

God's Miracle Millennium Child

He survived the Tsunami only to be told he will die anyway if the operation is not performed soon

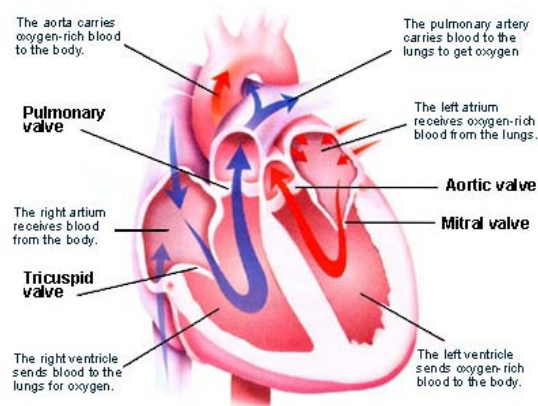
Insaff, a 5 year old boy, born 1st January 2000, came to our organization, Al-Noor, wanting to be educated like the other orphans from his village, but he could not qualify as he is not an Orphan. However, what he said to Mr Nazeem the gentleman who brought us these children, made us re think our decision.

He said, I too want to study like the others, but I know I can't because I have a bad heart! A 5 year old boy saying this.....

it just made our hearts melt.

We looked at his medical records and sure enough he was seriously ill... in fact he was slowly dying! He had a ruptured chordae of both leaflets of the mitral valve and 80% of the blood was flowing back into the lungs.

Diagram:



Insaff is the last of six children belonging to Mr Razick from Kalmunaikudy in Kalmunai. Insaff came to us on the 30th October 2005 with the other Tsunami Orphans and we could not keep him still... full of life and a bundle of joy, but when he came a week later, you could see the difference.... He just sat there with his dad, not saying much.

Mr Razick was out fishing when the Tsunami happened ... from the sea he could see the damage the waves were doing to the houses and the people but there was no way for him to make it back to the shore due to the turbulence of the waves. When he finally managed to get back to land, it was around 1130am, almost 2 hours after the Tsunami struck. There were rubbles in the place of his house and no one... he thought he had lost every member of his family along with all his possessions! By some miracle, he found his six children, two days later and three weeks later he found his wife, who by that time, sadly had become severely demented, all in Sammanturai, a village 10km away .



Now the family is just stuck in a 12 feet by 16 feet room made of up bricks and timber with an asbestos roof, called the camp, which is their home for the past year. With twelve families, making a total of 105 people, sharing 3 toilets and 2 bathrooms, living is very cramped, to say the least.

Insaff was washed away by the huge tidal waves. He managed to grab hold of part of a roofing and clung to it for his dear life. After the waves retreated, a boy found him hanging on to this roof, with water up to his neck and brought him down to safety. If this stranger was 15 minutes late, we would not be reading Insaff's story!

When his son became seriously ill this year, he admitted him to a government hospital only to be told that this sweet five year old boy needed urgent surgery or else he will certainly die. He has a Rheumatic Heart Disease – a ruptured Chordae of the Mitral Valve producing severe Mitral regurgitation and this could lead to heart failure.

Mr Razick earns roughly USD3 per day and the operation for his son was estimated at USD 4500. He needs to earn for over 4 years without feeding himself or the other members of his family to be able to save up for his son's operation.

He was able to get a letter from the Sri Lankan President's fund agreeing to pay Rs 175,000 but there was a balance of Rs 275,000. He tried many sources but with no luck. However, when he came to us, we agreed to find the balance fund. We had no idea how we were going to do it, but we were also not prepared to see this boy die so young!

We sent out emails to close friends and within days, we got GBP 2025 for this boy. This was much more than we needed nor expected in such a short space of time.



We then met Dr Prasad Krishnan who is the Chief Cardiac Surgeon at Apollo Hospital in Sri Lanka. He has over 15 years experience, working in world famous cardiac hospitals such as The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, The Cleveland Clinic, in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, The Greenlane Hospital in Auckland, New Zealand and having over 7500 operations, (1600 in Sri Lanka) to his credit. When we explained that Insaff's family was one of the Tsunami victims, he immediately said we have to hurry up to try and save this boy's life and he will do his bit. He said all he needed was the material and he will do the operation. He wanted us to admit Insaff on Saturday the 12th November so that the operation can be performed on Monday.

We called Mr Nazeem to give him the good news and asked for Insaff and his father to arrive at our Orphanage on Friday the 11th. However, when Insaff arrived, he was in a bad state. He was very short of breath and coughing almost continuously. He was wheezing and with a lot of Phlegm. As a result he could hardly take a step before becoming exhausted and he was carried by his father all the time. We prayed that he will be fine till we took him to Apollo Hospital the next day.

Saturday morning, the car went to collect him and take him to Apollo Hospital for admission. On Sunday, Dr Prasad called me to say that the Insaaf was literally struggling for every breath of air. The massive leak in the mitral valve had caused the pressure in his lungs to become so high that he could hardly breath even at rest. In consultation with Dr. Sivakumar, the cardiologist, Dr. Prasad said there were signs of active inflammation in his heart and that they were treating him with medication. Once the inflammation subsides, and his situation improves a little the operation can be performed.

A few days later, we were told that the Operation was fixed for Thursday the 17th ! The day of the Sri Lankan Presidential elections! At around 1145AM, we got a call from Dr Prasad saying the operation was a success! We have managed to repair his own valve and it is now functioning like a normal valve. The ruptured chordae were reconstructed precisely using fine PTFE (PolyTetraFluoroEthylene) strings tailored to the exact length. Herein lies the complexity of the operation, working with something as delicate and small as the heart valve of a 5 year old and reconstructing the severely damaged valve the way nature had originally made it. It was a very delicate and complex operation, with no margin for error and was efficiently and expeditiously accomplished in 3 hours by Dr. Prasad and his team.



Under normal circumstances such valves are replaced with an artificial valve. This is technically a much easier operation, but unfortunately brings with it a whole new set of problems. These include the inability of an artificial valve to grow, something very important for a 5 year old boy, the life long necessity for daily anticlotting medications, life long risk of bleeding and clotting problems, infections and failure of artificial valves. But thanks to the expertise of the experienced Dr Prasad, in repairing mitral valves, Insaaf could continue living with his God given natural valve..

Insaaf is the youngest among the 70 odd patients in Sri Lanka to have Mitral valve repair with reconstruction of the ruptured chordae to both leaflets of the Mitral Valve performed successfully by Dr. Prasad. The oldest being 75 years of age.

Within 5 days of open heart surgery, Insaaf is a bubbly smiling boy, merrily walking the corridors of the hospital with a smile. He has no more of the constant coughing and struggle to breath. Seeing Insaaf before and after surgery makes us realize how easily we take certain things for granted, like just breathing effortlessly and also what a great difference a heart operation can make to someone.



Al Noor is a non profit organization dedicated in helping orphans and the needy. However without your help, this will not be possible and we plead with you to assist us in any way you can.

We are located at:

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