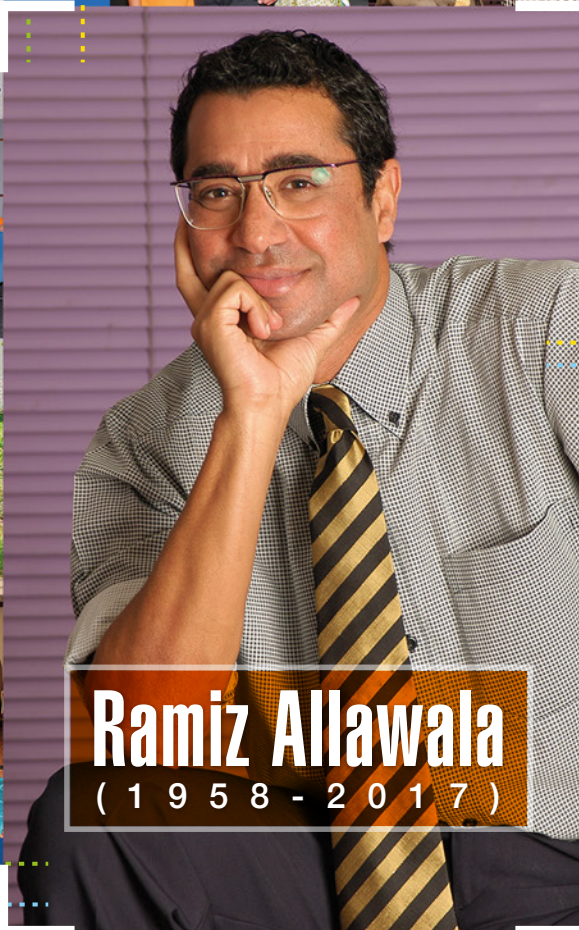
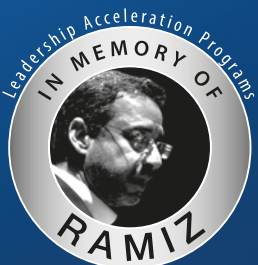


# Remembering RAMIZ ALLAWALA

on his 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
13, February 2021



**Ramiz Allawala**  
( 1 9 5 8 - 2 0 1 7 )





# OCTARA EVENTS FROM PAST

Extracted from Octara.com Newsletter - Issue 22 / 2017



**Ramiz Allawala**  
( 1 9 5 8 - 2 0 1 7 )

## A MAN TO REMEMBER

While Hillary Clinton and the US State Department may have faltered and failed in their multibillion dollars campaign to win hearts and minds in Pakistan, Ramiz Allawala succeeded beyond all measure as evidenced by the outpouring of affection for him from pretty much around the world once he had passed on to his immortal abode. He reveled in repartee, his razor sharp wit drawing upon a formidable store of knowledge that he kept updated, relishing an engagement with formidable minds. And yet he was a simple man with few needs and a heart of gold.

Born into a wealthy community of seasoned and highly respected entrepreneurs, the Punjabi Saudagars of Delhi, Ramiz Allawala was an outlier and followed in the footsteps of his dad, the formidable Ahmad Allawala, breaking away from the pursuit of material wealth, and bringing to bear his phenomenal store of passion driven energy on the pursuit of knowledge and adding value to the lives of fellow human beings. By most accounts Ramiz was a saint with a mischievous glint in his eyes; a warrior saint who found opportunity in adversity to better oneself. With all this talk of disruption and reinvention that has recently become the fad of the corporate world, Ramiz was disrupting and reinventing corporate lives much before the gurus began talking about it.

As CEO of Gulfstone Training for 18 years and 2 months, Ramiz was committed to bringing major shifts in current leadership capabilities. His firm's core strength being the helping of client organizations and their employees apply critical learning rapidly and effectively. That is one agenda that needs rolling out across the board on a war footing if Pakistan is to blast its way out of the restrictive and handicapping quagmire of the Third World suffering from a perpetual paralysis of analysis.

