

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**

Rotary
Club of
**ORGAN DONATION
INTERNATIONAL**



**LET'S
INSPIRE !**

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NEW STEP

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INTERNATIONAL**

**LET'S
INSPIRE !**

ROTARY CLUB OF ORGAN DONATION INTERNATIONAL

HEALTHY EYES

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Inspire President
Rotary Club of
Organ Donation
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Rotary Club of
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Inspire Secretary

Rtn Chandrashekhar S Joshi
Member

Time & Date: 8 PM on Sunday 12th Oct. 2025

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

**You have two hands.
One to help yourself,
the second to help others**
DONATE ORGANS

**CHIEF MANAGING EDITOR IPP RTN LAL GOEL
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BY INSPIRE SECRETARY RTN RUBY AGARWAL FOR ROTARY CLUB OF
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NEW STEP

FROM THE DESK OF CHIEF MANAGING EDITOR



Dear Fellow Rotarians and Esteemed Members,

Two years ago, when I stayed at Raj Bhavan Kolkata as the guest of His Excellency Governor of West Bengal, Dr C V Ananda Bose, I never imagined that my speech during the Global Green Parliament on “Organ Donation: Science, Religion & Faith” would resonate so profoundly. Delivered in the grand hall of the 220-year-old Raj Bhavan to pin-drop silence, that address became the foundation for my continuing advocacy in this noble cause.

An insightful article on the Evolution of Eye Banking in India by Club Organ Donation Chair Rtn Dr Kamal Jain presents a comprehensive analysis backed by compelling facts. This work has the potential to transform eye banking practices across India.

Once again, our Club Vice-President, Rtn Hemalatha Bhandari, has graced us with her lyrical wisdom. Her tropical poem, “The Final Gift of Love,” beautifully interweaves the devotion of Karva Chauth with the supreme love embodied in organ donation. It is a masterpiece that deserves contemplation and appreciation.

In our beloved “Healthy Food-Healthy Organs” segment, this issue brings you a Healthy Wheat Bran Stuffed Baani recipe from our Inspire Secretary, Rtn Ruby Agarwal. I am sure that this North Indian dish will be delicious for your taste buds.

Our “Interesting Facts About Our Members” spotlight this week illuminates the journey of our esteemed Charter Member and valued contributor to the Club Public Image Committee—a testimony to the dedication that defines our club.

COMPASSION IS THE WISH TO SEE OTHERS FREE FROM SUFFERING.

Yours in Rotary,

IPP Rtn Lal Goel

Chief Managing Editor

Founder & Charter President

NEW STEP

HISTORICAL SPEECH OF ROTARIAN LAL GOEL AT KOLKATA RAJ BHAVAN IN GLOBAL GREEN PARLIAMENT 2023 ON ORGAN DONATION: SCIENCE, RELIGION & FAITH



His Excellency Dr C V Anand Bose, Governor of West Bengal, Most Revered Jagadguru Mahaswami Isa Ji Maharaj, Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Shri S Somnath Ji, Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to Albert Einstein, “I cannot imagine a true scientist without deep faith. This can be explained with an example: ‘Science without religion is blind, and religion without science is lame.’”

Organ Donation

Organ donation is a true act of love. A person's resolve to give the gift of life to another reflects the foundation where science and religion stand together.

There has been considerable progress in the field of organ transplantation over the years.

Modern medical science has made it possible to transplant vital organs such as the heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, intestines and kidneys from one person to another, thereby saving the recipient's life. These complex surgeries involve skilled surgeons, trained technicians, qualified nurses, state-of-the-art infrastructure and the latest medicines, making organ transplantation a remarkable achievement of science.

Organ donation is an issue influenced by both scientific and religious perspectives worldwide.

From a scientific perspective, organ donation can save lives and improve the quality of life for recipients. Advances in medical technology have made organ transplantation a viable solution for various organ failures.

However, when it comes to religion and faith, beliefs and practices vary widely. Some religious groups and individuals may have concerns about organ donation due to cultural or religious beliefs. It is essential to respect these beliefs and engage in open and respectful dialogue to address any misconceptions or fears.

The Convergence of Science and Religion

The convergence of science and religion in organ donation can give rise to ethical dilemmas. For example, how should it be handled when the religious beliefs of a potential donor or recipient conflict with the medical necessity of transplantation?

Ethical discussions often help find common ground and foster understanding between the two worlds. Many religious leaders and organisations support organ donation and consider it a compassionate act consistent with principles of altruism and saving lives. Some faith-based organisations actively promote and facilitate organ donation awareness.

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When we face the death of someone we know, it can draw attention to the importance of life's spiritual dimension.

