

# Brain-dead Mopa Airport staffer's organs give new lease of life to three

The 22-year-old Kerala youth was injured in a road accident on January 28; declared brain-dead on February 3; his kidneys were donated to two patients waiting for a transplant at Goa Medical College, his liver was sent to a patient at a hospital in Aurangabad

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Three persons received a new lease of life after the family of a 22-year-old brain dead youth from Kerala decided to donate his organs.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMC) Dr Shivanand M Bandekar said, "The donor Sahil V S worked at Mopa International Airport as ground staff. He met with a road traffic accident on January 28. Despite receiving best medical treatment, he was declared brain dead on February 3. The brain stem death certification was performed by Dr Sanat Bhatkar, Assistant Professor, Department of Neurology and Dr Marina Vaz, Assistant Professor, General Medicine."

The State Organ and Tissue

Transplant Organisation (SOTTO), GMC, allocated the kidneys to a 33-year-old man and a 24-year-old man, both recipients at GMC while the liver was allocated by Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (ROTTO) West to MGM Hospital, Aurangabad.

Dr Bandekar said this marked the eighth organ donation under the umbrella of SOTTO goa. SOTTO has allocated 16 kidneys and facilitated allocation of four hearts, seven livers and two lungs through ROTTO West and NOTTO since its inception in 2019.

Dr Bandekar said in the last eight days, 11 patients from different parts of India have benefited from organ donation decisions by families of three brain dead patients in Goa- two at GMC and one at a private hospital.

■ Deceased donor organs are viable for transplant only if the individual is declared brain-dead and is on ventilator support

■ Tissues like cornea, skin and heart valves can be retrieved within a specified time limit even if the individual dies at home

■ Brain stem death is declared by the brain stem death committee, a team of four doctors recognised by the government and who are not involved in the transplant surgery

■ The team has to perform the brain stem death tests twice with at least a gap of six hours

■ A cadaver heart should be

## GIFT OF LIFE



transplanted within 4 to 6 hours after harvesting

■ The corneas can be stored for a

maximum of six hours

■ Kidneys can be preserved for up to 24 hours, but the sooner they are transplanted, the better

■ A donated liver can be stored for 8 to 15 hours

■ Heart valves can be cryo-preserved for months, and then used in heart surgery

■ Living donors can also donate skin, usually harvested from the back and thighs, to be used in reconstructive surgery for burns victims

■ Living donor transplants are more expensive than cadaver transplants as two surgeries have to be performed

# Congress questions Goa's meat export while locals face shortage



Team Herald

**MARGAO:** In a development that has sparked controversy, the Margao Congress has launched a scathing criticism of the Goa government's recent meat export initiative, alleging hypocrisy and communal disharmony.

It may be recalled that the government had recently announced that the State is making its international debut in the beef export market, with a significant shipment of 28.5 tonnes of frozen meat loaded for export to Iraq through the Goa Meat Complex, a partnership between the government-run facility and Karnataka-based Sunface Agrofoods Pvt Ltd.

Rajesh Kenny, Managing Director (MD) of Goa Meat Complex, had also confirmed to the media that this is the first time the State is supplying frozen beef to Iraq.

The announcement set the stage for Tuesday's press conference, where Congress leader Savio Coutinho,

alongside party colleagues including Advocate Snehal Onskar, Architect Carlos Gracias, Lincoln Gomes, Damodar Onskar, Anwar Naroo, Robert Vaz, Anel Alvares, and Camilo Camara, vehemently criticized the move.

Coutinho raised pointed questions about the government's priorities, directly challenging whether the export of beef was responsible for creating shortages during the Christmas season. He specifically highlighted recent incidents in Margao, including a raid at a private premises in Sirvodem where, beyond the beef issue, a teakwood log was used to harass the trader.

They also referred to the infamous incident at the SGPDA market involved a physical assault during beef transportation, which had led to a strike by the beef traders, just before Christmas day.

Challenging the government's stance, Coutinho questioned the basis on which self-proclaimed 'gau-rakshaks' stop vehicles and declare meat as cow meat, especially when the government claims only buffalo meat is being exported. He demanded to know who promotes and encourages elements involved in illegal raids and by what authority they determine the type of meat being transported.

