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Zen Resort Bali Zen Resort Bali Shah: Swall

Sustainable
Humans
Leads to
Sustainable
Development

Dr Mahendra Shah has dedicated his life to Sustainable Development with multiple decades of work with the United Nations, the World International Science Bank, and Policy Research Institutions as well as investment policy adviser to Governments and private sector funds. In 2002 while participating in the UN preparatory meeting for the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, it really hit home that the world cannot be sustainable without human beings themselves being sustainable. Fast forward a few years, and Dr Shah is now prioritizing the sustainability of lifestyle through his luxury resort in Bali: "Zen Resort Bali", a holistic and wellness sanctuary where worn out bodies, minds and souls can rejuvenate and ind harmony with themselves, others and nature once again. Dr Shah spoke with our team at Unsubscribe about career choices, ethical business and environmental practice, and what makes Zen Resort Bali stand apart from the rest.



Words: UN Interview with Dr. Mahendra Shah



TELL US ABOUT THE RESORT AND WHY YOU ARE INVESTING IN BALL'S TOURISM INDUSTRY? WHAT DISTINGUISHES THE RESORT FROM OTHER RETREAT RESORTS IN THE REGION?

Why are human beings not sustainable? Simply because all around the world we are adopting or aspiring to adopt modern lifestyles, which comprise little time to prepare and eat nutritionally balanced food, combined with inadequate and regular exercises - physical, psychological and spiritual, stress at work, stress in the home and living in an evermore polluting world... we are left depleted.

cocktail of an unhealthy increasingly recognized as the cause of the emerging worldwide healthcare burden of diabetes, high blood pressure, mental stress, cancer, asthma and many more ailments and debilitating diseases. Thus in the 21st century we are facing, firstly a global emerging crisis of human health and the scope of this is such that most nations will not have the health care resources to confront the ailments and the diseases of modern lifestyles. Modern lifestyles are also resulting in our love of more and more consumerism and a "throwaway" society that is the fundamental source of the escalating land and water pollution around the world. This environmental destruction and degradation is the second major challenge facing the world in the 21st century.

After the Nusa Dua UN meeting I traveled around Bali and saw the uniqueness of the Balinese, with their spiritual depth and community-centred culture and societal welfare. All across Bali I experienced warm hospitality and also saw the Balinese traditions of holistic health – be it the community solidarity and welfare of the Banjar governance or the secrets of a Jamun drink or the healing and beauty pleasures of Mandi Lulur.

The rice fields, cocoa and clove plantations across the length and breadth of Bali highlighted the productive agro-ecology, conservation of the natural environment and the cultural heritage and healing ceremonies, not only seen but frequently practiced everywhere. This uniqueness of Bali convinced me that that this was the ideal place to develop a holistic wellness centre with a focus on confronting the challenges of modern lifestyles, both human health and the environment, in a resort setting.

I made the decision to search for a serene environment to establish such a resort and two years later in 2004, Zen Resort Bali came into being. At the outset we focussed on integrating ayurveda-yogameditation-pranayama-naturopathy in combination with Balinese wellbeing and spiritual healing practices. We made a conscious choice to locate Zen Resort in North Bali as this area had so much to offer in terms of a natural environment - serene beaches, a unique and rich marine environment ideal for diving, snorkeling, dolphin watching and watersports; rice fields, vineyards and fragrant tropical plantations, volcanoes and waterfalls, natural hot springs and sacred temples, and most of all friendly and cultured people with genuine hospitality.

