



## Once stricken, twice shy

Everyone in the family was elated with the news that Hansa Ben (Jeet's mother) had given birth to a baby boy. However, that feeling did not last long once they saw Jeet, who was born with a cleft lip and palate.

Jeet's deformity was not new to his family. In the past, two of his family members were born with a cleft; one being Jeet's mother, Hansa Ben. So, it was evident that they would accept the child gladly. But they were worried about their son's health conditions in the long run and how he would face the challenges in his daily life with this deformity.

Jeet's parents live in a village called Sutrapada, near Somanath in the state of Gujarat. Jeet's father Vijay Bhai works as a daily labour and he was aware that they could barely be able to meet the cost of surgery.

Moreover, they were still reeling under the debt created for the cleft surgery of Jeet's mother five years back. So, treatment of Jeet was a far cry for them.

However, a Project Animator of ABMSS met the family during the scheduled search and awareness camp and identified Jeet with a cleft lip and palate. He assured that their son's case could be treated with multiple surgeries and without any cost.

"We were so happy when we met the person from ABMSS who assured us to provide free treatment. We would not have known the facility if he had not come to us and inform about the facility. We had to spend nothing for the surgery. Rather, they took care of our transportation and arranged food for us during our stay at Hospital. And more importantly, we were satisfied with the standard of quality treatment they provided to our child at the cleft centre in Ahmedabad", said his father, Vijay Bhai Kamadiya. Join us in helping many more children like Jeet and parents like Hansa Ben and Vijay Bhai.

Their happiness was even more when they saw Jeet after the surgery.

Here is what Hansa Ben, Jeet's mother expressed on seeing her son: "When I saw Jeet after the cleft lip surgery, I was overwhelmed. I am feeling as if my son was re-born. He looks beautiful now and looks like other children of his age. We can now take him out into our community and present him before our neighbors confidently. They have also assured that after 3 to 4 months, they will also do the surgery for Palate and then Jeet can eat well and improve a lot with his speech. We are also thankful to them for giving our family a reason to smile too".