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Ugandan child Jordan gets new lease of life

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KOCHI: Mukhaye Jane from Uganda was on cloud nine when she got to see her son Jordan Mugambe preparing to celebrate his second birthday by cutting his favourite chocolate cake at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) on Thursday.

Jordan was born with a complex heart defect called tetralogy of fallot (TOF), a condition in which there is a presence of severe cyanosis in infants and as result these children are also called as bluebabies.

Jordan is the second son of Thomas Mugambe, who works for an NGO in Uganda and Mukhaye Jane, who was earlier a banking professional.

Jordan was brought to Amrita hospital in Kochi on March 14, 2018 for open heart surgery to cure his critical heart defect. He was treated and operated successfully by a team of paediatric cardiac surgeon and paediatric cardiologist led by Dr P K Brijesh and Dr R Krishna Kumar. The surgery took place on March 15.

According to Jane, though Jordan was born with TOF, it took some time for doctors in Uganda to diagnose the fact that her son is battling with a life – threatening disease.

“At first he had difficulty in breathing so doctors in Uganda thought it was pneumonia and treated him for that but later I noticed that his nails and lips are turning blue especially when he was crying. In addition to that there was occasionally bleeding from

nose and above all he was not gaining weight. He was becoming weak day by day and I had to even resign my job as I had to look after him day and night,” said Jane, who was close to tears while recalling the days in which she was unable to pacify her son who was wriggling with pain.

Jane said that there were days where she completely lost hope. “I didn’t know what to do nor did my family. “Some in Uganda even said that I should stop the treatment given to my son as there is less chance for him to survive. But as a mother and human being I cannot see the destruction of my child. My family too supported me. I am glad that my son can now enjoy life like the rest of the children, she added.

“My son was first treated at the Uganda Heart Institute. However, doctors there advised that I should either go to USA or India for further treatment. Doctors at Uganda Heart Institute and Uganda Rotary Club told me about the Gift of Life International, which is an organization of Rotarians across the globe which sponsors heart surgeries for children with congenital heart disease in developing countries. The officials at Gift of Life got us in touch with Gift of Life programme in India. The Indian High Commission in Uganda helped us to get visa and facilitated travel arrangements, said Jane.