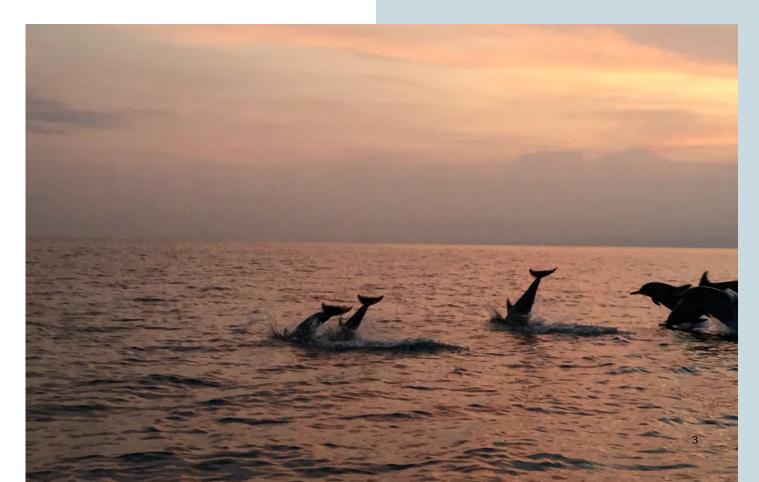
The other modern lifestyle challenge of increasing pollution and degradation of the environment lead us to develop Zen Harmony Diving. Four fifths' of our world is water and a fifth is land. A cubic meter of waste on land ends up in the ocean currents with a high probability of degradation and destruction of some 100 or more cubic meters of marine ecology and marine life. It is only a matter of time- perhaps no more than a few decades - when the oceans will strike back with fury causing wide destruction and degradation, putting at risk the Earth's life supporting capacity.

Our vision of developing Zen Resort Bali took shape in a concept that integrated holistic wellness with harmony diving, both ideally suited to the environment and potential of Bali as an international wellness and recreation vacation destination that provided services focused on enabling holidaymakers to restore and rejuvenate their health, as well as learn and experience how to change their modern lifestyles towards more healthy and sustainable living. We recognize that international and national tourists are increasingly seeking health and wellness destinations where they can recuperate and heal from the stresses and strains of modern work and living. This combination of holistic wellness and recreation can help make lifestyle changes towards more sustainable and healthy living in harmony with nature as well as one's self and fellow-beings.

At Zen Resort we encompass strategies that are socially, economically and ecologically sustainable. We use solar power to produce hot water and we cycle grey water in the resort to green our landscape environment as well as irrigation to grow organic vegetables and culinary and medicinal herbs. We inancially support local small-scale information and education on sustainable ishing and marine conservation. We facilitate employment and other livelihood opportunities for the local community, develop and market local food, health and beauty products, advise local farmers on crop agronomy, especially medicinal plants. Furthermore, we promote subsidized holiday stays for doctors and the healthcare community willing to give a few days of their holiday for local community health and education services.

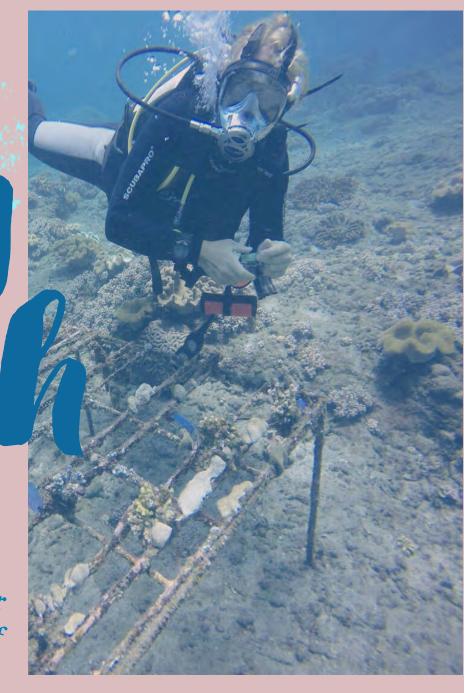
Over the years we have seen the appreciation and personal satisfaction of Zen guests, many of whom, especially group retreats, actively participate in a wide range of above activities as well as organizing topical seminars and discussions that enhance mindfulness towards making healthy lifestyle and sustainable living choices. Over the last decade, Zen Resort Bali has created a model environment for the concept of holistic wellness and its practical development. It has achieved this by prioritizing a holistic and wellness approach that coordinates body, mind and spirit in a serene and spiritual environment. With this in view, the goal is to create and develop Zen Resorts around the world, each one adapted uniquely to local conditions. In 2015, Zen Resort initiated negotiations in The Netherlands to launch and develop an integrated wellness resort in combination with a think tank/institute of traditional and modern medicine and an institute of herbal medicine in Europe, towards confronting the challenges of preventive, restoring and curative health care for the ailments and diseases of modern lifestyles. These discussions are ongoing and currently we are in the process of identifying partners in India in a similar manner.

A decade of operations and guest experiences and comments has demonstrated that our decision to invest in Bali in a holistic wellness and recreation resort was right the one and we are convinced that this model can and needs to be replicated around the world. Currently we are working towards this goal with ongoing negotiations in Norway, Iceland, Latvia, Holland, Spain, India, USA, Brazil and New Zealand.



