



March 2020

Greetings from all of us at shuktara homes. We have just celebrated the festival of Holi, which you will know involves paint and water and lots of smiles. This year Pappu made sure that we had chemical free colours and everyone enjoyed the day.

You may remember from previous news that just after Christmas 2019, I was awarded the British Empire Medal, for which I have to thank our supporter Patrick Tissington in cahoots with Sue Tungay, who gave him some details which he forwarded to the relevant Government Departments. Pappu, chairman of shuktara here in Kolkata was delighted with the news and thinks it will help in terms of people getting to know about his work here with the young people. As yet, it has not been awarded, but the BEM is given in the local town hall of one's residence by the Lord Lieutenant of said county. Kingston Town Hall did not push my buttons, so I have been in touch with the British Deputy High Commissioner in Kolkata to see if I can be awarded here with the shuktara family in attendance.



On the 1st March we took the keys for a small ground floor flat with wheelchair access just around the corner from Lula Bari. For a long time we have wanted to have a separate stitching centre for the girls, where Nandita can work with them. This seems like the perfect place. It also means that the girls can come and go from Lula Bari during the day rather than stay in one place, especially now that most of the older ones have finished at school. We can take on work as well from people to give the girls a personal income.

It's an exciting time for all of us and especially Prity, who is really looking forward to it. Nandita is now back with us full time and we have named the stitching centre **Anjali Bari**, in memory of Tookie Mashi (who died in 2018) as her proper name was Anjali Singh. This is a fitting memorial to her. We have also taken on a new carer at Lula Bari, bringing the total number of staff to 7 for 7 girls! Minu Mondal is settling in well as a full time carer and is especially good with Tamina. *(Minu in photo above with Guria and Tamina)*

As I write this we are saying goodbye to Joanna Worsley, a great friend of Lula Gibson in whose memory we named the girls home Lula Bari. *(Lali and Joanna in photo right)*

We have also had Lula's brother Anthony and his wife Maggie stop by on their way to Assam and Kate Barton on her way to Jaipur. It's great for the girls to see this commitment and the visits that happen from Lula's friends and I think they have a real sense now of who Lula was and why we named their house in her name.



Anthony and Maggie with David



Kate at Anna Bari



Pappu has managed to organise making Special Chairs for all of the young people with cerebral palsy, so that they can now sit up and do their studies, be fed, have a greater support and the chairs have wheels so they can be pushed from room to room. I see that this has been of particular help to Prity, but Guria loves it as well as Aakash and Subhash at Anna Bari, who howl with laughter as they get pushed in to have their evening study time with Joydeb. Joydeb was hired by Pappu and recommended by Priyanka, who tutors the girls at Lula Bari. He works with young people with disabilities in rural Bengal and comes three evenings per week and works with Aakash, Bablu, Ramesh, Subhash, Sumon and Bappa. He is always smiling and is a perfect fit into the way Pappu runs things at the shuktara homes. *(photo Joydeb with Aakash)*

As you may be aware from the last newsletter or from our Mailchimp e-news Karen, our replacement for Sue Tungay, didn't work out and left us due to other commitments. We appreciate her support and send her our thanks, but we are still looking for a replacement for Sue, as Secretary of Shuktara Trust UK and I know they would also love to have new trustees to join the team in London.

So if you support shuktara and would be interested in being a Trustee, please get in touch with Sue Tungay. You will see her details below.

Thank You all, always, for your support and commitment to the work that continues here in Kolkata.

David Earp

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Update...

In these unprecedented times with India currently under lockdown for three weeks we wanted to share this photo of Sunil, Bapi and Ramesh. These guys have lived together in the shuktara family since 2000.

Be assured every precaution is being taken to keep the girls and boys at Anna Bari and Lula Bari safe.



Thank you to Maria Livings, owner of **Lush Designs**, for donating to shuktara through **Giveacar Social Enterprise**. This organisation will pick up your unwanted car or motorbike, sell or scrap it, and donate the proceeds to your chosen charity.

If you're interested here's the link: [Giveacar Social Enterprise](#)

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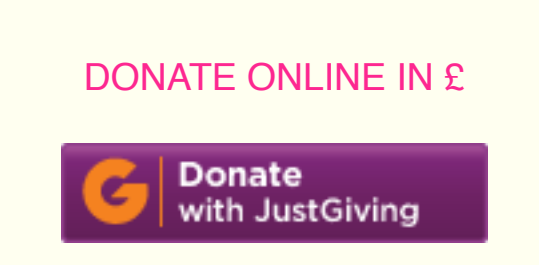
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If you're a UK taxpayer, **Gift Aid** increases the value of your charity donations by 25%, because the charity can reclaim the basic rate of tax on your gift – at no extra cost to you.

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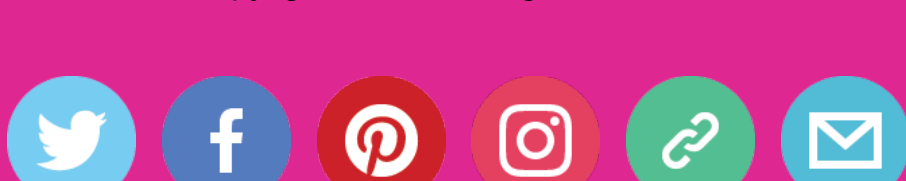
Shuktara provides a home for life for children and young adults with disabilities in Kolkata, India, who have no family.

shuktara.org

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