

**UNITE  
FOR  
GOOD**

**Rotary**  
Club of  
**ORGAN DONATION  
INTERNATIONAL**



**LET'S  
INSPIRE !**

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# NEW STEP

*Weekly Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Organ Donation International*

**UNITE FOR GOOD**      **Rotary Club of ORGAN DONATION INTERNATIONAL**      **LET'S INSPIRE !**

**ROTARY CLUB OF ORGAN DONATION INTERNATIONAL**

**LATEST INNOVATION IN SKIN DONATION**



**Rtn Lal Goel**  
Founder & Charter President  
Rotary Club of  
Organ Donation International



**Rtn PHF Ritika Gupta**  
Inspire President  
Rotary Club of  
Organ Donation International



**Dr Sunil M. Keswani**  
M.Ch (Plastic Surgery):  
KEM Hospital, Mumbai  
Specialises in Cosmetic Surgery & Burns  
Medical Director, National Burns Centre  
Navi Mumbai

**Rtn Ruby Agarwal**  
Inspire Secretary

**Rtn PHF Dr Rohan Monis**  
Club Medical Director

**Time & Date: 8 PM on Sunday 22nd Feb., 2026**

Watch live on <https://www.youtube.com/@gyan8932>

**A donor's heart may stop,  
but their kindness never does**  
**DONATE ORGANS**

CHIEF MANAGING EDITOR IPP RTN LAL GOEL  
PUBLISHED ON BEHALF OF INSPIRE PRESIDENT RTN PHF RITIKA GUPTA  
BY INSPIRE SECRETARY RTN RUBY AGARWAL FOR ROTARY CLUB OF  
ORGAN DONATION INTERNATIONAL.  
CONTACT: [rcorgandonation@gmail.com](mailto:rcorgandonation@gmail.com)

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## FROM THE DESK OF CHIEF MANAGING EDITOR



**Dear Fellow Rotarians and Esteemed Members,**

In this issue, I am pleased to present Is India's Organ Donation Policy Shift Good Enough? — a critical evaluation of India's evolving organ donation framework. The article highlights both the encouraging progress our nation has made and the urgent structural reforms still required to bridge the staggering gap between organ demand and supply. It is our hope that this analysis will spark meaningful dialogue among policymakers, medical communities, and citizens alike.

Continuing from our last issue — where we covered four organ donation awareness programs across Chennai and Puducherry — this edition brings you two more inspiring outreach events held in Chennai: one at Sriram Engineering College and another at Agni College of Technology. These programs exemplify the Club's commitment to sowing the seeds of awareness in young, impressionable minds — for it is today's students who will carry the torch of compassion forward.

We are also deeply honoured to feature a beautiful poem by our President-Elect, Rtn Hemalatha Bhandari — “Be the Spark for a Second Start.” Her words carry a warmth and wisdom that resonate with the very heart of our mission. We are confident you will find it as moving as we did.

Our Inspire Secretary, Rtn Ruby Agarwal, once again delights us in our popular “Healthy Food – Healthy Organs” segment with a refreshing, mouth-watering recipe for Healthy Oil-Free Batata Vada. A reminder that nourishing our organs begins at the dining table.

Finally, our “Interesting Facts About Our Members” spotlight celebrates another cherished member of our Rotary family, offering a glimpse into the remarkable individuals who make this Club so very special.

**“Be remembered not for what you took, but for what you gave.”**

Yours in Rotary,

**IPP Rtn Lal Goel**

Chief Managing Editor

Founder & Charter President

## IS INDIA'S ORGAN DONATION POLICY SHIFT GOOD ENOUGH?



**Rtn Lal Goel**

**Founder & Charter President,  
Rotary Club of Organ Donation International  
Chairman: Organ Donation India Foundation & GYAN**

India has reached a historic milestone in organ transplantation. In 2024, the country performed approximately 18,900 organ transplants—the highest ever recorded. Yet beneath this achievement lies a stark reality: India continues to face one of the world's most severe organ shortages.

