
Revealed: the racy novel written by the world's most powerful climate scientist

The chair of the UN's panel on climate change Dr Rajendra Pachauri has taken a break from writing academic papers on global warming to pen a racy romantic novel.

By Robert Mendick and Amrit Dhillon in Delhi

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As the UN's climate change chief, Dr Rajendra Pachauri has spent his career writing only the driest of academic articles. But the latest offering from the chairman of the UN's climate change panel is an altogether racier tome.

Some might even suggest Dr Pachauri's first novel is frankly smutty.



Dr Rajendra Pachauri Photo: AFP/GETTY

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Return to Almora, published in Dr Pachauri's native India earlier this month, tells the story of Sanjay Nath, an academic in his 60s reminiscing on his "spiritual journey" through India, Peru and the US.

On the way he encounters, among others, Shirley MacLaine, the actress, who appears as a character in the book. While relations between Sanjay and MacLaine remain platonic, he enjoys sex – a lot of sex – with a lot of women.

In breathless prose that risks making Dr Pachauri, who will be 70 this year, a laughing stock among the serious, high-minded scientists and world leaders with whom he mixes, he details sexual encounter after sexual encounter.

The book, which makes reference to the Kama Sutra, starts promisingly enough as it tells the story of a climate expert with a lament for the denuded mountain slopes of Nainital, in northern India, where deforestation by the timber mafia and politicians has "endangered the fragile ecosystem".

But talk of "denuding" is a clue of what is to come.

By page 16, Sanjay is ready for his first liaison with May in a hotel room in Nainital. "She then led him into the bedroom," writes Dr Pachauri.

"She removed her gown, slipped off her nightie and slid under the quilt on his bed... Sanjay put his arms around her and kissed her, first with quick caresses and then the kisses becoming longer and more passionate.

"May slipped his clothes off one by one, removing her lips from his for no more than a second or two.

"Afterwards she held him close. 'Sandy, I've learned something for the first time today. You are absolutely superb after meditation. Why don't we make love every time immediately after you have meditated?'"

More follows, including Sanjay and friends queuing to have sexual encounters with Sajni, an impoverished but willing local: "Sanjay saw a shapely dark-skinned girl lying on Vinay's bed. He was overcome by a lust that he had never known before ... He removed his clothes and began to feel Sajni's body, caressing her voluptuous breasts."

Sadly for Sanjay, writes Dr Pachauri, "the excitement got the better of him, before he could even get started".

While teaching meditation to women in the US, Sanjay can once more barely contain his ardour. Again, breasts – usually heaving or else voluptuous – are thrust to the fore.

"He enjoyed the sensation of gently pushing Susan's shoulders back a few inches, an action that served to lift her breasts even higher," writes Dr Pachauri. "He was excited by the sight of her heaving breasts, as she breathed in and out deeply."

A friend of Susan is taken to a motel by Sanjay but only after he has fondled her breasts – "which he just could not let go of" – inadvertently sounding the car horn at the same time.

Other passages in the novel involve group sex and more risqué sexual practices.

The novel was launched amid much fanfare with Bollywood stars and wealthy industrialists in attendance, a reflection of Dr Pachauri's esteemed status in the country.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, on behalf of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

In the acknowledgement of his novel, Dr Pachauri admits to writing the book while flying around the world between meetings as IPCC chairman or else in his capacity as head of a research institute in Delhi.

But with calls for him to resign over academic blunders in the reports he presides over, some critics will question whether he should have devoted more time to scrutinising the science behind the reports.

Some will also wonder whether just a little bit of Dr Pachauri is reflected in Sanjay, although there is no suggestion Dr Pachauri has ever lusted after women quite so readily.

Both men are in their 60s, grew up in Nainital and obtained doctorates in the US. There are, of course, plenty of differences too.

Although the novel, is unlikely to win awards other than the Bad Sex in Fiction prize, it is at least to the lay reader more enjoyable than most of his other books.

Previous titles include the 1976 tome Dynamics of Electrical Energy Supply and Demand: An Economic Analysis (Praeger special studies in US economic, social and political issues.

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