

# Newsletter

Oct - Dec 2021



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# Highlights



Our co-founder, Ms Sarbani Das Roy, was awarded the Sanmarg Aparajita - Saluting Womanhood Award in CSR and Social Work 2021 for her tenacious quest to make the city a better place for homeless persons with psychosocial conditions.

For the last ten years, Aparajita awards have been a celebration of women who dare to follow their hearts. To receive this award Sathi and Kamla from Sarbari, Women's Shelter - Iswar Sankalpa joined Ms Das on the stage. We are deeply honoured and humbled by this recognition from Sunmarg Aparajita.





The Residents and team members of Iswar Sankalpa went for the **annual picnic** to Select house, Narendrapur. The day was packed with games, dance, food and music for all!



As the year drew to a close, we organised the last Iswar **Sankalpa Haat** of the season on the 10th, 11th, and 12th December at Crust and Core Café. The Christmas Haat was a three-day event that featured fresh winter vegetables from Nayagram, sustainable handicraft products made by the Vocational Training Unit and delicious food from a special menu curated by Cafe Crust and Core. Local musicians performed at the haat.



Two **medical camps** for homeless persons were organised by Iswar Sankalpa on 26th and 27th December 2021 for the first time, since the lockdowns were imposed. 28 homeless persons with psychosocial conditions and persons from low-resource settings were provided access to hygiene, food and doctor consultation. 8 persons were enrolled in the Naya Daur programme and 3 individuals in Marudyan.

In October 2021, Iswar Sankalpa's reintegration team travelled from Kolkata to Mumbai to reunite Shankaralingam (Shankara) with his family.

Sankara was a young man from Madurai, who migrated around the country for work to support his family financially. He was motivated by his will to provide better educational opportunities for his younger siblings. Shankara frequently moved from one state to another looking for suitable opportunities and in the summer of 2019 Shankara arrived in Kolkata.

In Kolkata, Shankara went from one place to another but his effort to secure employment bore no fruit. Meanwhile, his leg got badly wounded and Shankara became immobilised on the pavements. He had reached the city he set out for, but couldn't find the means to sustain himself, overtime his physical health deteriorated and his mental health took a toll.



## Shankara's story

When the Reintegration team identified Shankara in early 2020, his appearance was untidy; he had dirty layers of clothes and unkempt facial hair but beneath his eerie looks, he was polite, soft-spoken and wanted to draw the social worker's attention to his leg, which needed medical attention.

Shankara was formally enrolled in Iswar Sankalpa during a Medical Camp in Rajabajar, right before the beginning of the first lockdown in 2020. Shankara was very distressed and didn't talk unless spoken to, but he was always vocal about one thing: He wanted to go home.

After being sanitized and tested, he was welcomed to Marudyan, the men's shelter, where he received psychosocial and nutritional support. With proper nutrition and a newfound social circle, Sankara started to open up and bond with his fellow Marudyan residents, he actively started to partake in therapeutic and vocational activities at the shelter. Shankar gradually became engaged in making notebooks, Diwali candles, functional literacy programs and art-based and movement therapy sessions. Sankara even helped and oversaw the daily cooking and actively supported the wellbeing of other residents at Marudyan.



However, Shankara never forgot to ask when he was going home. The first lockdown prevented his chances of returning to Mumbai and reaching Madurai. However, he showed patience and waited for his day. When the lockdown was lifted and normalcy seemed to return, his hopes to return to Madurai rekindled; however, before his travel back home could be planned the second phase of the COVID lockdown began and yet again, Sankara's patience was put to the test.