An estimated five lakh (500,000) patients require organ transplants annually, but only a fraction receive them. More concerning is the foundation of the system itself—India's deceased organ donation rate remains below 1 per million population (pmp).

### **In contrast:**

- Spain records approximately 52.6 deceased donors per million population (2024)—the highest in the world.
- The United States records approximately 48 deceased donors per million population (latest reported data).

For a nation of over 1.4 billion people, this gap is not merely statistical—it is systemic.

### **The Recent Policy Shift**

Since 2023, the Government of India has initiated significant reforms under a "One Nation, One Policy" approach, anchored by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO).

## Removing Access Barriers (2023)

- The upper age limit of 65 years for waitlist registration was removed.
- The domicile requirement was abolished, allowing patients to register in any state.
- Registration on the national waitlist was made free.

These were long-overdue measures that reduce interstate disparities.

## Equity-Based Allocation (2025 Advisory)

NOTTO issued a 10-point advisory providing:

- Additional priority to women recipients.
- Preference to immediate relatives of deceased donors.

This addresses long-standing gender imbalance and incentivises family consent.

## Digital and Financial Enablers

- Aadhaar-linked online pledge registration has crossed 3.3 lakh pledges.
- Financial assistance under Ayushman Bharat supports eligible transplant patients.
- Efforts are underway to strengthen real-time registries and organ transport protocols.

These reforms build upon the Transplantation of Human Organs Act and the NOTTO-ROTTTO-SOTTO framework established in 2014.

## Progress: What Is Working

- Transplants have risen from fewer than 5,000 in 2013 to nearly 19,000 in 2024.
- Deceased donors crossed 1,100 in 2024.
- States like Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat demonstrate that structured programmes improve outcomes.

These gains are meaningful—but not transformative.

## The Persistent Structural Gaps

### Deceased Donation Remains Critically Low

India remains overwhelmingly dependent on living donors.

While Spain stands at 52.6 pmp and the United States at 48 pmp, India remains below 1 pmp due to:

- Inconsistent state implementation
- Legal ambiguity around brainstem death
- Fear of medico-legal consequences
- Absence of national Donation after Circulatory Death (DCD) protocols
- Limited expanded-criteria donor use

Without mandatory reporting and legal clarity, deceased donation cannot scale.

### Infrastructure and Human Resource Deficits

Many registered transplant centres remain inactive. Public hospitals lag behind private institutions. Chronic shortages include:

- Trained transplant coordinators
- ICU beds for donor maintenance
- Retrieval and transport logistics
- Real-time digital allocation systems

Announcements alone cannot fix underfunded systems.

### Mobile Organ Retrieval Centres: A Critical Missing Link

One transformative reform India urgently needs is the establishment of Mobile Organ Retrieval Centres (MORCs).

### Why Mobile Retrieval Centres Matter

India's geography is vast. Many potential donors are located in tier-2 and tier-3 cities where:

- Transplant teams are unavailable
- Brain-death declaration is delayed
- Organs are lost due to logistical constraints

**Mobile Organ Retrieval Centres—equipped ambulances with trained surgical retrieval teams and organ preservation equipment—can:**

- Travel to non-transplant hospitals
- Perform on-site organ retrieval
- Stabilise and preserve organs
- Coordinate rapid air or road transport

This model reduces organ wastage, decentralises access, and builds confidence among smaller hospitals.

## **International Inspiration**

Spain's high performance is supported by hospital-based coordinators and rapid retrieval systems. The U.S. model relies on strong Organ Procurement Organisations with structured transport networks.

**India must adapt these principles to its scale through:**

- Nationally funded Mobile Retrieval Units
- Regional rapid-response teams
- Dedicated organ air corridors
- Real-time GPS-linked tracking systems

Without mobile infrastructure, policy reform will not translate into higher deceased donation rates.

## **Massive Unmet Need**

Kidney transplants number around 13,000–14,000 annually, yet waiting lists run into lakhs. Waiting periods stretch 3–5 years. Thousands die while waiting.

Rural and economically weaker patients face barriers of affordability and awareness. Myths, religious misconceptions, and fear continue to influence family consent.