Ramiz Allawala's specialties were strategic thinking, conflict resolution, problem solving and solutions, values based decision making and corporate ethics, negotiations and persuasive communications, all vital for the establishment of prosperity, peace and progress in a world gone VUCA – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous.

## Mushy and teary eyed remembrance

The Pakistan Society of Training and Development (PSTD) first floor hall was packed with Ramiz's pals, colleagues and family. Karen, Alina, Alisa and Zach were there as also was Mr. Iqbal Allawala, Ramiz's uncle. Azeez Allawala, the eldest and only surviving sibling of Ramiz, and a dear old friend, spoke on behalf of the family along with Ramiz's daughter Alisa who made the audience feel mushy and teary eyed with her very personal remembrance and tribute to her father. Knowing Ramiz one can only hazard a guess at the kind of bond he shared with his kids, the depth of which became evident as Alisa spoke, with her siblings Alina and Zach sitting quietly and discovering through other people's eyes what a great chap their father was, something they already knew.

***“Unless we celebrate such people we will not be able to capture the essence of their contributions” – Khalid Awan***

Mr. Khalid Awan, the Chairman TCS, was lost for words when asked for his thoughts on Ramiz's passing, and then came back forcefully, declaring that we must ensure Ramiz's agenda is vigorously promoted and pursued to enable the dawning of a new era. Referring to a recent publication, 'The Rise and Fall of Nations', he said that the strengths and weaknesses of a society could be ascertained by looking at their rich and famous and how they attained their preeminent positions – by making great bets; through political patronage; or by building institutions and focusing on developing other people. “Mian Abdul Ghani, the man behind the PSTD, was a great Pakistani. Unless we celebrate such people we will not be able to capture the essence of their contributions. Ramiz inspired and motivated thousands of people.”



***“I knew he had what it took to be a first rate trainer” – Jamil Janjua***

Jamil Janjua, the CEO Octara and co-host with the PSTD of Ramiz's remembrance day, emceed the occasion, and spoke of his own association with Ramiz that dated back two decades and more. “In the early 1990s I was working with TCS, and we had differences amongst the leadership which is normal in progressive organizations. One day Mr. Khalid Awan invited Ramiz to speak to us all. He walked into a boardroom full of senior executives, slowly took off his jacket, loosened his tie and rolled up his sleeves. The body language was clear. It was time for action! For the next two and a half hours he mesmerized all of us. He talked about the value of empathy and listening with a view to understanding and not just framing a reply, and the centrality of teamwork and pulling together in the pursuit of excellence. At the end of it the atmospherics inside the boardroom had undergone a qualitative change for the better. That is my first recollection of Ramiz. I knew he had what it took to be a first rate trainer.



Later when I joined the British Council and put together a leadership series I asked him to come onboard, and that started him off in the corporate training field, becoming the most asked for trainer in the corporate world.”

Ramiz could engage in equally earnest dialogues at the CEO level as with the tea-boy level, said Jamil Janjua, and on a more personal note he said that Ramiz had a voracious appetite and was an unusual dresser who complimented the clothes that he wore rather than the clothes complimenting him.

***“Ramiz helped us out of a serious jam at the Habib Bank in 2001” – Zafar Usmani***

Zafar Usmani, a valued enabler of the Pakistan Society of Training and Development (PSTD), was there on the 5th of March 2017 when Octara organized a Memorial Day for Ramiz at the beautifully appointed and very impressive premises of the PSTD.



“Ramiz helped us out of a serious jam at the Habib Bank in 2001. At the time HBL had one of the most difficult labour unions in its history, representing some 18,000 members and prone to getting violent. I was in a flap and told Ramiz I had never before dealt with such people. He came up with the perfect solution, and organized a negotiating skills training workshop which was attended by the management team and the labour union leaders, two sets of diametrically opposed participants acutely hostile to each other, sitting face to face for two days while Ramiz took our class with a focus on achieving win-win outcomes, which we did, to the amazement of all people.”

