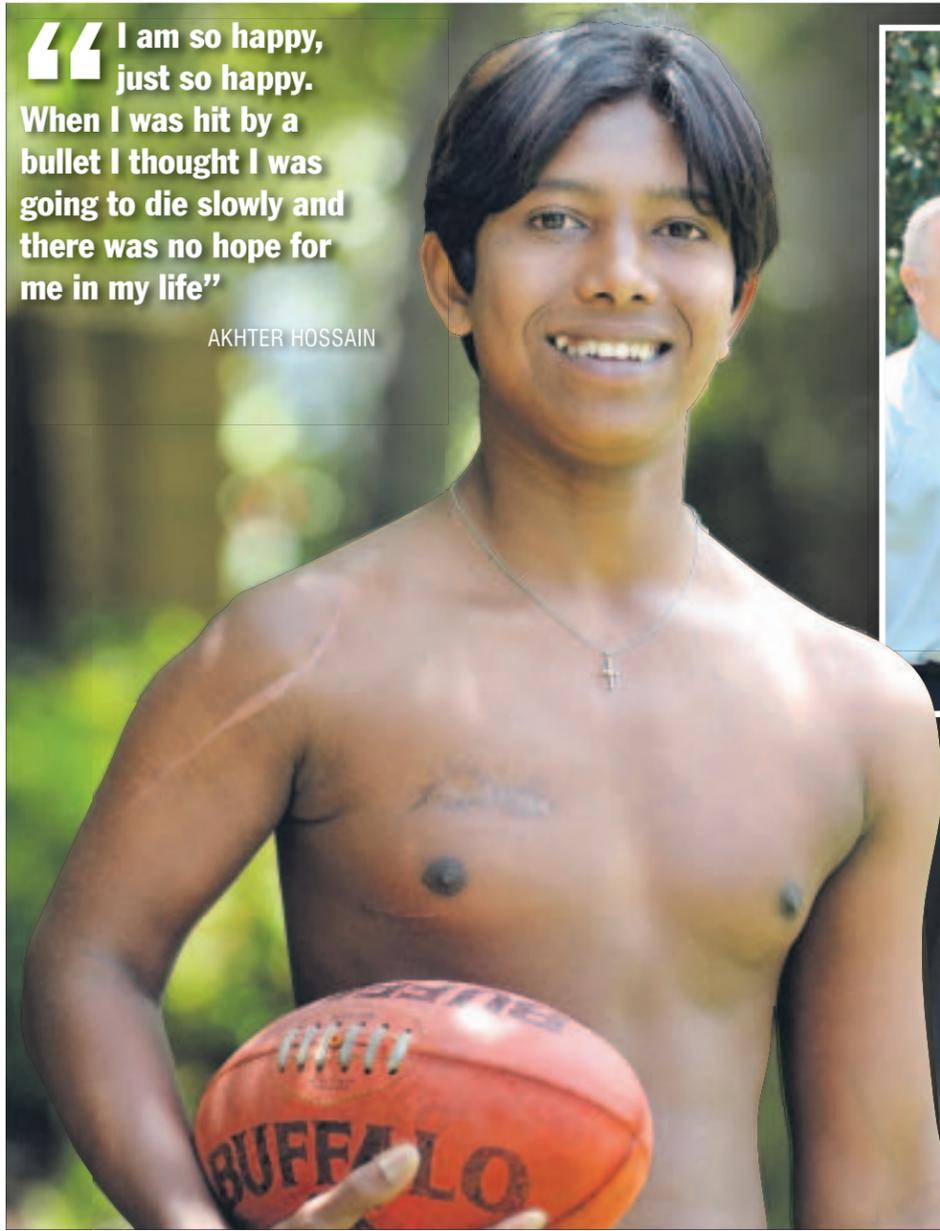


**“ I am so happy, just so happy. When I was hit by a bullet I thought I was going to die slowly and there was no hope for me in my life”**

AKHTER HOSSAIN



**New lease of life:** Akhter Hossain, 14, lost the use of his right arm when he was hit in the shoulder and chest by stray bullets in Dhaka. Surgeon John Griffiths (left and below) reconstructed Akhter's shoulder at Cabrini Hospital. Akhter will return to Bangladesh this weekend. Pictures: CRAIG BORROW



**Akhter, 14, was shot down in a crossfire, his arm and life in ruins**

# Tortured teen's life rebuilt

A BANGLADESHI teen shot during a mutinous uprising has been given his life back by Melbourne surgeons who restored the use of his arm.

Akhter Hossain, 14, nearly died and his prospects were ruined when he was shot in the shoulder and chest while caught in the crossfire of an uprising in Dhaka in February last year.

Abandoned without care from his own nation, Akhter

**Grant McArthur**  
medical reporter

could raise his arm only a few centimetres, was in constant pain and facing a life as a beggar when he was brought to Australia by Children First Foundation in July.

His shattered right arm and life have now been rebuilt by orthopaedic surgeon John Griffiths at Cabrini Hospital, as the smiling teen was only too happy to demonstrate yesterday.

“It is very good. Very, very, very good. I am so happy, just so happy,” he said.

“When I was hit by a bullet I thought I was going to die slowly and there was no hope for me in my life.”

Despite being only 14, Akhter is his family of eight's sole breadwinner after his fisherman father was disabled in an accident, and had been selling tea outside a military building when the mutiny took place.

With 54 army officers and

several civilians killed in the uprising, the incident has dominated headlines in Bangladesh even more than the separation of conjoined twins Trishna and Krishna — but little help was offered to the wounded Akhter.

Without the use of his arm and with no help from his own health system or government, Akhter was facing a future as a beggar until rescued by businessman Atom Rahman, who contacted Moira Kelly at Children First Foundation.

Mr Griffiths said Akhter's upper arm was shattered by a high-powered bullet, with his nerves and muscle wasting away over the past 18 months to the point where his arm would have been irretrievable if the injury was left without attention for much longer.

But there may be a silver lining to Akhter's ordeal. He has now learned basic English and has the possibility of a much better job when he returns home, including an offer of employ-

ment from Mr Rahman, as well as the possibility he can undertake education.

**TODAY** marks a year since surgeons at The Royal Children's Hospital began the delicate surgery to separate conjoined twins Trishna and Krishna.

Moira Kelly and her Children First Foundation will celebrate with a Mass of thanksgiving at St Patrick's Cathedral from 10.30am and invite all members of the public — from all cultures and beliefs — to attend or say a private thank you.



Melbourne → KL from **\$149\***

Melbourne → Mumbai from **\$157\***

Melbourne → London (Stansted) from **\$301\***

Check out our other great fares from KL across the AirAsia X network, including:

- China → Chengdu
- China → Hangzhou
- China → Tianjin
- Korea → Seoul
- India → New Delhi
- Taiwan → Taipei

**SALE ENDS TODAY**

*AirAsia.com*



Book @ [airasia.com](http://airasia.com) Holiday package deals @ [airasiago.com](http://airasiago.com)

\*Flights and fares are subject to availability. Seats are limited and not available on all flights, or peak periods or days. Fares include airport taxes. Convenience fee is applicable for online bookings made by credit, debit or charge card. Other terms and conditions apply. Booking period 15 - 17 November, 2010. Travel period 1 July - 10 November, 2011. Lowest possible sale fares are one way on the web. Next best possible fare available via phone with additional \$25 service fee. All amounts are in Australian dollars unless stated otherwise. AIR08975