## **The International Comparison**

**Spain's leadership—52.6 pmp—was built through:**

- Mandatory brain-death reporting
- Hospital-based transplant coordinators
- Continuous professional training
- Cultural normalisation of donation
- Presumed consent

The United States, at 48 pmp, benefits from strong Organ Procurement Organisations and structured national reporting.

India's reforms remain largely procedural rather than systemic.

## **The Verdict: Progress, But Not Enough**

The 2023–2025 reforms deserve recognition. They have:

- Increased transplant numbers
- Reduced bureaucratic barriers
- Promoted equity
- Improved digital registration

However, they do not yet address the structural core of the crisis.

## **The Road Ahead: From Reform to Transformation**

### **Universal Financial Protection**

- The AB-PMJAY scheme must be mandatory for all transplant-performing hospitals.
- Insurance companies must comprehensively cover organ transplantation without increasing premiums.

Financial fear must never prevent a transplant.

### **Empower NOTTO with Statutory Authority**

NOTTO should be granted stronger binding powers for:

- Mandatory reporting
- Audit control
- Enforcement capability

Organ allocation must be insulated from politics and delay.

### **Mandatory Brain-Death Reporting**

- Compulsory declaration in every ICU
- Regulatory action for non-reporting
- Uniform national protocols

### **Education Reform**

- From 5th standard onwards, organs, tissues, brain death, and organ donation must be part of the curriculum.

## Responsible Public Discourse

Deliberate misinformation that discourages organ donation should invite accountability under appropriate legal provisions.

## Media as a Public Health Partner

Sustained organ donation messaging—not seasonal campaigns—is essential.

## Structural Reforms Still Needed

- Harmonised legal definitions of death
- Mandatory brain-death audits
- National DCD protocols
- Public ICU investment
- Transparent allocation systems
- Performance-linked funding
- National rollout of Mobile Organ Retrieval Centres

## Conclusion

India has the population base, clinical expertise, and technological capacity to become a global leader in organ donation.

What is missing is decisive systemic execution.

With Spain at 52.6 pmp, the United States at 48 pmp, and India still below 1 pmp, incremental reform is not enough.

We need stronger laws.

We need empowered institutions.

We need compulsory reporting.

We need universal financial protection.

We need a mobile retrieval infrastructure.

We need education from childhood.

We need a media partnership.

And above all, we need citizens to step forward.

Until structural reform matches policy ambition, thousands of preventable deaths will continue.

And that is a gap no nation of 1.4 billion should accept.

## Is India's Organ Donation Policy Shift Good Enough?

### India's Deceased Donation Rate



52.6 pmp



48 pmp



<1 pmp

### The Policy Reforms



One Nation, One Policy



Ayushman Bharat  
Health Coverage



Domicile & Age Limits  
— Removed —

### A Critical Need: Mobile Organ Retrieval Centres (MORCs)



- ▶ Rapid Organ Retrieval
- ▶ Small City Access
- ▶ Green Corridor Transport

### The Gap Persists...

- ✔ Deceased Donation Still <1 pmp
- ✔ Infrastructure & HR Deficits
- ✔ Massive Waiting Lists

- ✔ Empower NOTTO
- ✔ Universal Health Coverage
- ✔ Mandatory Brain-Death Reporting
- ✔ Mobile Retrieval Centres Nationwide
- ✔ Educate & Act Now!

