

RENEWED RESURGENCE

In September, Satish Kumar celebrates 50 years of Resurgence & Ecologist – the magazine he has edited for 43 years. Today he reflects on his learnings and hopes for the social justice movement as he steps down from the magazine following his 80th birthday.

photography CONSCIOUS FRONTIERS words CHRIS YONG

The pathway

When you understand peace, you have to remember that there are three levels. Peace within yourself, between ourselves and with our planet Earth. You require all three to move forward.

The reason why there are so many political and social conflicts in today's world is because we are not at peace with ourselves, and we won't achieve global peace without that inner harmony.

We need to rise above our divisions as humans, and the challenge is that we are currently divided into factions. Political wars stem from conflict in national interests, and as nations we divide ourselves. We further divide ourselves religiously and ideologically; we say that one truth is better than another.

I want to transform that division into a harmony and appreciation of diversity. That challenge is the same today as when I began my walk for peace 54 years ago. I wanted to foster unity between people and nations, and to do that I needed to harness trust between people – and I did so by letting go of my possessions and placing myself in the services of strangers. I walked over 8000 miles, crossing Pakistan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, France and Belgium among other countries. I caught ships to America and Japan and I walked, meeting people and sharing with them my message of peace and learning from their experiences, their cultures and embracing our differences. The pilgrimage forged borderless kinships in the name of people,

planet and progress. It took two and a half years to complete, and there was one over-arching message that became evidently clearer throughout the trip: we are one earth, we have one future, and we have one destiny as humans.

A new era for Resurgence

As editor of Resurgence, I have spent 43 years promoting ecology, social justice, sustainability and spirituality. Along my walk I met people who were part of the movement, who envisioned the same future and together we have helped shape Resurgence.

I became editor of Resurgence in 1973 and I'm proud that we've been working towards eradicating injustice and the exploitation of people, and underlining the importance of respecting our environment.

We still have many challenges ahead of us – we need to reshape the systems that accept inequality and create a better future for all people. Inaugurating a new era for Resurgence we are hosting 'One Earth, One Humanity, One Future' – a landmark festival bringing together 50-plus leading social, economic and political activists who will share ideas and inspiration for creating a fairer, more sustainable world.

This event is particularly poignant, as it provides a continuum for the interlinked endeavours of my peace walk, Resurgence, and the wider green movement. It's a chance to reflect on what we have already achieved, and to

refocus and ignite our dedication for forging the future we want to build. We need to think carefully about the world we want to live in and address the issues which can help us change our collective thinking.

This celebratory event reminds us that the future we envisage is possible. We have ended apartheid, we are putting out slavery, the Berlin Wall has fallen, and female leaders direct the affairs of some of our most influential nations – we have proven time and again that change can happen.

A reflection

As I step down as editor-in-chief of Resurgence, I leave the magazine in a very healthy position, and with a dedicated following. Resurgence is both a catalyst and a community, which can continue to bolster the environmental movement. There are astounding organisations which are changing the world, and they shouldn't alter the fabric and identity of who they are. But I call on them to remember that we need a global movement; an environmental movement which stretches beyond our individual aims – and to consider ourselves to be part of that bigger movement.

We need to collectively focus on positive transformation. Be that social, political or environmental. I want to bring us back to the theme of harmony. Be at peace, build a movement, and rise above the differences which separate us. Let's share these ideas – and work together.

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ABOUT RESURGENCE

Today published as Resurgence & Ecologist, the magazine is a thought forum for environmental and social issues. Satish Kumar will be stepping down as editor-in-chief of the magazine and its websites, but will continue to manage the Resurgence Trust, the educational charity which publishes the magazine and its two websites. The One Earth, One Humanity One Future festival at Worcester College, Oxford (22-25 September) will celebrate 50 years of Resurgence and galvanise action for a more equitable and sustainable world.

WWW.RESURGENCE.ORG/R50EVENT

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