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YOU HAVE HAD SUCH A COLOURFUL CAREER. CAN YOU SHARE SOME OF THESE WITH US AND TALK ABOUT CAREER CHANGES NAVIGATING LIFE'S SURPRISING OPPORTUNITIES?

My professional work over some four decades has been concerned with sustainable development, food security, climate change, international negotiations, holistic wellness, integrative medicine, sustainable living and modern lifestyles. My passion for human health and the sustainability of human beings began at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, where I had the honour to coordinate and prepare the 1992 Earth Summit report "The Global Partnership for Environment and Development – A Guide to Agenda 21".

I was born of Indian parents in Kenya and had most of my schooling there. I did my university education in the UK and in 1971 I left my alma mater Cambridge to return to Kenya. I joined the University of Nairobi and the Kenyan Ministry of Economic Planning; interestingly my research and policy would include participating in the development of Kenya's Fourth Development Plan, designing the first "automatic light signals" traffic system for the City of Nairobi and designing strategic planning for Kenya's Rural Development including Wildlife areas.

In 1976 I was invited by the Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (an international science and policy institute established in 1972, in response the President Lyndon Johnson of the USA call, "it is time that scientists of the United States and the Soviet Union worked together on problems other than military and space matters, on problems that plagued all advanced societies, like energy, our oceans, the environment, health" I joined the Food and Agricultural program at IIASA and lead the team to partner with FAO on Global Agroecological assessment of world population supporting capacity, food security as well as global climate change and agricultural vulnerability.

In 1984, I was called upon by the United Nations Development Program to join the special office, at UN Headquarters in New York, set up to respond to the famine emergency across Africa. I was appointed as Director of Information for planning and mobilizing timely and effective emergency aid to the famine-affected population across some 35 countries. Over a period of some 2 years we mobilized integrated relief aid of some USD 4.5 billion. We also partnered with Live Aid and Bank Aid to mobilize and commit civil society and Governments to respond adequately and in a timely manner to the evolving famine emergency, especially the million of displaced people.

This period of some three years in New York, often with field visits across Africa, was one of the most emotionally enlightening and at the same time humbling experiences of my professional work. The international media reported the work of this UN office as one of the most successful relief aid operations carried out by the international community, saving millions of lives during the Africa-wide famine.

From 1988 to 1989 I was appointed as Director of Planning for the UN Office for Afghanistan to develop a recovery, rehabilitation and development plan for Afghanistan in the aftermath of the departure of the Russian troops. Whilst I was based in Geneva, I went on a number of missions to Afghanistan and also Pakistan, where we developed a good plan for recovery and rehabilitation plan in the aftermath of the departure of the Russian troops. However the fighting between various Mujahideen Jirga meant that most almost donor countries that had promised aid simply walked away from Afghanistan, leaving more half of the Afghan population to live for in refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran. Many of these Afghan refugees have been in the same refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran and they are the forgotten people with a generation of young adults born and brought up in camps. It is no wonder that so many to this day risk their lives across oceans to reach safe haven across the Mediterranean Sea and elsewhere.

In 1991 I was called on by the Secretary General of the UN Conference on Environment and Development to join their secretariat in Geneva and New York to prepare and coordinate at the Earth summit report, Agenda 21 for Environment and Development. This was an intensive period of work on putting the world on notice that sustainable development was not an option but absolutely imperative. The Earth Summit Rio1992 report was comprehensive and globally endorsed but some 163 Governments leaders and yet the many of major rich nations walked away without any financial commitments for actions to implement Agenda21. This was heartbreaking as, for example, the issues of global climate change and worldwide biodiversity loss as well as hunger and poverty were recognized as major 21st century challenges in the addition to the issues of poverty and debilitating hunger that affected a fifth of the world's population.

In 1997, I was appointed as Executive secretary of the CGIAR Systems Review. The CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research), based at the Word Bank in Washington DC, comprises of 16 agricultural research centres round the world that have contributed to crop and livestock agricultural research and developed high yielding varieties an agricultural management systems that have been the foundation of the food and agricultural breakthroughs such as the 1970s Green Revolution that more than doubled world food production and saved million from the potential threats of famines, especially the high population countries such India and China.

