

Aakash with Moloy and Minudi on the roof of shuktara
(photo by Raegan Hodge)



Wishing you a wonderful Easter break from Kolkata.

A couple of weeks ago, Pappu Mishra, who is the chairman of **shuktara**, received a phone call from the Child Welfare Committee asking if he was able to accept a small boy with cerebral palsy into the boys' house.

He was told to go and meet with them and visit **Aakash** at a nursing home, which isn't very far from Behala where the boys' house and Lula Bari are situated in Kolkata.

The nursing home had an extension where they kept abandoned children, but with lack of money and trained staff they were closing this down to concentrate on the hospital side of their work.

Aakash was the last boy from the home and was living on the nurses station on the first floor of the hospital.

He and Pappu immediately hit it off and Pappu said yes.



Aakash was found about 8 years ago on a train outside Howrah Station, wrapped in a white towel, in the first class carriage of a train heading for Delhi. The manager of the nursing home who happened to be on the train alerted the police at the next station and headed back to Kolkata with Aakash.

He has been cared for since then at the nursing home by the team of doctors, nurses and care staff, but has never interacted with children or young people.

It was clearly not the right place for him to stay. As they had placed all the other children in care or in Government homes, Aakash was the one that they found the hardest to place and the one that they loved the most.

He has been surrounded by love and care and it was hard for all of them to say goodbye to him. Many tears were shed.



Last week, on Wednesday 28th March, Aakash was brought to Shuktara by Pappu and coincidentally the Shuktara Documentary Film crew were also with him on their last two days of shooting, so they were able to photograph and film the whole day.

He came with one of his carers who was really happy to see Shuktara and left with tears in her eyes, but joy and happiness at the prospect of Aakash growing up surrounded by boys his own age, or older, who understand his disability.

All of you know the boys at Shuktara who have cerebral palsy and Sumon has bonded with Aakash, telling him - you will be like me!

His first night was calm and quiet and he slept well. The second day was harder for him. He cried a lot and was missing the women that looked after him, but with our female carer Minudi around during the daylight hours at the boys' house she has taken over some of his care and that is settling him well.

Moloy, who also cares for Ratan and Subhash, now really has his hands full and I think we need another full time staff member, as these three boys need 24/7 care.

It is all very good news and if you wish to read the update (#13) by Phoebe Brown who is here this week filming for the Shuktara Documentary Film project, please [click here](#). Thank You for your support.

Happy Easter