When faced with the decision of organ and tissue donation during the trauma of a loved one's death, a person's religion suddenly becomes very important.

As the decision is made, the question often arises, "What is my religion's stance on organ and tissue donation?"

Most people are not aware of their religious group's doctrine or position on organ and tissue donation.

To encourage organ donation, it is important to bridge the gap between science and religion by raising awareness, providing education, and engaging with religious and spiritual leaders and communities to create a better understanding of the benefits and ethical considerations of organ transplantation.

This can help remove barriers and increase organ donation rates worldwide.

Organ donation is a subject that is seamlessly woven into the realms of science and religion.

Science

From a scientific perspective, organ donation is rooted in ethics and medical ethics.

Religion

While the medical and scientific aspects of organ transplantation are well documented, ethical and religious dimensions bring unique perspectives to this life-saving practice.

Buddhists believe that organ and tissue donation is a matter of personal conscience, and they place high value on acts of compassion. They respect those who donate their organs to save others' lives.

Roman Catholics view organ and tissue donation as an act of charity and love. The Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services, a set of principles guiding the Church's healing mission, clearly interprets the permission for organ donation.

Hindu mythology contains stories in which parts of the human body are used for the benefit of other humans and society. There is nothing in Hinduism that indicates that human organs, dead or living, cannot be used to alleviate the suffering of other humans.

Life after death is a strong belief of Hindus and is an ongoing process of reincarnation. The law of karma determines where the soul will go in the next life.

The Bhagavad Gita describes the relationship between the mortal body and the immortal soul like the relationship between clothes and the body:

**“Vāsāṃsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya
navāni gṛhṇāti naro’parāṇi |
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇā-
nyanyāni saṃyāti navāni dehī ||”**

Just as a person discards old clothes and takes new ones, so the soul discards old material bodies and takes new ones - Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2:22.

One of the fundamental purposes of the Islamic religion is the protection of life: this is a fundamental objective of Sharia and Muslims who believe that Allah greatly rewards those who save others from death.

Muslim scholars from the most prestigious educational institutions are unanimous in declaring that organ donation is an act of virtue and may be an obligation in some circumstances.

Sikh philosophy and teachings place great emphasis on the importance of giving and putting others before oneself.

“Where there is ego, there is no God. Where there is God, there is no ego.” - Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib

Sikhism emphasises the importance of doing good deeds.

Sikh teachings contain many examples of selfless giving and sacrifice by the 10 Gurus and other Sikhs.

“God’s true servants are those who serve Him by helping others” Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib.

Sikhs believe that life after death is a continuous cycle of reincarnation but the physical body is not necessary in this cycle a person’s soul is the real essence.

Conclusion

Organ donation is a unique field where science and religion meet.

While the scientific community continues to advance the field of transplantation, religious perspectives provide ethical and moral considerations that guide this practice.

Bridging the gap between these two worlds requires open dialogue, ethical deliberation, and respect for diverse beliefs.

Ultimately, it is the harmonious coexistence of science and religion that allows organ transplantation to become a beacon and witness to the possibility of human cooperation and compassion.

Thank You

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Braj Vibhuti Rotarian Lal Goel is a visionary leader and a driving force in Organ Donation advocacy. As Founder & Charter President of the Rotary Club of Organ Donation International and Chairman of the Organ Donation India Foundation & GYAN, he has been pivotal in raising awareness about Organ Donation across India. He serves on the National Committee for the National Campaign for Body-Organ Donation (NCBOD) and has been recognised globally for his efforts. He is the ex officio member of the Karnataka SOTTO advisory committee. He is the Advisor to the Organ and Blood Donation Committee (Rakt Veer) of Rotary District 3110.

His accolades include the Rajiv Gandhi Businessman of the Year Award, Tyag Murt Mata Ramai Ambedkar Samman, Icons of India Award, World Parliament International Award and the White Coat Ceremony honour by Donate Life, USA. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Mangalore University awarded him the distinguished title of 'One in a Million'.



EVOLUTION OF EYE BANKING IN INDIA

-Rtn Dr Kamal Jain

Abstract

Eye banking in India has evolved significantly over the past eight decades, emerging from a single centre in Chennai in 1945 to one of the largest eye banking networks globally. Despite this growth, corneal blindness continues to pose a major public health challenge. This paper reviews the historical evolution, milestones, current status, challenges, and future directions of eye banking in India, highlighting recent data and national initiatives aimed at bridging the demand-supply gap for corneal tissue.

Introduction

Corneal blindness ranks third among the leading causes of blindness worldwide, following cataract and glaucoma. It is estimated that 4.9 million people globally are bilaterally blind due to corneal disease, with a significant burden residing in low- and middle-income countries such as India (WHO, 2022). Eye banks play a pivotal role in addressing this condition by procuring, processing, preserving, and distributing corneal tissue for transplantation. Corneal transplantation is among the most commonly performed tissue transplants worldwide, restoring vision and improving the quality of life for countless individuals.