***“He helped us out in our darkest hour” – Zaufyshan and Haseeb Hasan***

Then there were those colleagues, friends and admirers of Ramiz who sent in their condolences and remembrances via video, not being able to grace the occasion themselves. Rehan Allahwala sent Ramiz's career synopsis that highlighted his many achievements. Kamran Rizvi spoke of him as a



giant of a man, and his first meeting with him in 1998 at the British Council workshop where he spoke of ethos, pathos and logos, leaving an indelible mark on his mind. Zafar Ahmed referred to him as his buddy, a word that summed up his relationship. Hammad Siddiqui called him a very helpful, great soul, and Haseeb T. Hasan saluted the man who had helped him out during the darkest period of his life. “Ramiz and Karen were there for Zaufy and I in Karachi those days, and we owe them so much. They recommended that both of us start our own business and today, by the grace of Allah, Zaufy and I have been working for 21 years based on their advice.”

Zaufyshan Haseeb called Ramiz a true warrior and spoke of his unconditional acts of giving to those in need.





## ***“Less grief and more disbelief” – Crystal Heart Kazmi***

Imran Owais Kazmi, also known as Crystal Heart Kazmi, called Ramiz public property that was attached to everybody, and said that he felt less grief and more disbelief, with a part of him not willing to accept that Ramiz was no more.

**When Ramiz relocated to Northfield in Minnesota (USA) true to form he developed some tight friendships. Wayne Eddy, former president of the Minnesota Broadcasters Association, and anchor of The One 95.1FM, brought together some of Ramiz's friends there to reminisce. Major (R) Bruce W. Morlan (USAF) spoke of him as the most curious person he had ever met, and Teri Knight said that Ramiz's light is so bright still that it shines through the valley of death. Jeff Johnson was struck by Ramiz's ability to make people feel good about themselves and the world which is something one cannot replace.**



because it's such a downtime when you're taking chemotherapy. We would not just talk about his cancer, but about everything and anything.

My Bible group as a Christian prayed for him to our God to help him get through this. When I went through some surgeries he prayed to Allah for me. I think we are both blessed for those prayers. I have done over 2000 interviews or more in my lifetime, and I would say Ramiz was the very best of all. I've done senators, athletes, politicians, doctors, criminals, and all sorts of people, and Ramiz is on the top. He was quite the guy. He loved his second home away from his beloved Karachi. We talked about Pakistan and he told me all about it. We didn't talk about war and peace between countries. We just knew that he being a Pakistani and me being an American liked and loved each other, and that was good enough for us.”



*Karen Allawala planting a tree in remembrance of Ramiz at PSTD, Karachi*



*Tree planted in remembrance of  
Mian A. Ghani, founder of PSTD*



*Karen with  
Chacha Iqbal Allawala*



*Karen with Jamil Janjua, M. Arif & Jason Bosco from Octara*



*Friends, Families of Ramiz and HR & Trainers Fraternity present at the Event*

## ***“My Bible group as a Christian prayed for him to our God” – Wayne Eddy***

Wayne Eddy interviewed Ramiz in depth and spent 24 hours in continuous conversation with him cut up in two hours segments. “In one of our interviews we came up with the idea of chronicling his trip through cancer treatment, never anticipating that it would end on his death. He would come in every other Friday if he was strong enough after chemotherapy, and he would tell us what it was like and what he was going through. It gave him something to look forward to

## ***“He made sense of all the dashes and dots that I was not familiar with” – Shireen Naqvi***

Shireen Naqvi, trainer and motivator extraordinaire, was there in person at the PSTD on the 5th of March, 2017 to pay tribute to a man she summed up in three words – Ahan! Fear, and Azmat. “I first met Ramiz at a Trainers Resource Group session, and all I could do was say ahan, ahan, ahan! So that's what life's all about! He made sense of all the dashes and dots that I was not familiar with. I am still running his



courses that he created, designed and initiated. I feared him. I was scared when I saw him, not knowing how to react to him because he was so azeem. I felt he had every right to ignore me, and yet he was there with his hypnotic voice and charming smile. His message is find out who you are and live the life you're supposed to lead."

