

DR PASCIENCE KIBATALA – THE QUINTESSENTIAL RURAL SURGEON

I regret to announce the transition of Dr Pascience Kibatala, the immediate past president of the International Federation of Rural Surgery, IFRS, on 11th January 2012 in Dar Es Salam, the Federal Republic of Tanzania. He could not attend the fourth biennial conference of IFRS that took place in Eruwa, Nigeria in November 2011 due to ill health.

In my report after attending the World Health Organization First Global Forum on Medical Devices that took place in Bangkok, Thailand in September 2010, I wrote the following about Pascience:

“This invitation (to the Global Forum) was facilitated by Dr Pascience Kibatala, a Tanzanian general surgeon and adviser to WHO.

“I met Dr Kibatala for the first time in August 2006 at the conference of the Association of Rural Surgeons of India, ARSI, that took place in Mehsana, India. I was in India looking after a friend and colleague who had renal transplant at Apollo Hospital in neighbouring Ahmedabad. We are overseas members of ARSI and shared the same hotel room during the conference.

“Dr Kibatala is a foundation member of the International Federation of Rural Surgery, IFRS, and was privileged to host its second conference in 2007 at his base, St Francis Designated Hospital, Ifakara, Tanzania. My wife, Atinuke and I in company of two other Nigerian doctors, J K Ladipo and R O Tijani attended the Ifakara conference relating with Pascience for the second time. During the conference, Dr Kibatala was elected the Vice-President (President -designate) of IFRS.

“In November 2009, the Association of Rural Surgical Practitioners of Nigeria, ARSPON, of which I am the national secretary and a foundation member, attended the third conference of IFRS in Pipalia Kalan, Rajasthan, India. During the conference, ARSPON was admitted into IFRS, Pascience was installed the president and I was elected the secretary of IFRS. We were both honoured with the fellowship of ARSI in recognition of our ‘significant contributions and dedication to the advancement of rural surgery’. That was the third encounter with Pascience.

“At the forum in Bangkok, I gave him a complimentary copy of the third edition of *Davey’s Companion to Surgery in Africa*. He was grateful and exclaimed that the second edition of the book was his ‘bible’ during his surgical training. I am the third editor of this edition with my teachers Professors A Adelaye and O O Adekunle. I am also privileged to be the publisher of the book.”

We will miss the wise counsel and comradeship of Pascience. We extend our commiserations to rural Tanzanians and his family for this great loss to humanity. May his soul rest in peace.

Oluyombo A Awojobi (Secretary, IFRS) from Nigeria.



Cultural night at Ifakara, 2007



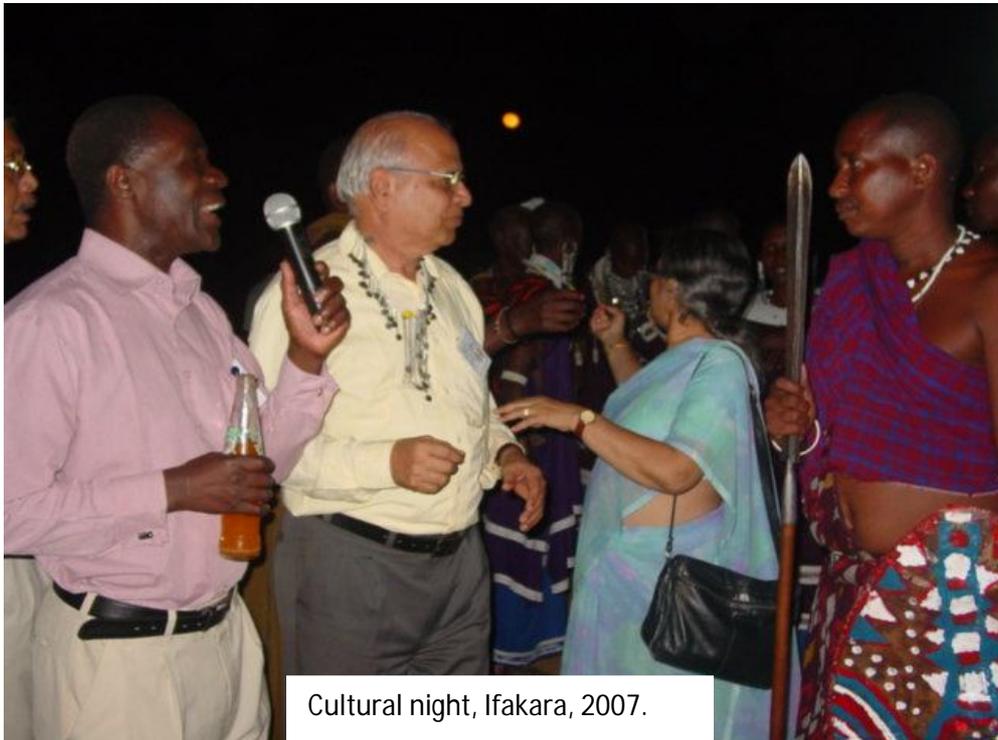
Opening ceremony at Ifakara, 2007



With the Nigerian contingent, Ifakara, 2007.



Arrival, Ifakara, 2007.



Cultural night, Ifakara, 2007.