Historical Background

The world's first eye bank was established in New York City in 1944, marking the beginning of organised eye banking. India quickly followed suit: in 1945, Dr R.E.S. Muthiah founded the nation's first eye bank at the Madras Eye Infirmary (now the Regional Institute of Ophthalmology, Chennai). Three years later, in 1948, Dr Muthiah performed India's first successful corneal transplant, laying the foundation for modern keratoplasty in the country (EBAI Archives, 2023).

Growth and Development

In the decades following independence, India witnessed a gradual expansion in eye banking infrastructure. The establishment of the Eye Bank Association of India (EBAI) in 1989 standardised practices and promoted ethical tissue procurement. As of 2023, approximately 740 institutions (eye banks and eye donation centres) are registered under the EBAI. Pre-COVID data from the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) indicate that India achieved record collections of 71,709, 68,409, and 65,417 corneas in the years 2015–2018 (Indian J Ophthalmol, 2023).

Current Status and Statistics (2023–2024)

Recent national data reveal a significant shortfall between tissue availability and demand:

- * In 2023, 47,676 corneas were retrieved, and 29,057 were utilised for transplantation (NAMS Annals, 2024).

- * In 2023–24, approximately 27,394 corneal transplants were performed across India (Times of India, 2024).

- * Of the ~720 registered eye banks, only 18 centres account for nearly 80 % of all cornea collections, reflecting substantial disparities in performance (Times of India, 2024).

- * The average utilisation rate across Indian eye banks is between 40–50 %, varying by donor characteristics, preservation time, and infrastructure (PIB, 2023; Indian J Ophthalmol, 2024).

India's estimated annual demand remains at ~100,000 corneal transplants, implying a need for ~200,000 donor corneas per year to meet this goal, assuming a 50 % utilisation rate (Indian J Ophthalmol, 2024).

Challenges

Despite commendable growth, India continues to face multiple systemic challenges in eye banking:

1. Uneven distribution and functionality – Many registered eye banks are inactive or underperforming, while a small number contribute disproportionately to tissue procurement.

2. Low utilisation rates – Only about half of retrieved corneas are suitable for optical keratoplasty due to poor donor quality, delayed retrieval, or inadequate preservation.

3. Public awareness and cultural barriers – Limited awareness and socio-religious misconceptions deter families from pledging eye donation.

4. Infrastructural and manpower limitations – Many centres lack modern preservation media, cold-chain logistics, or adequately trained personnel.

5. Data reporting gaps – Only a small fraction of eye banks consistently submit detailed data to national registries (Indian J Ophthalmol, 2023).

Modernisation and Technological Advances

The last decade has seen major innovations aimed at enhancing quality and efficiency:

- * Lamellar keratoplasty techniques such as DALK and DSAEK have improved visual outcomes and reduced tissue wastage.

- * Modern corneal preservation media (e.g., Cornisol, Optisol-GS) now allow extended storage, enabling better logistics.

- * The EBAI continues to develop standardised protocols, accreditation criteria, and training programs for technical personnel.

- * Digital platforms and Hospital Cornea Retrieval Programs (HCRPs) have improved donor identification and tissue utilisation rates.

NEW STEP

Government Initiatives

The National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI) remains the cornerstone of governmental support for eye banking. Key initiatives include:

- * Financial assistance for eye bank infrastructure and equipment.
 - * Supply of corneal preservation media and support for HCRPs.
 - * Public awareness campaigns on eye donation through the National Eye Donation Fortnight (August 25 – September 8).
 - * Integration of corneal transplant registries within national health databases.
- These measures have collectively contributed to steady improvements in tissue availability and quality assurance.

Discussion

India's eye banking system represents a remarkable success story of medical and social collaboration. From a single eye bank in 1945 to a network of over 700 registered institutions, the progress is substantial. Yet, the demand-supply gap remains striking: in 2023–24, fewer than 30,000 transplants were performed against an estimated need of 100,000. Bridging this gap requires multi-sectoral action — scaling up hospital-based retrieval programs, strengthening quality control, improving public education, and incentivising voluntary donation.

