

# No hurdle too high for Hajj



**She developed cancer, and after many procedures and treatments, it had, unfortunately, spread, writes DR SALIM PARKER.**

**THERE** was no question about her intention; she was going to perform Hajj. The question was whether she would make it for that year.

She had not applied in time and was not on the accredited list. Nor was her husband or sister who

wished to accompany her.

She could not postpone performing the fifth pillar of Islam as she most likely would not be on this temporary abode the next year and would probably be gracing higher honours.

Yes, it is easy to say that Allah's

infinite mercy exempts the sick, the terminally ill and those without the required funds to undertake this once in a lifetime journey.

The exemption from the obligation does not obliterate the desire to perform Hajj. In fact, sometimes, the knowledge of the futility of the little time we have left on this earth strengthens the resolve, gives purpose to the final acts and duties of life. She was one of those people.

She entered the deen many moons ago, much to the consternation of her family. She developed cancer, and after many procedures and treatments, it had, unfortunately, spread to such an extent that nothing more could be done. Her time on this earth was to be only a few months.

There is never enough time to do all that a person plans to do while being part of this world, never enough time to prepare for the ultimate journey in the life of any Muslim. Yet, there was time to still undertake the journey before she passed her final breath.

She asked her oncologist about being able to perform Hajj, clearly indicating that this was her last wish.

The medical team discussed the issue and consented to her travelling, making sure that she understood all the risks involved.

She might not even depart our shores, she might succumb on the way or during Hajj. She understood and accepted all of that. She was ready to go. All her medications except those to control pain were stopped.

Her husband appealed to the authorities but, unless someone cancelled, there was precious little they could do as the quota allocated to South Africa had already been filled. Also, there were a number of similar cases that had surfaced by now, and all the official body could do was assist, advise and motivate.

Time was passing by and plans had to be put in place. Time for the pilgrim was limited and results were needed urgently. For the Saudi embassy, Hajj was still a few weeks away and they had to first sort out the officially accredited pilgrims before they could start considering other cases.

Flights, accommodation and numerous other logistics had to be sorted out. The husband stored their Hajj money in a safe at home as no agent wanted to take money until they had received Hajj visas. The husband flew to Pretoria and asked for an appointment with the relevant person.

He was told to leave his application at the security guards who would forward it to the necessary person.

Worried about all the parcels that he saw in that area, he managed to convince the guard to let him in.

When he approached the embassy official, he was asked to leave his application on the desk. He asked whether he could explain their situation, and this was allowed. There was some sympathy expressed and it was checked that all the necessary documentation was in order.

He left full of hope but again time was of the essence. The standard 'Insha Allah' though said with good intention, was no concrete and definitive answer.

The embassy often receives desperate applications from people who claimed never to have performed Hajj before, yet a cursory examination of their passports would reveal at least one previous Hajj visa.

The embassy had to do a due diligence. There was, however, another person who also was aware of this application.

A person who, not for favour or reward, persistently enquired about the case as he felt it was such a worthwhile endeavour.

He would, when doing business with the embassy, gently probe the merits and status of the case and added what he knew. It is said that all and every duah counts.

She and her husband had so many people making duah that their application seemed to have been elevated.

One day, while at home, the doorbell rang and the husband opened the security gate. Four policemen were standing outside and they requested to speak to him about a previous employee of his.

As soon as he let them in, they accosted him.

They evidently were not policemen even though they were dressed in official uniforms. He had to give them money. They somehow knew that he kept it at home.

She was sleeping in the room next to the lounge where the altercations were taking place.

One of the intruders peeked into her room and saw her sleeping.

He then threatened to shoot her in her sleep if the husband did not cooperate with them.

The husband did not have much of a choice and gave them whatever they could lay their hands on.

They were insisting on firearms as well but this was not found. What was found was their Hajj money, the money that they had saved for her final journey before she was to depart this world.

They bound him, again threatened to kill all of them if he moved or shouted, and left.

He was bound but he was not broken.

It seemed that numerous obstacles were put in their way but this only increased their determination to perform Hajj.

Some in life see any hindrance as a sign that they should give up, others see it as an indication to try harder. Our Creator tells us that with difficulty comes ease and we know that with faithful perseverance comes reward.

Yet, here they were with their Hajj money stolen, no visas and with her health deteriorating.

The cost of airline tickets were also increasing as the Hajj season flights were peaking, and the costs of the journey inevitably rose as only the more expensive accommodation would be available by the time they received their visas, if they received them at all.

They went ahead with their planning. Somehow, somewhere, he found the money to pay for the journey.

Then he received an sms on his phone; his visa had been granted. Another sms indicated that his wife also would be undertaking the journey and his sister soon informed him that she had also received the good news.

He would be their mahram and his sister would be able to assist his wife if and when necessary. The first hurdles had been crossed. The physical journey was still to be undertaken.

This story will continue next month.

For more Hajj Stories visit [www.hajjdoctor.co.za](http://www.hajjdoctor.co.za). You may contact Dr Parker via e-mail: [salimparker@yahoo.com](mailto:salimparker@yahoo.com)

**The pull that draws the believer to perform the ultimate journey is inexplicable but this urge to fulfil the journey becomes paramount when one knows that one's time is limited.**  
Photo DR SALIM PARKER