Rotary

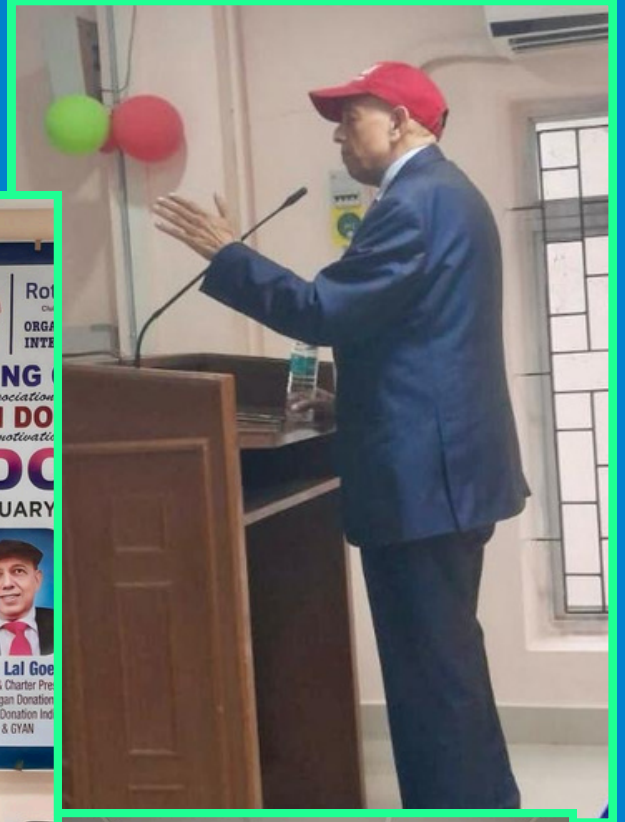
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**ORGAN DONATION  
INTERNATIONAL**

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## ROTARIAN LAL GOEL DELIVERS INSPIRATIONAL TALK ON ORGAN DONATION AT CHENNAI'S SRIRAM ENGINEERING COLLEGE



**Chennai, 3 February 2026** — Rotarian Lal Goel, Founder and Charter President of the Rotary Club of Organ Donation International and Chairman of the Organ Donation India Foundation & GYAN, delivered a compelling keynote address on organ donation at Sriram Engineering College, Chennai, on 3 February 2026.

Invited as Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker, Rotarian Lal Goel urged students and faculty to confront the critical state of organ donation in India and take an active role in spreading awareness. His address was both thought-provoking and motivating, drawing on his extensive experience championing this vital cause.

Rotarian Hemalatha Bhandari opened the session with a warm introduction, highlighting Rotarian Lal Goel's decades of dedication to organ donation advocacy.

The event was presided over by Dr B R Ramesh Babu, Principal of Sriram Engineering College, alongside Dr P Mahesh, Professor and Head of the School of Computer Science, and other distinguished guests.

In his address, Dr Ramesh Babu commended Rotarian Lal Goel for his powerful and informative presentation, noting that the awareness programme had effectively highlighted the urgency and importance of organ donation. He added that both staff and students came away with a deeper understanding of the issue.

The session was attended by a large number of students and faculty members and is expected to inspire many to pledge their support to this noble cause.

## YOUTH HOLD THE KEY TO TRANSFORMING ORGAN DONATION IN INDIA, SAYS ROTARIAN LAL GOEL



**Chennai, 3 February 2026** — Rotarian Lal Goel, Founder and Charter President of the Rotary Club of Organ Donation International and Chairman of the Organ Donation India Foundation & GYAN, urged India's youth to take an active role in addressing the country's organ donation crisis during a special address at Agni College of Technology, Chennai, on 3 February 2026.

Speaking to an audience of students and faculty, Rotarian Goel painted a sobering picture of organ donation in India, drawing comparisons with countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom to highlight the significant gap in donation rates. He attributed India's poor performance to deep-rooted myths and misconceptions prevalent in society, and called on young people to become agents of change.

While praising Tamil Nadu for consistently ranking first in organ donation across India for several consecutive years, Rotarian Goel stressed that much more remains to be done. "Thousands of lives can still be saved," he said, urging greater awareness and action at the grassroots level.

Dr Srinivasan Alavandar, Principal of Agni College of Technology, welcomed Rotarian Goel and presented him with a memento in recognition of his commitment to this noble cause. Dr Alavandar expressed hope that the session would help shift the mindset of both students and faculty by dispelling long-held myths surrounding organ donation.

Rotarian Lal Goel engaged warmly with the audience, providing detailed responses to questions raised by attendees.

The event was also attended by President-Elect Rotarian Hemalatha Bhandari, alongside a large number of faculty members and students.