## "We worked hard and played harder" – Khurram Khwaja



Khurram Khwaja was Ramiz's childhood friend, and spoke of always living in the shadows of their elder brothers, and making their own brotherhood! "We worked hard and played harder. We scuba dived, went swimming and played rugby, the hardest game one can think of. We formed the Pakistan Rugby Union. In 2015 we got recognition at the world level, and my brother Fawzi

attended the World Rugby Awards that brought forth special praise and encouragement from Ramiz."



Sarfaraz Rehman went to school with Ramiz and confided that Ramiz wasn't very good in his studies in school. "His attitude towards those who were good in their studies was that when he grew up he would run a business and the rest would work for him! In my periods of indecisiveness Ramiz encouraged me to follow my conscience. He has been a wonderful influence on many people."

Rufi Jamil was another childhood friend of Ramiz's and said that his legacy is his values, fondly remembering him sitting in the last row in class and throwing pellets at his friends! She spoke of his smile and courage with which he braved his cancer, insisting on getting up on his feet each time she went to meet him.

Waqar, a fellow HRD practitioner, recited an emotionally charged passage from Inshajee Chalo. He said that Ramiz loved his Karachi and his Sind Club, and came back here to live out the last days of his life. "We should institute a Ramiz Memorial Lecture and engage weighty personages to deliver it."

Fahad Ahmed, Ashok Kumar Sanjwani, Abdul Rafay and Kamran Ahmed Ansari were also people whose lives Ramiz touched, and he spoke of their personal experiences with him and how he changed their lives.

## "Over the past year I have taken his advice and never been happier" – Umair Jaliawala

Umair Jaliawala, leading the new generation of trainers who have already left their mark in the realms of youth empowerment, was the last speaker on the roster, and spoke of the advice Ramiz gave him in his final few days. "Do not fear anything. Go out and live. Go out and love. And then go out with honour and your head held high." That is exactly how Ramiz led his life. "Once I was very despondent for not being



able to bring people together on the TRG platform, and he asked me why I had taken it upon myself to do so? He advised me to go out and enjoy life and concentrate upon myself. Over the past year I have taken his advice and never been happier."

## "God doesn't employ accountants" – Clay Christenson

The last item on the agenda, before we all went out to plant trees in memory of Mian Ghani and Ramiz, was a four minutes video clip by Clay Christenson on 'How to Measure Your Life.' How do you measure the profitability and success of your life is the question Clay posed in the video. "We aggregate, and hence have this sense of hierarchy, wealth and so on. The reason I concluded that God doesn't employ accountants is because He has an infinite Mind. He doesn't have to aggregate up above the level of individual people in order to have a perfect understanding of what's going on in this world. So when I have my interview with God at the end of my life He is not going to ask me how high I went in anybody's organizational chart, or how much money I left behind in the bank when I died. He will say I put



you in such and such circumstance, now can we talk about the individual people whose life you helped become better because you worked with them, or because they were members of your family, or you just met them and they needed your help. Let's talk about the individual people whose life you blessed because you used your talents I gave you to help them. I realized that that is the way God will measure my life

by the number of individual people whose life I blessed. It's actually very important that you succeed at what you're succeeding at. But that isn't going to be the measure of your life. God doesn't count. He doesn't aggregate. He is going to assess you on how much you helped other people be better people."