At the CGIAR I had the honour to author with the late Maurice Strong, the World Bank book entitled "Food in the 21st century – from Science to Sustainable Agriculture". During my three 3 years with the CGIAR, I also had the privilege to work closely with Dr Emil Salim of Indonesia in preparing the recommendation for positioning the CGIAR in the emerging challenges posed by the private sector focus on intellectual property rights on, the most fundamental of human rights, that of food. The world community needs to revisit the legal and the humanitarian considerations of IPR, especially as related to fundamental human rights such as that of food as well as patenting of life forms.





In early 2001, I returned to IIASA in Austria to work as a Senior Scientist on Climate change and agriculture. I joined the team to prepare a first global report on Climate Change and Agricultural Vulnerability. I had the honour to present this report and the results at the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit n Sustainable Development. My research at IIASA until 2008 focussed on food security, climate change, international negotiations and sustainable development.

During the first decade of the 21st century, there had been a growing public outcry around the world for policy actions to confront climate change. In 2008 Germany was the first country to announce specific policy actions to grow biofuels towards "reducing" carbon emissions and thus climate change. Soon after, another 20 countries joined the stampede and adopted time-bound policy targets to produce biofuels.

The OPEC Fund for International Development commissioned the Food and Agricultural group at IIASA to produce an independent scientific and policy relevant report on the impacts of growing biofuels on food prices, food security, deforestation and land degradation, carbon emissions and climate change. The report highlighted that first generation biofuel crops such as corn in the USA, rapeseed in Europe, Jethropa in Mozambique and cassava in Thailand would not result in any carbon savings and in fact would lead to deforestation, land degradation, higher food prices and increased world food insecurity.

Our report was highly commended by the international scientific and policy community for its global, regional and national coverage and systemic analytical assessments, that captured the reality of escalating food prices and consequential food riots, as in many food insecure countries in 2008.

This OFID-IIASA report became a subject of the Wikileaks as a IIASA national council member, representing the country's agricultural lobby, pressurised the IIASA Directorate to withdraw the already published and internationally released report that in fact had been cleared with a Forward to the report written by the IIASA Director. This situation contrarian to IIASA's founding principles of academic freedom and independent research, left me as a principal author of the report, confronted with the ethical and moral principals of science and policy in the interest of sustainable development. I had no choice but to resign and bring to an end a 17-year very productive and satisfying professional carrier at IIASA.

As it happened, within a matter of weeks, I was appointed as Director of Qatar National Food Security Program in Doha. The next eighteen months were a period of not only planning and development of Qatar's food security policies but also implementation of national policy and investment actions. My work in Qatar also gave birth to the idea of a Global Dry Land Alliance to tackle the problems of dryland agriculture, which affected a third of the world's arable land and comprised some 40% of the world's farmers. It had been a pleasure to be part of the QNFSP and the time came in passion to mobileze sustainable humans for sustainable development

For me has been an amazing professional and humanitarian career path, where one assignment lead to another, across multidisciplinary social, economic and environmental issues at national, regional and global levels. Now I am devoting more and more time to the issues of sustainable human beings and the challenges of human health and environmental protection; my wish is for another few decades of work to see the realty of a world of sustainable lifestyles and restoration and rejuvenation of our one Earth and one world for future generations.

WHERE DOES BUSINESS INTERSECT WITH HEALTH AND ETHICS? WAS THERE A TRIGGER IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE FOR WAITING TO PURSEUE A CROSS BETWEEN HEALTH AND BUSINESS

The human right to health means that everyone has the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; this includes access to all medical services, sanitation, adequate food, decent housing, healthy working conditions, and a clean environment and that hospitals, clinics, medicines, and doctors' services must be accessible, available, acceptable, and of good quality for everyone, on an equitable basis, where and when needed.

Health care around the world has become a business, so often driven by, "if you do not have the money, go somewhere else to seek what you need" and yet health has been endorsed as a fundamental universal human right. Governments around the world are in concert with the medical and the pharmaceutical industry, both of which are projects to grow exponentially with the rise of ailments and diseases of modern lifestyles.

And yet the ethical vision and practice of medicine and healthcare, be it Hippocrates oath of modern medicine or the Ayurveda oath of traditional medicine stress the delivery of healthcare as human right duty without consideration of monetary payments in cash or kind. It is time the practitioners of traditional and modern medicine put into practice their sacred oath when they receive their license to practice medicine and healthcare.