*“Be the Spark for a Second Start”*

## **ORGAN & TISSUE DONATION**

*Sharing a spark in the fading sun  
Uniting two lives when a journey is done,  
New breath begins for a daughter or son.*

*Mending a heart that was heavy and low,  
Offering seeds so that gardens might grow,  
Nobly deciding to let kindness flow.*

*Trusting the magic that science can true,  
Useful and selfless, A gift from the blue,  
Ending the wait for a life to renew.*

*Wishing for time that was slipping away,  
Easing the clouds of a dark, stormy day,  
Delivering hope in a quiet display!*

*Threading the needle of fate with a trust,  
Healing the spirit because we feel we must,  
Under the stars, we are more than just dust  
Rising above as the brave and the just.*

*Finding a future where others saw fear,  
Reaching across to a soul we hold dear,  
Igniting a light that will shine through the year.*

*Saving a world with a simple consent,  
Answering prayers that the heavens have sent,  
Treasured and sacred, a life well-spent,  
Universal love is what this has meant,  
Remembering always the grace that it lent!*



**Rtn Hemalatha Bhandari**  
**President Elect**

## HEALTHY FOOD - HEALTHY ORGANS

# Oil-Free Batata Vada

### Ingredients:

#### For the Filling

- 3–4 medium potatoes, boiled and mashed
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 4–5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 2 green chilies, finely chopped
- 1 tsp mustard seeds (dry roasted)
- 8–10 curry leaves
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander, chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice

#### For the Batter

- 1 cup besan
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- ¼ tsp ajwain
- Salt to taste
- Water to make thick batter

### Method

**For the filling:** Dry roast mustard seeds until they splutter. Add curry leaves, green chilies, garlic, and ginger — sauté with a splash of water for 2 minutes until the raw garlic smell goes away. Add onions and cook with occasional splashes of water (water sauté method) until soft and translucent. Add mashed potatoes, turmeric, chili powder, salt, lemon juice, and coriander. Mix well, cool, and shape into balls.

**Make the batter:** Mix besan with all the spices and enough water to form a smooth, thick coating batter.

#### Cook without oil — choose one method:

- **Air Fryer:** Dip potato balls in batter, place in air fryer at 200°C (390°F) for 12–15 minutes, flipping halfway until golden and crisp.
- **Oven/OTG:** Bake at 200°C for 20–25 minutes on a parchment-lined tray, flip once.
- **Appam Pan (Paniyaram Pan):** Spoon batter into the cavities, place potato filling in the centre, cover with more batter, and cook on low-medium heat covered. Flip and cook the other side.

**Tips:** • The appam pan method gives the closest texture to the fried version.

- Add a pinch of baking soda to the batter for a slightly puffier coating.
- Serve with green chutney or tamarind chutney.

Enjoy guilt-free Batata Vada! 😊



Rtn Ruby Agarwal  
Inspire Secretary





**Rtn Astha Saxena**  
Club Member

**Name:** Astha Saxena

**Mobile:** 9627905000

**E-mail:** asthasaxena.psycan@gmail.com

**Profession:** Psycho Oncologist

**Founder & Director at** Psycan Manovaha Pvt. Ltd.

**Family:** Joint family

**Favourite Food:** Pizza

**Favourite Holiday Destination:** Beaches

**Favourite Book:** *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown

**Favourite Song:** *Lag Ja Gale se phir* by Lata Mangeshkar

**Favourite Quote:** *The mind is like an iceberg, it floats with one-seventh of its bulk above water.- Sigmund Freud*

**Date of Birth:** 08/10

**Social media:** IG: asthasaxena\_08 IG: psycan\_manovaha

**Why did you choose to become a member of RC Organ Donation International:** In the field of psycho-oncology, we assist patients in managing their most profound fears and aspirations for what lies ahead. I became involved with RC Organ Donation International because I believe that even when confronted with a terminal illness, the urge to contribute back creates a significant sense of control and purpose. Advocating for organ donation is a natural progression of promoting the psychological health and life significance of our patients.



**SCAN  
ME  
FOR  
QUICK  
PLEDGE**

**(Pledge your Organs to donate only  
after talking to your family members)**