## Bonanza!

By the above reckoning Ramiz has hit pay dirt in a very big way in the Afterlife. May Allah bless his soul and grant him a place in Heaven, ameen, summa ameen. ■

Report filed by **Adil Ahmad**  
Correspondent, [octara.com](http://octara.com)

For viewing his interview and event's video, go to our YouTube channel "Octara Private Limited Pakistan" and Facebook Page "In Remembrance of Ramiz Allawala"







I have known Ramiz for many years now, and had the privilege of penning the biography of his illustrious father, the legendary Ahmad Allawala, during the course of which my interactions with Ramiz were substantial. Ramiz made the transition to his celestial abode on the 13th of February, 2017. He fought the cancer tooth and nail, almost vanquishing it on more than one occasion. His loving and supportive family, along with his legion of students and fans provided him with positive energy as they prayed for his wellbeing.

At the appointed moment, however, the Lord's work had to be done even if it were to leave behind a huge emptiness in the hearts and minds of his family and friends who flocked to his funeral to bid him farewell. For me, I did not feel the emptiness, for even in his absence I could sense him loud and clear. Ramiz was a warrior through and through, and his conquests were legendary as they ignited the minds and fired the imaginations of corporate leaderships across the board.

Ramiz's work and remembrance will carry on of that there is no doubt. His specialties were strategic thinking, conflict resolution, problem solving and solutions, values based decision making and corporate ethics, negotiations and persuasive communications, all vital for the establishment of

prosperity, peace and progress in a world gone VUCA – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous.

Ramiz understood that it was all about mindsets. What he taught was not rocket science; what he taught was unadulterated commonsense that has regrettably become most uncommon in the mad dash of life as we know it today. He beguiled us to stop and ponder that which sat on the tips of our nose evading our attention. It was a treat to see the light switch on in the eyes of the participants as the penny dropped, revealing the solution in all its simplicity. Pure genius. Such was Ramiz.

## EULOGY

by **Adil Ahmad**, Correspondent, [octara.com](http://octara.com)

As CEO of Gulfstone Training for 18 years and 2 months Ramiz

was committed to bringing major shifts in current leadership capabilities. His firm's core strength is helping client organizations and their employees apply critical learning rapidly and effectively.

The likes of Ramiz are not to be mourned. They are to be celebrated. He has enriched our lives and left us much the wiser. To each of his students to whom he was a river of knowledge and self-awareness the time is now upon us to put his many thoughts into action and make this world a better place.

Rest in peace, my friend, and may Allah bless your soul and grant you a place in Heaven, ameen, summa ameen.



Karen thanked everyone for the great support that the family received every step of the way. "Thank you to PSTD, Khalid Awan, Jamil Janjua, Arif, Jason and their wonderful staff for putting together this great tribute to my husband. My Chacha Iqbal Allawala, Beenish, Adeel, Alina, Alisa and Zach, and a special thank you to Stewart for giving us the transportation to fly from Rochester to New York City. It was Ramiz's fond request before he died to have the opportunity to say goodbye to his family and friends here in Pakistan. He wanted to be placed with his Abbu and Ammi. Finally, he wanted his life celebrated just as we are doing today.

Being amongst Ramiz's dearest as we have been over the last few weeks has illuminated the sincere impact he had on people he came in contact with. His capacity to really listen and empathize, and



read between the lines and hear even that which is not being said, made him a great source of advice, encouragement and motivation. He belonged to everyone. He drew people to him with his down-to-earth charisma and extraordinary sharp wit.

Ramiz often referred to his cancer as a gift. For the first time in decades he was able to sit back and let others take care of him, something he never felt comfortable with. He was at peace in the company of his kids Alina, Alisa and Zach, and his grandson Kaya.

I was blessed beyond my wildest dreams to spend the last 33 years with this great man. He taught me so many lessons. He was a great instructor on my life and in my life. Ramiz took his last breath on February 13th, 2017 at approximately 4am. The heavens lit up and a bright new star was once again seen, and his journey continues."

## KAREN'S Tribute