World Health Organization, Bangkok, 2010



dear friends

I just got the message of the son of Kibatata that he passed away today, most probably due to diabetes

His son told me that it all went very suddenly and that shortly after he was taken to hospital he passed away

They will transfer his body to Ifakara where he will be buried

I expressed him and the family our sincere condolences on behalf of our group

I had Kibatata several times on phone calls about financial support last week where he made a somehow confused impression, but I never realized this could happen

I feel sorry and sad, he was a fantastic person full of ideas and plans about rural surgery and always enthusiast

Peter Reemst (Treasurer, IFRS) from Denmark.

Dearest Gabi, Thomas, Peter and friends,

The news of Kibatata's death was devastating indeed. Both I and Shipra were remembering our times with him (and also his late wife at Sivakasi).

He had attended ARSI conferences at least four times. He offered to host the second international conference at Ifakara in our first int. conference at Ujjain, India. He planned to start a (first ever) institute of rural surgery at Ifakara in Tanzania.

Unfortunately, he was transferred to their ministry in DarEsSalaam and then as a consultant in the WHO.

How did he die? Why should his family have financial difficulties after serving the WHO for five years? Gabi/Thomas/Peter please do take up this issue with say Meena Cherian. WHO should take care of its employee specially after an untimely death during service with the organisation..

The least we could do is perhaps to start an oration in his name in our biennial IFRS conferences. Also dear Gabi please do write an obituary in our newsletter in the next issue. The new editor is Prof. Dilip Gupta, head of surgery in MGIMS Wardha.

I am sending a copy of this letter to him with request to print this obituary in our April issue. His email address is <drdilipgupta@hotmail.com>

Best wishes.

Beny(J.K.Banerjee)

IFRS President, we the members of ARSPON mourn with you and the rest of the International Community on the painful exit of Dr. Kibatata Pascience. He was an amiable and humble person, very unassuming.

Many of us from Nigeria met him for the first time in Pipalia India during the 3rd IFRS International Conference and shared lots of memorable discussions with him.

We will miss him tremendously and may the Good Lord console the numerous friends and relatives that would miss him very much.

Yours truly, Dr. Afuka J. N. (National Secretary, Association of Rural Surgical Practitioners of Nigeria).

Dear WHO GIEESC members,

We wish you all a Very Happy and Healthy New Year 2012.

We were shocked to hear of the demise of our GIEESC member Dr Pascience Kibatata on 10 Jan (due to cardiovascular failure) as informed by his son Peter (shiganga_p@yahoo.com) to us. All of us will remember his contribution not only in the field of surgery but in public health in WHO GIEESC and Ministry of Health. He assisted in making the first WHO EESC collaborating center in St. Francis Ifakara District Hospital, Tanzania, hosting the 2nd WHO GIEESC meeting with MOH and putting EESC in the national health plan. He was an advocate for the value of access to proper surgical care in the development of health care systems. Above all his natural warmth and modesty he will be remembered by each and every one who was fortunate to interact with him.

We would like to thank you all for your enthusiasm to take the WHO GIEESC activities in 2012 forward and for the success of the WHO GIEESC meeting organised in collaboration with UCSD in 2011. We have a huge task ahead of us, hopefully led by each of the WHO GIEESC working groups, particularly in addressing the updating of WHO EESC tools, research database, mednet, fund raising, and emergency trauma training course for LMICs to strengthen their frontline surgical health workforce.

We will be putting together the WHO GIEESC meeting report next week for dissemination and look forward to working together through partnerships and collaborations.

Best wishes for 2012

Meena and Luc

Dr Meena Nathan Cherian MD

Emergency & Essential Surgical Care (EESC)

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Dear all,

We are all very sorry to know about the sad demise of Dr. Kibatata who was a thorough gentleman and a real well-wisher of rural surgery. We all will be missing him.

We all mourn his untimely death.

Ravi (Dr. Tongaonkar) from India.

Yombo,

Good day and let me quickly express my deep sympathy to our IFRS, through your office, on the passing on to glory of one of Africa's gift to our sprawling rural poor, health wise. His great contribution and sacrifice in this respect will be engraved in letters of gold. This will remain his eternal legacy! May his family take solace in these words. May the Lord grant the family and the rest of us the fortitude to bear this great loss.

Ewan Alufohai

Professor and Consultant Surgeon from Nigeria.

I am deeply saddened by the sudden death of one of my close friend Dr Pascience Kibatata, a kind, warm and brilliant person. We were more than a friend rather he was like my brother. In fact we used to address each other as brother. I consider myself fortunate to have known him as a sweet, loving and gentle personality. Many memories come alive. First time he visited India with his wife on my persuasion. We visited lot of places together in south during Shivakashi conference. He remained my guest in Delhi for couple of days. Whenever we met we used to have long chat and discussion about Indian mythology and culture for which he always showed great interest. Pascience never shared his own problem with others. I was not aware of his illness. During Ifakara conference also, he never disclosed his wife's serious illness till the last day of the conference. Though I knew about it, he requested me not to tell others so that the participants don't get panicky. Today, I indeed feel sorry that I won't have another opportunity to see him. May be God has a plan for him. My thoughts and prayers are with him. My heartfelt salute to my dearest friend Dr Pascience Kibatata. Let his soul rest in PEACE in the feet of ALMIGHTY. -S.K.Baasu from India.

Why was the Universe not made to keep wonderful people like him this side of the divide forever?
May the work he started go from strength to strength.

And his soul rest in peace.

Shima

Shima K Gyoh

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