Conclusion

The evolution of eye banking in India reflects a story of vision, resilience, and humanitarian service. From its modest beginnings in Chennai to becoming one of the world's largest eye banking systems, India has demonstrated a sustained commitment to restoring sight. The path forward lies in modernising infrastructure, standardising protocols, and fostering a culture of voluntary eye donation. Through innovation, awareness, and collaboration, the goal of eliminating corneal blindness in India can be made a reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Retn Dr. Kamal Jain is a distinguished physician and humanitarian leader with over three decades of medical practice since 1991. He serves as Club Learning Facilitator and Organ Donation Chair of the Rotary Club of Organ Donation International, and as Director of the Organ Donation Awareness Project at the Giants Welfare Foundation, where he coordinates 625 groups nationwide for organ donation awareness across India.

Based in Bhiwandi, Dr. Jain established the city's first Eye Donation Centre and has personally performed over 250 eye enucleations. He is a Life Member of the Eye Bank Association of India and Advisory Committee Member of the Sahiyara Eye Bank in Thane. His leadership roles include Honorary Secretary of the National Jain Doctors Federation and Past President of both the Giants Group of Bhiwandi and the Bhiwandi Medical Practitioners Association.

Dr. Jain holds a 2014 world record from the Golden Book of World Records for hosting the "Most Professional People in Matrimonial Meet." He has also served in disaster relief missions, providing medical care to earthquake victims in Latur (1993) and Bhuj (2001) as part of the Giants Medical team.



The Final Gift of Love

*A fast is broken, the moon is seen,
For long, long life, a loving scene.
Karva Chauth, a promise true,
I wish the best for you.*

*But love is more than just a plea,
It's giving everything you can be.
When life's light flickers, soft and low,
A deeper kind of love will show.*

*Not gold or diamonds, but a part,
The steady beat of a new heart.
A gift of sight, a breath of air,
A life exchanged, a love to share.*

*That final gift, so pure and bright,
Turning off darkness, turning on light.
True love exists in one final prayer:
Take this piece of me, and you'll be there forever.*



Rtn Hemalatha Bhandari

HEALTHY FOOD - HEALTHY ORGANS

NEW STEP

Healthy Wheat Bran stuffed Baati

A wholesome twist on the traditional delicacy

Ingredients

>For the Dough:

- 1 cup wheat atta (freshly ground whole wheat for best texture & taste; store-bought atta tends to be too fine)
- ¼ cup wheat bran
- 2 tbsp sooji (semolina)
- 1 tbsp besan (gram flour)
- 1 tsp ajwain (carom seeds)
- 1 tsp haldi (turmeric powder)
- A pinch of baking soda
- Salt to taste
- ¼ cup hung curd
- 1 tbsp fresh thick milk malai (cream)
- Paneer whey water, milk, or plain water as needed for kneading



>For the Stuffing:

- Boiled potatoes, green peas, and/or paneer (use any one or a combination)
- Spice mix: saunf (fennel seeds), jeera (cumin), dhaniya (coriander powder), black pepper, amchur (dry mango powder), and salt
- Fresh ginger, finely chopped
- Green chillies, finely chopped

Method

Prepare the dough: Combine all dough ingredients in a large bowl. Gradually add liquid (using paneer whey water or milk or water) and knead into a firm, smooth dough. Cover with a moist cloth and let it rest for 30 minutes.

Make the stuffing: Sauté ginger and green chillies. Add your choice of filling (mashed boiled potatoes, peas, crumbled paneer, or a combination). Mix in all the spice powders and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add chopped fresh Coriander & Let it cool completely.

Boil water: Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil.

Shape and stuff: Divide the dough into equal portions. Flatten each ball, place a big spoonful of stuffing in the center, and seal the edges carefully. Roll gently to form smooth balls.

Boil the baatis: Carefully drop the stuffed baatis into boiling water. Boil for at least 30 minutes until they float to the surface, indicating they're cooked through.

Bake to perfection: Remove the baatis from water and drain. Bake in a preheated tandoor or oven at 200°C (400°F), turning occasionally, until golden brown and crisp on both sides (approximately 15-20 minutes).

Serve hot: Break open the baatis, and serve alongside spicy healthy dal or kadhi, green chutney, and cooling raita of your choice.



Rtn Ruby Agarwal

NEW STEP



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Family: Chinki Gupta (wife), Divya Gupta - Married (Daughter) & Deepesh Gupta (son)
Favourite Food: Puri, Chana, Halwa.
Favourite Holiday Destination: Vaishnodevi, Katra
Favourite Book: The Secret
Favourite Song: *Ruk jaana nahi, tu kahin haar ke ...*
Favourite Quote: *Discipline leads to Success !*
Date of Birth: 16.12
Wedding Anniversary: 26.09
Social media: Instagram dg_108108
Why did you choose to become a member of RC Organ Donation International : Respected Lal Goel ji invited me to be a part of this prestigious endeavour

Rtn Dinesh Gupta
Charter Member &
Club Public Image Committee Member

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notto.abdm.gov.in

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after talking to your family members)**