The trigger in my life was in Bali in 2002, when I realized that having spent some three decades professional working on sustainable development, I had missed the key aspect of it in that human beings themselves need to be sustainable. Asking whether we were I realized the answer was not only no but that humanity is totally out of control as more and more people adopt modern lifestyles. Thus began my commitment and passion to focus on integrative medicine and sustainability of human beings and the environment in a resort setting. Yes development of Zen resort has been most gratifying and satisfying and the evidence is simply the gratitude and genuine tears of appreciation that all staff see and feel and when guest come to the end of their holiday at Zen.



WHAT ROLE DOES THE OCEAN PLAY IN YOUR RESORT? CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE HARMONY DIVE IN MORE DETAIL? WHAT DOES THE RESORT DO TO ENSURE CONSERVATION OF THE OCEAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IN ITS PRACTICE?

We hold in the highest regard our Earth's Oceanic Water World. The world's oceans and seas are the lifeblood of our Earth, covering more than 70 percent of the planet's surface, driving weather, regulating temperature, and ultimately supporting all living organisms. They are home to millions of species, flora and fauna, most of which remain unknown. This undiscovered wealth of the Oceans may hold the means for our sustainable future and the welfare of generations to come. We have the responsibility to increase public awareness and actions towards protecting and conserving the world's sacred oceanic resource.

Besides experiencing the beauty and amazing diversity of the marine world, Scuba diving and snorkelling offers a unique pathway to health and fitness through the effective practice of controlled underwater breathing, meditative relaxation and free flow physical exercise in an underwater environment some 800 times the density of air. Thus the oceans have the potential to deliver human health and fitness benefits through, for example physical, mental, emotional and spiritual therapy that is critical to confronting the globally emerging ailments and diseases of modern lifestyles.



Zentsu



Zentsu

Whilst some three billion people in the world live in coastal areas with easy access to the oceans, less than 60 million people have experienced scuba diving and snorkelling. For most people, the anxiety of the underwater world, lack of diving knowledge and skills, complexity of equipment and affordability are the main barriers to diving. Zen Harmony Diving is a unique concept that unites the best of yoga, Ayurveda & scuba diving and enables scuba divers & snorkelers to discover the beauty and amazing diversity of marine life whilst experiencing an exceptional pathway to human health and fitness through the effective practice of underwater controlled breathing, meditative focus and free flow physical exercise.

Our shared vision at Zen Harmony Diving (ZHD) is to co-create and revolutionize the world of diving to substantially increase the community of scuba divers and snorkelers; through their leadership, enhance wider public awareness of the need to change our interface with all forms of marine life and protect the oceanic world, our largest and most precious natural resource.

Human beings spend the first nine months of life in the womb, essentially in a water medium. Most people do not breathe air effectively and efficiently and this is the most critical need for a health and wellness. From the day of our birth, we assume we know how to breathe because it is "natural". Zentsu[™], an adaptation of Watsu, is an important part of Zen harmony Diving. It has been specially designed to release present and hidden tensions in the body that might prevent Scuba Divers and Snorkelers totally immersing themselves in the water world. A number of our scuba divers and snorkelers guests have described the Zentsu[™] experience as bringing back the deep and secure memories of the first nine months of life in the womb. The benefits of Zentsu[™] are that as we become totally blended with the environment, resistance disappears and we experience a whole new realm of possibilities. When practiced in the pool or the ocean for a just a few minutes of floating and water relaxation exercises, it is particularly beneficial for rapid relaxation and body alignment.

WHAT IS INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AND WHAT BENEFITS DOES THE RESORT PROMISE FOR GUESTS?

A fifth of the world's population - 'the rich' considered purely on income per capita levels - rely on modern medicine that is based upon the "western model" of evidence-based practice for diagnosing and treating health ailments and diseases. And another fifth, which are poor, more often than not depend upon traditional, holistic medicine that has evolved from generation to generation over thousands of years, accumulating knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences of diverse people around the globe.

Given these diverging trends, the challenge for our generation today is to think how we can practically bridge traditional and modern medicine with a focus on a holistic integration of preventive and curative as well as restoring and sustaining health. More importantly, we need to think how it might possible to transform modern lifestyles into sustainable ones.

