

## Dr Stephen Cizario Odu Hakim

### *A pioneer, tutor and mentor*

As South Sudanese medical consultants have increased in the different specialties over the last several years, anaesthesiology has remained one of the rarest specializations. Dr Stephen Cizario Odu Hakim, aka Akeri, was among the few who took the step to specialize in anaesthesia and excelled in it.



Dr Stephen was born in Khartoum, Sudan, on 29 March 1979 to Cizario Odu Hakim of the Madi clan of Pandikeri of Opari Eastern Equatoria State and Mama Asunta Sadia.

He attended Juba Model Primary School from 1990 to 1998 and completed his secondary school certificate at Comboni Secondary School in Juba, South Sudan 2002.

Dr Stephen attended the University of Bahr el Ghazal College of Medicine and graduated with an MBBS degree in 2010.

In 2017, Dr Stephen obtained his Master of Medicine in Anaesthesia from Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

As one of the pioneers in anaesthesiology, his colleagues described him as a mentor, tutor, and dedicated servant. He impacted the lives of many young doctors who looked up to him.

He worked in several cities, including Juba, Raja, and Wau, where he is remembered as a hardworking and committed doctor.

Dr Koma Akim, his cousin, who is a general surgeon, has this to say about Dr Stephen: “Dr Akeri loved his work. He dedicated himself to providing anesthesia services to women and girls who underwent obstetrics fistula surgery repairs at Juba Teaching Hospital and the Lutheran Reconciliation Hospital, Hai Referendum, Juba. He loved his work so much that even though he was ill, he still cared for his patients. He once told me that ‘work is for the living.’ His work ethic encapsulated his beliefs, and he worked until his last moments.”

Dr Stephen passed away on 27 August 2024 after battling cancer for many years. He is survived by his wife, Gune Tongun Ladu Rombe, and their son and three daughters.