**The Life and Legacy of James Boro Karugu (1937–2023)**

**Early Life and Education** James Boro Karugu was born in 1937 in Kenya during the colonial period. Raised in a modest Christian family, Karugu's early life was shaped by discipline, integrity, and a deep respect for justice. He attended Alliance High School, one of the country’s most prestigious institutions, which laid the foundation for his intellectual and moral formation.

Karugu later earned a law degree from the University of Dar es Salaam, before proceeding to further his legal studies in the United Kingdom. He was called to the Bar at Lincoln’s Inn, one of London’s four Inns of Court, making him one of the few Africans at the time to receive legal training at such a high level.

**Legal Career and Rise to Attorney General** James Karugu returned to Kenya during a transformative era—the dawn of independence. He joined the State Law Office as a young prosecutor and quickly rose through the ranks due to his brilliant legal mind and incorruptible character.

In 1979, he was appointed Kenya’s second **Attorney General**, succeeding Charles Njonjo. At the time, the AG’s office was extremely powerful, combining the roles of chief government legal advisor and public prosecutor. Karugu stepped into this role with humility and a strong sense of duty.

**A Man of Principles** Unlike his predecessor, Karugu was a quiet, reserved man—more comfortable in the courtroom than on the political stage. His tenure, though short (1979–1980), was marked by a push for greater professionalism and ethics in Kenya’s legal system.

His strict adherence to legal integrity led to tensions with powerful figures within the ruling elite. Rather than compromise his values, Karugu resigned just a year into the job—a rare and brave move at the time.

**Later Life and Legacy** After stepping down as AG, Karugu retreated from public life and chose to live quietly on his farm in Kiambu. He avoided the limelight for decades, becoming something of a legend in legal circles—admired for his humility, legal intellect, and incorruptibility.

In his later years, Karugu remained engaged in private legal work and was often consulted informally on matters of national legal importance. Despite his short term in office, many regard him as one of the most principled figures ever to occupy the post of Attorney General in Kenya.

He passed away in **November 2023** at the age of 86.