The holistic integration has to be based upon a partnership that looks upon the human being as a whole living organism rather than merely a combination of parts, systems and symptoms. The ancient wisdom of traditional medicine and indigenous healing practices are being increasingly embraced across the Western world, and a global revival is organically evolving. Ayurveda, Chinese medicine, herbalism, and shamanic practices have taken their place in the modern seeker's lifestyle as many turn away from the reductionist and impersonal approach often experienced in modern medicine.

We're building a global network of modern-traditional wellness practitioners committed to incorporating multi-disciplinary interventions and applying integrated therapeutic measures. Also recognizing that all clinical aspects of the individual patient condition must be considered to achieve the core goal of optimal health and healing. We have found that traditional diagnosis of body impurity levels and a multi-dimensional approach to diet and detox facilitates an effective wellness practice to change course and begin a new life for those stressed out with modern lifestyles. In a world increasingly confronted by the emerging burden of the ailments and diseases of modern lifestyles, the practitioners of modern and traditional medicine need to heed their respective oaths of service and care towards mobilizing their science and practices to deliver the right mix of preventive-curative medicine towards restoring health and healing the body, mind & spirit.



HOW DOES ZEN RESORT BALI "UNSUBSCRIBE"? HOW DO/HAVE YOU?

'Unsubscribing' is an often forgotten aspect of life and living. It is essential to unsubscribe from time to time to enhance good health and wellbeing, especially the stresses and strains of modern living.

1. Unsubscribe: Zen Resort Bali

The Nirvanam Sanctuary at Zen Resort Bali is a sacred spiritual place where all Zen guests go to unsubscribe and so do all our staff and I.

My mind argues that the development of the vision, concept and practices of Zen Resort Bali is an outcome of a combination of my background and experiences, namely an Indian heritage, a African upbringing, a European education and an International profession that entailed working in some 10 countries and visiting more than a hundred around the world. However my heart tells me that it was a square meter of land in Zen Resort that pulled me to Bali. This piece of land in our Nirvanam sanctuary has seen an everincreasing number of guests being able to "let go" and liberate themselves from the ills of the past and begin a new journey of fulfilment of aspirations and goals of living a life of harmony.

2. Unsubscribe: Zen Harmony Snorkelling in the Swimming Pool

Put on a full-face mask, and snorkel up and down the length of a swimming pool. Learn "unconsciously" and without effort to breathe effectively and efficiently, to focus meditatively on the pool floor tiles and to exercise gently whilst swimming. Recall the world of water, the security of the first formative 9 months of life in the womb, the 75% of you that is water and remember the life on Earth began with a drop of water and that 80% of the world

3.Onsubscribe: Joy and . USossow-A book of poem about-for children

On my travels, I carry a small book of poems, "Joy and Sorrow" that in times of mindfulness I open to unsubscribe.

In early April 2003, I was in London watching the BBC 10 O'clock evening news reporting the plight of an 11-year-old boy, Ali Abbas, laying a bed in a Baghdad hospital, with arms amputated and a blackened burnt body. This brought back memories of my own field visits to Ethiopia and Sudan in 1984 during the famine emergency across Africa. Ali was the living victim of collateral damage of a missile attack during the US invasion of Iraq in early 2003.

In the middle of the night, I sat down and drafted a letter to editor of the Guardian, "The Plight of Ali....Where is the US Air Force, Where is the Royal Air Force, Where is the India Air Force?....Is here no Air Force General that can commandeer a military bomber, and take Ali safely to Washington or London or New Delhi where there is morphine?!" I sent this letter and it was published two days letter; and a day later Prime Minster Tony Blair announced in parliament that the Royal Force would take Ali to Kuwaiti hospital."

A few weeks later a lady, from North England wrote to me and asked about who I was and about my work...she had seen the news and read my letter....I sent her some of my written work. In 2006, out of the blue, I received a book of poems, entitled "Joy and Sorrow". This book comprising children's' everyday living experiences in the developed and developing world, was not only dedicated to me.

Over group dinner to celebrate this book of poetry, a friend in Vienna said that it is not often that the words of a scientist are turned into poetry, emphasizing that art and literature are the everlasting heritage of humankind and not material creations. These words ring in my head very often and I turn to this little book, recalling the brilliance of the author in turning words from science, humanity and policy into poems that highlight the life and living of children, be they in the developing or developed world. This little book has become my comfort shawl to unsubscribe during my travels and remind me to pursue a life of living in harmony.



