

KAILAKURI HEALTH CARE PROJECT

(Kailakuri & the Mati NGO)

Village Kailakuri, Madhupur Thana, Tangail District, Bangladesh



MARCH 2017:

SHILPI'S STORY OF ILLNESS, RECOVERY & WORK AT KAILAKURI



Shilpi as a diabetes patient; and as a Health Educator in 2016, speaking in front of 300 diabetes patients. She spoke clearly and confidently, and wove in stories of her personal experiences to motivate and encourage others.

My name is Shilpi Hagidok, and I am 28 years old. My husband Nolbart Rema works as a farmer and we live in Kailakuri village. I have a six year old son, Senga who is disabled. Growing up, we were very poor. We lived up north, near the Indian border. I have two brothers and one sister. My mother died when I was in Class 3 and my father had to work very hard to look after us. I continued to go to school.

When I was in Class 10 and preparing for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exam, I suddenly fell sick. I was taken to a local hospital, and I first heard about diabetes from that hospital. After receiving treatment there for a while, I went to sit my SSC exam. During this time, my diabetes continued to deteriorate and after I had sat nine exams, it became very uncontrolled. I could not finish the rest of my exams and I was taken back home. I was given treatment by a few kobiraj (village healers) but this did not make any difference and I continued to buy tablets from a local pharmacy. Slowly, I developed cataracts in both of my eyes, and lived at home for another two years in this way. Then one day, one of my uncles (who had stayed with the Taize Brothers), communicated with Brother Guillaume and arranged to bring me to Taize in Mymensingh.

I was sent to Mymensingh Medical for a diabetes check-up and Brother Guillaume purchased insulin for me. My weight was down to 28 kilograms and I had a BMI of 11. After staying at the Brothers' house for six days, Brother Guillaume wrote a letter of referral and one of his assistants, Tulu, took me to Dr Bhai's hospital for

the poor - Kailakuri Health Care Project. This was in 2006. Because of the cataracts, I had lost sight in both eyes. I felt exactly like a blind person. I could not see anything, and I could not look after myself.

But after arriving at Kailakuri, I knew this was the right place for me and Brother Guillaume kept encouraging me that I would gain my eyesight back. Because of Dr Bhai's treatment and reassurance I gained confidence that I would get better again. After five months of treatment and two cataract operations, I slowly regained my sight. After seven months I could see clearly. Then at the end of 2007, Dr Bhai employed me as a health educator in his project. My job was to teach patients about various diabetes and nutrition issues. When I began working in the project, primary treatment seemed more difficult than at present. Many people preferred to seek treatment from kobiraj rather than doctors. Now people are better educated and aware of their health problems, so they come to Kailakuri for treatment straight away.

If I want to speak plainly about health treatment in this project, I have to begin with my own experience. Because of the staffs' utmost dedication, I received my life back again. I gained my eyesight back, and I cannot find words to express the gratitude I feel for this. I can also speak of my husband's younger sister (Shuli Rema) who had stomach TB. First she went to the kobiraj and spent a lot of money in different places but did not get well. She was diagnosed with TB after being admitted to Kailakuri and through this treatment she became healthy again. Now she works in a beauty parlour.

From working at Kailakuri, I have become more aware of how to look after my family's health, and they take the initiative to look after themselves. If I want to share about this hospital, I have to say that it has given me a second life. My family was extremely poor, and they could not have afforded a cataract operation or insulin for me. I have received all of this only because of Dr Bhai's hospital for the poor. Not just me, but many other poor patients have survived because of this hospital and been able to live healthy lives. Thank you so much.

Greetings from New Zealand volunteers Ben and Sophie



Hello to all Kailakuri Supporters! My name is Ben McLaughlin, and I'm a doctor from New Zealand. My partner Sophie and I have just arrived in Kailakuri, and will be volunteering here for 2 months. Sophie is a registered nurse (also a Kiwi) with experience in rehabilitation and surgical nursing, whilst my main experience is with Obstetrics, Gynaecology, and Emergency Medicine.