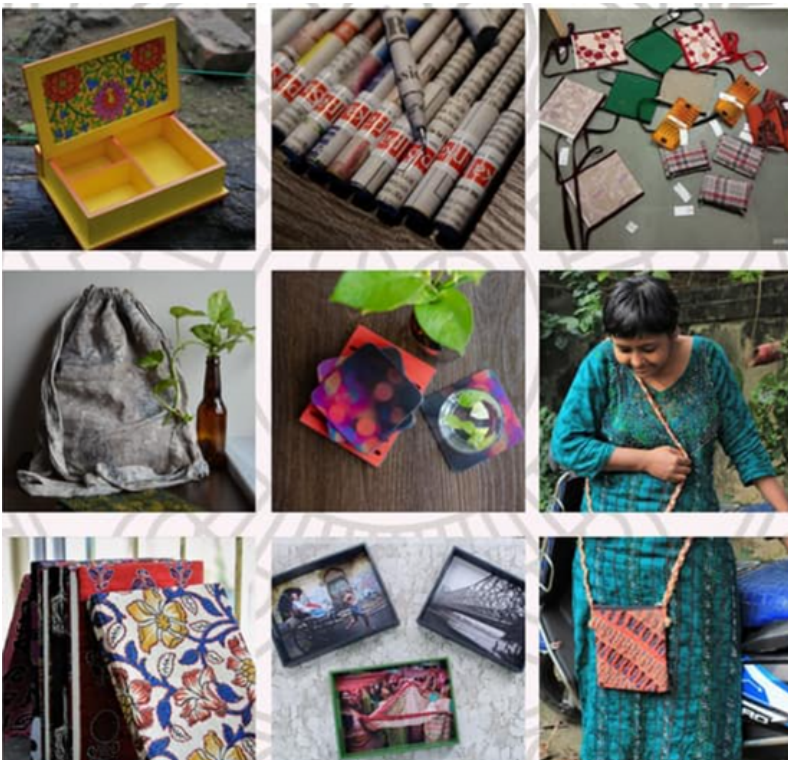
He grew restless and started to lose hope as the lockdowns made going home very uncertain. There is only so much a person can handle. But his story is not a tragedy because soon Sankara's family was traced and contacted by the restoration team in the summer of 2021. Shankaralingam's kinsmen got to know of his status and were eager to embrace their lost son. Shankar's patience would soon payout as a visit was scheduled in October 2021 by the restoration team. His long wait was finally coming to an end. Sanakara's maternal uncle and members of the restoration team arranged a meet up in Mumbai, from where Shankara would travel to Madhurai.

If not tended to, Shankara's lively adulthood could have been taken away by mental health complications, however, timely identification and interventions helped Shankara return to his family. Within weeks of reaching home, Shankara started to work and support his family again. Shankara wants to stay in Madhurai, close to his family to provide for his loved ones. He intends to get married and start a family of his own. Shankaralingam's journey from various parts of the country to Kolkata, back to Madurai and his immense desire to contribute to his family represents the kind of life each of us wants to live; a productive, contributing and meaningful life to love and care for our loved ones.

With support and care from Iswar Sankalpa, Shankara was able to win his battle with homelessness and mental health. He's now an active, contributing member of the community, living his life with dignity.

# Support our #MindChampions

Iswar Sankalpa meaningfully engages the clients in life skills sessions, vocational training and livelihood skill-building sessions. This is an essential step towards the recovery of persons with psychosocial conditions. These activities help the person to relearn social skills, learn to work and live in groups, and also support them in becoming financially able. It plays an important role in developing their self-confidence and belief and helps to open up opportunities for their future employment. The training also helps these individuals to contribute to their living own expenses as well as help their families, rebuilding confidence and dignity and making them an integral part of their families and communities.



Iswar Sankalpa runs a cafe cum training unit - Crust and Core which specializes in customized orders. Our delivery partners are Swiggy and Zomato. Order Now!

Additionally, Saksham - The Vocational Training Unit produces handmade bags, home decoration items and seasonal products for sale. Proceeds from the sales go to the creators as a stipend for making the products. Have a look at our product range...

Cafe Crust & Core Menu

Saksham Product Catalogue



Order today, support our #MindChampions

# How You Can Help?

| Donation options  | Details  |
|---|--|
| Support Medicines for a Client<br>₹1200   | Covers medicines for one client for 3 months   |
| Meals for Male Shelter Clients<br>₹10,000   | Covers breakfast and dinner for one week for 30 residents  |
| Special Occasion Lunch<br>(Non vegetarian)<br>₹26,000   | Special lunch freshly cooked and served in our shelters for 120 clients in celebration or in memory of an occasion |
| Festival Dresses<br>₹36,000   | Covers new dress for 120 clients   |
| Supporting a Client<br>towards Independent<br>Living in the Community<br>₹13,500  | Supports living expenses for 3 months for one client working on an organic farm land owned by Iswar Sankalpa       |
| Corpus Fund<br>₹50,000  | Provides financial stability to the organisation and aids in sustaining the projects                               |
| <p>Any amount of your choice can be donated through online transfers, cash or cheque, for the cause of supporting homeless persons with psychosocial disabilities.<br/>You can also contribute through donations in kind.</p> <p><b>Contact:</b><br/>wilson@isankalpa.org or +91 8240227124<br/>udisha@isankalpa.org or +91 9051496627 for more details</p> |  |
| <p>Society Registration No. S/IL/42976<br/>Date of Registration : 06.03.2007<br/>IT, Section 12A Registration : DIT(E)/S-27 8E/436/08-09<br/>IT, 80G, Registration : DIT (E)/2997/8E/436/08-09<br/>FCRA Registration : 147120892<br/>PAN : AAAAI1966N</p>   |  |

All Donations are exempted from tax under 80G

*Your support gives us the  
courage to move forward!  
Thank you.*

**Sankalpa** ISWAR

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