

■ The boy was suffering from blue baby syndrome, father brought him from Howrah to Bengaluru for treatment

Father fights all odds to treat son's congenital heart disease

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Determined not to let his poverty deter him, Sanyasi Guku travelled all the way to Bengaluru from Howrah to treat his eight-year-old son for a congenital heart defect (CHD). On reaching the city, he learnt the treatment could not be done for free as he had hoped, but not giving up, he got a job in an elec-

trical company that offered an insurance scheme to pay for his treatment.

"It is a beautiful story of parental love and the lengths that people go to secure a better and safe future for their children. They come from all walks of life," says Dr C N Manjunath, director, Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular sciences and Research, where the boy was finally treated.

Sanyasi Guku is a handi-



craftsman by profession, but doing embroidery in Howrah did not give him the money he needed to

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treat his son, Bubay Guku, suffering from the 'Blue baby syndrome.' "I have been trying to collect money for his treatment but as fate

would have it I got to know of the Sathya Sai Hospital in Bengaluru which provides treatment free of cost. However, when I came here

I found the operation could not be done there," recalls Sanyasi, who fortunately met a good samaritan, who not only helped him get lodgings for his son and wife, but also told him about the insurance scheme at the company in Marathalli that covers the treatment costs of its employees' children. "It was the only way to get my son treated and so I decided to join the company," he recounts. Working as part of the housekeeping staff at

the electrical company in Marathalli for nine months, he became eligible for the ESI scheme and approached the ESI hospital, which referred him to Jayadeva hospital.

"The child came in with a congenital heart defect called Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) which involves four anatomical abnormalities, including a hole in the heart, narrowing of the valve, hypertrophy of the right ventricle and overrid-

ing aorta. A three-and-a-half hour long surgery was done by Professor Sitaram Bhatt and his team," explains Dr Manjunath.

Now that his son is on the way to recovery, Sanyasi hopes to return to Howrah next year. "I will leave the city next year after my son undergoes a few more check-ups which are costly and I cannot afford back home," says the devoted father, who has two more sons studying in Kolkata.