paints, Nairobi).

Mr. Rattansi passionately believes in the value of sports.

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He has also an abiding faith in the youth of this country. For this reason, he fully participates in the administration of youth organizations, such as the President's Award Scheme of which he has been a member since 1966. Indeed, he has made the resources of the Trust available to other youth programmes, particularly the Outward-Bound School, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. This is a clear demonstration of his patriotism and commitment to the welfare of Kenya.

Finally, Mr. Rattansi is a scholar in his own right. Deeply religious, he avidly reads books on religion, world affairs and Kenya. In particular, he takes a keen interest in the history of Kenya. To this end, he has sponsored studies on the history and culture of Asians in Kenya and East Africa.

To date, this venture has yielded three books all written by Cynthia Salvadori. These are: *Through Open Doors: A View of Asian Cultures in Kenya*, published in 1983, *Two Indian Travellers*, published in 1997 and *We Came in Dhows*, 3 volumes, published in 1997.

Taking into account Mr. Rattansi's outstanding personal contribution to social justice, development of sports and philanthropic support to education in Kenya, the University of Nairobi is proud to award him the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*).