

# Diagnosed at two, she defies odds

# 72.4% for CBSE girl with hearing loss

**JHINUK MAZUMDAR**



**Shruti Nandi**

**Calcutta:** Once turned away by mainstream schools for being hard of hearing and for struggling with her speech, a girl who often found herself excluded from social circles has carved a quiet, determined path to success, scoring 72.4% in the CBSE Class X examinations.

Shruti Nandi, now 16, was diagnosed with profound hearing loss when she was just two. A few months following her diagnosis, she began using hearing aids.

“She has undertaken a long journey, moving from a time when she couldn’t hear, follow others, or answer questions, to now being able to read, memorise her lessons, and speak, though with difficulty,” said her mother, Debasmita Nandi.

A student of GD Goenka Public School, Dakshineswar, Shruti prepared for her first board examination by carefully writing out her answers.

“Because of her condition, the milestones were delayed. But she never gave up—slowly and steadily, she worked past her limitations. In Class II, she

could barely memorise or retain the names of five flowers or fruits. When I look back at those days and see her now, standing at the threshold of a new journey, I feel she has achieved something truly remarkable,” Debasmita said.

Her marks are: 74 in English, 75 in maths and social science, 79 in AI and 59 in science.

It was after an investigation at age 2 that Shruti’s parents’ fears came true.

“We would notice that she didn’t respond when called, but we wondered if we were mistaken. The concern deepened when, even during a thunderstorm that would frighten most children her age, Shruti would merely glance once or just

blink,” Debasmita said.

The diagnosis and treatment were not the real challenge; it was society’s insensitivity that proved far harder to overcome. “The problem was the apathy and rejection of several mainstream schools when we tried to get her admitted to kindergarten,” said Debasmita.

“The insensitivity of schools appalled us. Our world had already been turned upside down after her diagnosis, and we were left anxious about whether she would even be granted admission. ‘We will let you know’ was all most of the schools said,” she recalled.

It was the erstwhile DPS North Kolkata, now GD Goenka Public School, that gave her an opportunity.

“Shruti struggled with languages and could not manage studying three of them in Class X. We tried to help her, but the doctor advised that it would be too much for her. Her father went through the CBSE norms and, with the support of GD Goenka Public School, got her exempted from studying the languages in Class X,” Debasmita said.