Coutinho expressed skepticism about the reported income of Rs 500 per animal slaughtered, suggesting there might be larger financial motivations behind the export initiative. "It is beyond our capacity to believe that this government is into such petty business of Rs 500 per animal," he stated, alleging that the "double engine government" has likely struck a high-kickbacks deal through this export initiative.

Onskar accused the government of sponsoring a hate campaign that pits the public against each other while simultaneously deriving monetary benefits. He argued that the export business exposes the government's hypocrisy in its treatment of the cow, which is respected by Hindus.

Coutinho also cast doubt on the credibility of Sunface Agrofoods Private Limited, claiming a Google search revealed the company as "permanently closed" and potentially serving as a mask for other beneficiaries of the ruling dispensation.

The controversy comes at a critical time for local consumers. On Tuesday, visitors to the SGPDA retail market found meat supplies severely limited. Consumers were informed that the situation was dire, with meat supply significantly reduced and only a very limited amount arriving even in North Goa. This shortage is particularly impacting the hospitality industry during the peak tourism season.

## Call for unity: Konknni associations urged to strengthen Roman script movement

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan has called for unity among all Konknni Scripts Associations, emphasising that such a collective effort will exert greater pressure on the Sahitya Akademi and the Goa government. The appeal was made on the occasion of the 38th anniversary of the Official Language Act, with the organisation reiterating that recognition for Roman Script Konknni in the Act is possible if key Konknni associations, including the Dalgado Konknni Academy, Tiatr Academy, and Tiatrismachi Sounstha, collaborate with the Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan and other script associations to take the movement to the people of Goa in a significant way.

The organisation pointed out that while Konknni associations in Karnataka, such as Mandd Sobhann, Poetica, and Karnataka Konknni Lekakancho Sangh, have already expressed their willingness to join forces with their Goan counterparts, similar cooperation is still lacking within Goa. They stressed that if uniting organisations outside the State for the cause of Roman script Konknni is possible, there is no reason why Goan associations cannot come together as well. The Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan reaffirmed its commitment to working alongside all like-minded associations to push this movement toward its logical conclusion.

As part of its broader strategy, the organisation emphasised the need to consolidate efforts and

### DEMANDS FOR UPCOMING ASSEMBLY SESSION

- Amend the Official Language Act to include Romi script alongside Devanagari,
- Introduce Romi Konknni in schools
- Appoint a Goa State Minority Commission
- Ensure that Goa Staff Commission examinations are conducted in both Romi and Devanagari scripts to enable fair selection of candidates for government jobs

rally both opposition and ruling legislators to support Roman script Konknni in the Goa Legislative Assembly. They outlined four key demands for the forthcoming Assembly session: amending the Official Language Act to include Romi script alongside Devanagari, introducing Romi Konknni in schools, appointing a Goa State Minority Commission, and ensuring that Goa Staff Commission examinations are conducted in both Romi and Devanagari scripts to enable fair selection of candidates for government jobs.

Highlighting the significance of uniting all Konknni script associations, the Global Romi Lipi Abhiyan announced plans to organise an All India Konknni Maha Sabha. This initiative aims to bring together representatives of all five Konknni scripts for a structured dialogue and to create sufficient pressure on the Sahitya Akademi to reconsider its "one language, one script" policy.

## Chinchinim Gram Sabha pushes for swift approval for Panchayat Ghar

Team Herald

**MARGAO:** Chinchinim gram sabha members on Sunday pressed for the immediate implementation of the Panchayat Ghar project, highlighting its importance for the village's development. The project remains stalled, awaiting financial approval from the Chief Minister.

"The file has been pending, and there was an urgent call for the Chief Minister to expedite the process," the Sarpanch informed the gathering, stressing the project's significance in improving local governance and services.

Villagers also raised concerns over the maintenance of traditional bundhs, vital for protecting agricultural land and properties. The Panchayat assured residents that a proposal for necessary repairs would be forwarded to the relevant authorities.

