



July 2022

On the 1st of July we celebrated 23 years of shuktara.

As you all know it was on the 1st of July in 1999 that I took charge of Anna and Sunil in my flat in Kolkata, with Alison and Bryan in the flat above me. I think I can speak for them as well, when I say that our lives really changed from that moment.

The bond between Sunil and Alison was very quickly established and Anna and Bryan were an incomparable duo.

I very much took Anna on as my responsibility and everything wonderful that has happened since those early days happened as a consequence of me saying "YES" to Anna and Sunil.



Celebrating 23 years of shuktara on 1st of July



Pappu, Chairman of shuktara, and his daughters

Pappu is chairman of shuktara in India and he runs everything with a commitment seldom seen. The shuktara girls home - Lula Bari, Anna Bari - the boys home, Shuktara Cakes, day to day care and organisation of staff is smoothly, professionally and conscientiously managed by him.

This year on Founders Day, the entire shuktara family and extended friends and family all gathered at Anna Bari for food. By extended family I mean the young people who grew up at shuktara, including Ipshita and Kedar, who now live and work independently and of course Sanjay and Raja - now both married, living independently with their own family and working at Shuktara Cakes.

In the evening of the 1st of July Pappu organised pizza for everyone at both homes.



Ipshita returns for a visit



Prity eating pizza

On the 12th of April REACH School finally reopened and our little group were able to attend again physically rather than in front of a laptop. Our vehicle, generously donated by my friend Nigel, is still being used to drive around - picking up, taking them and bringing them home from school.

Puja is in the Autism Unit. Guria is in the Cerebral Palsy Unit, as well as Lali and Suman, who go twice a week.

Moni and Bappa attend daily in the Special Education Department.



Bappa writes his name

Puja Basak, who came in February this year is settling in really well and was more

than excited when Pappu informed the girls and staff that he was going to take them away to the seaside. They left for Puri on the 2nd of June using the overnight train. It was a hard job manoeuvring wheelchairs and carrying the girls on to the train, but they managed both ways and enjoyed their stay by the beach at The Pink House, where we have always been when we have been able to travel.

Shuktara Cakes continues to thrive and as I write this our team are baking patisserie for the French Consulate in Kolkata for their Bastille Day celebrations. Talks are ongoing between the UK trustees and consultants to undertake extending our bakery into a cafe setting in the city.

Shuktara Trust UK trustee Judith Harris, who was recently in Kolkata met up with a number of people to help get this moving along.

There is a lot to do and a lot to fundraise for - but we all want to do it professionally and none of us are rushing in until we have a clear business plan in place.



Lali, Moni and Prity at Pink House Puri



Judith Harris and Guria

As you know before covid struck, I was awarded a medal which is still in Kolkata waiting for me to pick it up. I had to leave India just over a year ago because I had overstayed my visa. I couldn't leave on the due date as I was testing positive. I am feeling stronger now a year later but I'm becoming more and more clear that after 23 years in India and particularly since the death and personal loss of Anna that my time is now better spent in the UK. By supporting Pappu on our daily phone and video calls and by using my knowledge and love of all things shuktara to assist in raising money to keep it all running as smoothly and beautifully as it always has. With a remarkable Indian team at the helm led by the even more remarkable Pappu Mishra who works tirelessly and way beyond the call of duty, I have no concerns at all.

Together with the medal, I received a Royal Garden Party invitation and on Wednesday 25th May one of my oldest friends Frank, and I donned top hats and morning suits to attend.

The day ended with a beautiful intimate get together of friends, hosted by Shuktara Trust UK Chairman Adam Thompson and Kate Maxwell.

I can't think of a place that I've been to where I felt so much love in one room - apart from at Shuktara of course!

Thank you all for your support

David Earp



Pappu and Sunil



David and Frank at the Royal Garden Party

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

shuktara.org

Official website of Shuktara Trust (UK) | UK Charity Commission No: 1112303



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