This week we are being orientated to the project, and hope that we can find some areas in which our input will be useful. We have been welcomed during the morning prayer with singing and flowers. Our first impressions are of lovely, dedicated staff, and the incredible legacy that Dr Bhai has left behind. We were

fortunate enough to stay with Nadine, Ratan, and Sister Julianne when we arrived in Dhaka, and look forward to seeing Nadine and Ratan again when they return from their honeymoon in April. The staff here are looking forward to a visit from Sister Julianne soon.

Warmest regards from Kailakuri

Dr Ben McLaughlin (MBChB with Distinction, PGDipObstMedGyn with Distinction)

Kailakuri's Future Plans – Pijon Nongmin, Project Manager

For those of you who have supported us for many years, you will know that Dr Bhai (Dr Edric Baker) first started primary health care work in Thanarbaid clinic (run by the Church of Bangladesh) in 1983. Because of his dedication and hard work, patient numbers and programmes gradually increased over time. So in 1996, in Kailakuri village about 4km north of Thanarbaid, he started a new sub-centre. When considering the future, Edric decided to separate from Thanarbaid in 2004 and started the Kailakuri Health Care Project as an independent project, in partnership with IIRD NGO. Then in 2013, we left IIRD and became partners with Mati NGO. After Dr Bhai passed away on 1 September 2015 we had to face some new challenges. With everyone's help, we have been able to overcome these and the health project has carried on as usual.

After much discussion between staff, committees, donors and supporters a decision was made to become an independent NGO. The NGO's name will be "Dr Baker's Organisation for Well-Being". In the meantime, we have applied for Social Welfare Department registration and received name-clearance. We hope to complete each stage of this process in good time. Next we will apply to the NGO Bureau for permission to receive foreign funds (in the name of the new NGO). Lenen Rahaman, Executive Director of Mati NGO, has supported us in this endeavour and agreed to continue fulfilling head office responsibilities until we gain the appropriate permissions (which could take another 6-12 months). We will keep you updated.

For the past three years Nadine Vickers has been working as an International Correspondent and Fundraising volunteer at Kailakuri. After several months she will return to New Zealand and we need to secure another volunteer in her place. Please let us know if you are interested in this position.

(Pijon Nongmin has been selected as provisional Executive Director for the new NGO and an Executive Committee has been appointed, with members from the pre-existing Project Advisor Committee.)



Peter Reid QSM

It is with sadness that we advise of the death of Peter Reid, long time friend of the Baker family and supporter of Edric in his service at Kailakuri. Since the formation of the Kailakuri NZ Link Group as a registered charity Peter has audited our accounts free of charge. Although 89 years old Peter remained very active right to the end. We were only one of many NGO and charity groups he carried out free audits for. We give thanks for his talents and generosity of spirit.

Wedding of Nadine Vickers and Ratan Bormon

Our congratulations and best wishes go to Nadine and Ratan who were married on Saturday 4th March. This was a wonderful festive weekend of ceremonies and celebrations enjoyed by the entire Kailakuri community as well as guests from NZ and elsewhere in Bangladesh. Thank you Nadine and Ratan for everything you do for Kailakuri. We hope you are enjoying your honeymoon in Darjeeling.

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WEBSITES

<http://sites.google.com/site/kailakurihealth>

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/kailakuri

(Like our Facebook page and receive regular updates)

Donations can be made by...

- Paying online through our website via Paypal at <http://sites.google.com/site/kailakurihealth>
- Making a telegraphic transfer (TT) payment to our New Zealand Bank Account (ANZ, Whakatane, New Zealand). Account Name: Kailakuri Health Care Project - Link Group; Account Number: **01 0486 0185024 00**, **SWIFT code ANZ BNZ 22**. Please email Glenn Baker at treasurerkhcp@gmail.com with your donation and contact details.
- If you live in the United States, you can write a cheque to "Asia Connection Inc". Please indicate on a separate note that the donation is for Kailakuri and send to Ted Rose, Treasurer, Asia Connection Inc, 1226 Scott St, El Cerrito, CA.94530-2458, and give your contact details for a receipt.

Thank-you so much for your support.

Our greatest need is gifts towards on-going running costs.