



shuktara

*a new home in the world for young adults*

43b/5 Narayan Roy Road P.S. Thakurpukur Kolkata 700008 West Bengal INDIA

Contact no: - 91 33 2496 0051



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The major festival of Durga Puja is now over and by the time you read this, Diwali will also have come and gone. Diwali is celebrated in most of India, but here in West Bengal we celebrate Kali Puja. This is the night when Bengalis let off their fireworks, light candles and an evening that everyone at shuktara really enjoys. Because Diwali is usually the following day, they use this excuse and have two nights of fireworks! However this year, both festivals fall on the same day – but I expect they will keep some fireworks back anyway and celebrate for a couple of nights running.

As with the Pujas, I usually hide away somewhere quietly!

The Durga Puja festivities were enjoyed by everyone at shuktara. Some of the older boys went out on their own, some stayed at home and some of them went with Pappu to help carry Prity and our new girl Moni around the city. They always hire a big car for this occasion and stay out all night long.



**Sanjay Sarkar – Durga Puja 2014**



**Moni on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

Moni had come a short time before the Pujas and was very excited to have new clothes and jewellery to wear for her very first outing. At the beginning of September, Pappu had received a phone call from Childline India Foundation about a little girl who they were unable to care for. They had placed her in a hospital, for safe keeping, even though she was well. Pappu immediately went to the hospital and agreed that Shuktara would take her and she would live at Lula Bari, our girls home. She came on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

It has been tough for Moni, she does not have the mental capacity to understand that her family have abandoned her and for the first few weeks she would cry out for her mother. Moni was left on a pavement in North Kolkata and has no use of her legs. She uses her arms to manoeuvre herself around. She is already settling in well and enjoys the activities with the other girls and their tutors.



**Our two latest girls Muniya and Moni at Lula Bari ready to out and celebrate Durga Puja**

For the last month the schools have been closed here because of the Pujas. This time is known as Puja Holidays and once they re-open and we feel she is ready, Moni will be enrolled at REACH school along with Muniya, Tamina, Prity, Lali and Raja Singh. The rest of the our young people have now finished school and are either working at Shuktara Cakes Training Centre or doing extra studies at home, while deciding what to do next. It is hard to find employment and will become even harder as our girls get older. This was why we were so happy when Alain Cojean decided to start the Shuktara Cakes centre. It has really helped our older boys and given them a chance at a career in Patisserie.

Thank you for supporting shuktara and we wish you all a happy Diwali

David Earp



**Pappu with Tamina, Sunil and Raja Singh in the boys house ready to go out for the Durga Puja festival**