

SHIS NEWS LETTER – FEBRUARY 2013

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PARASHPADMA'S HEALING TOUCH FOR ATARJAN'S FAMILY

- Ebadat & Tahamina

It is a tale of a courageous and loving woman. It is worth being told because Atarjan's long battle against misery and mishaps has finally been overshadowed by her crowning glory in being a mother figure for so many helpless children at our Parashpadma rehabilitation centre.



It is more than a decade when Atarjan, fair, short in height, and clad in a dust-smeared green bordered white sari, I had knocked as our doors. She came with a 9/10 year old boy in her arms. "Do you keep Khonra

(lame) children here"? she had asked. We told her that only those with chances of recovery through operation, physiotherapy and related therapy were admitted. Dukhe, Atarjan's son, was examined and admitted. Now Atarjan insisted that She be allowed to stay with her son. She would not listen to any of our arguments against it. We yielded to her demand. Anyone would have. Dukhe was her fifth and only surviving child, the preceding four having died prematurely. She lost her husband when she was expecting Dukhe. We told Atarjan that She could stay provided she could take care of so many helpless children at our centre, along with her own Dukhe. She agreed and from then on there has been no looking back for her. She has been a caring mother to all the children since 2001.

Polio-stricken Dukhe, in the meantime, has been physically rehabilitated. He has been married to Putul, also a polio affected girl. They have a nice little kid. They are happy. So is Atarjan. She has liberally sprinkled "atar" or perfume on so many lives. She deserves every bit of her happiness and sense of satisfaction.

SHIS LAUNCH SERVICE FOR GANGASAGAR MELA

- Anwarul Alam

Lakhs of pilgrims congregate at Ganga Sagar where the holy Ganga falls in the Bay of Bengal to take a holy dip in the confluence on the auspicious morning of Makar Sankranti (14th January) every year. Most of them come from other states.

The West Bengal government makes all necessary arrangements for the shelter, sanitation, drinking water, safety and security as well as communication for the pilgrims. This

year chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) South 24 Parganas district, Dr. Sikha Adhikari, had approached SHIS Director, M.A. Wohab for providing two motor launches for emergency medical care for the pilgrims. For nine days from January 8, these boats rendered yeoman's service. They ferried critical patients from the Mela ground to the hospitals at Kakdwip and Diamond Harbour.



This year the number of pilgrims was between five to six lakhs, a little less than the previous years. The reason may be the diversion of a large chunk to the Maha Kumbh at Prayag in Allahabad.

Apart from the two emergency boats, the usual MMU boats also attended to 4000-5000 patients by rendering 24-hour service during the Gangasagar Mela. The role of the doctors, nurse and other SHIS health workers was impeccable, as always.