The meeting concluded with a resolution to push for swift government action on these issues, with members committing to following up with the Chief Minister's office. The gram sabha reaffirmed its commitment to addressing community concerns and ensuring progress for Chinchinim and Deussua residents.

## VOICES OF DISSENT



Members of the Global Konknni Forum protest at Azad Maidan, Panjim, demanding equal recognition for the Romi script in the Official Language Act, on the anniversary of its passage

## Romi Konknni protagonists protest for official status, warn of legal action

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Romi Konknni proponents have warned the Goa government to recognise their demand for official language status or face protests and legal action.

Marking the anniversary of the passing of Goa's Official Language Act (OLA), which excluded the Romi script, activists staged a peaceful demonstration at Azad Maidan on Tuesday. Despite 555 days of protest, they claimed their demand for equal recogni-

tion under Articles 14 and 29(1) of the Constitution remains ignored.

Antonio Alvares, Treasurer of the Global Konknni Forum (GKF), criticised

those who had once fought for Romi Konknni but later remained silent. "The turnout today reflects the growing frustration among Goans. The government must act, or we will take this fight to court

— Antonio Alvares, Treasurer, Global Konknni Forum

Francis Fernandes, Vice President of GKF, urged political leaders to step forward and support the movement, calling it a matter of preserving Goa's culture and linguistic heritage.

GKF Secretary Jose Salvador Fernandes blamed political leadership for sidelining Romi Konknni when OLA was enacted in 1987, granting official language status solely to the Devanagari script. "For 38 years, Romi Konknni writers, followers, and lovers have

been fighting this injustice," he stated. Francis Fernandes, Vice President of GKF, urged political leaders to step forward and support the movement, calling it a matter of preserving Goa's culture and linguistic heritage. GKF Treasurer Apolonia Rebello reaffirmed that protests would continue until Romi Konknni is granted official status. "This is our constitutional right, and the government will have to listen," he asserted.



Although the passage of the Official Language Act making Konknni the official language is to be celebrated, many see the definition of the script as a great betrayal. Though majority of Romi protagonists fought for Konknni they felt that recognition of Devanagari script alone, was a major betrayal.

## SHOULD KONKNNI DAY BE CELEBRATED WITH REGARD TO BOTH DEVANAGARI AND ROMI SCRIPTS?

“We all feel that Devanagari and Romi should come together. But the Devanagari protagonists do not want Romi, that's why we have been excluded. By putting Devanagari alone as the official script in the Official Language Act, Romi script has suffered. If we go to any government department with a Romi script application, they do not accept it, since they say Devanagari is the official script. In schools too, they teach Devanagari, and other better scripts are neglected. Those who face government interviews where Devanagari is recognised, too face complete disadvantage.

— Jose Salvador Fernandes, Sec Global Konknni

“First of all, I request that both the scripts should have equal status. I have no issue with that, But we have been fooled by the government and the leadership of the movement. It was like fooling us by giving a small chocolate. Our Romi script is used in tiatrs, in the church, it is there in our songs which have gained international fame. But till date, Romi script has not got justice. We have been suppressed and ignored by the government. The government has to give respect and acceptance to this script. Romi script is unique, it is not like other languages, it is such a soft and sweet language, we become emotional when we talk the language. Sometimes it is very difficult to translate it

— Felício Simao Fernandes, Konknni protagonist

“Konknni is a beautiful language, with such lovely greetings such as Dev Boro Dis Dium (May God give you a good day), at night we say Dev Bori Raat Dium (May God give you a good night). It's a lovely language which comes from the heart. We should promote it. But what has happened is that there is a division. There should not be any division, Romi too should get due recognition. The Chinese and the Russians are learning English, but here we are fighting over a script. If we recognised Romi script, the language itself will prosper. My children find it extremely difficult to study it in school, especially the computer generation. We learnt Konknni informally at home, due to the love for the language. So the Global Konknni Forum is spreading awareness

— Joseph LR Vaz, Konknni lover

“We were always together and we should be together. The then Congress government betrayed us and created differences between us. This is indeed very sad. The present generation is suffering because they have to study Devanagari. They have discouraged our children from learning Romi. Our Goans have a great love for the Romi script. A number of books and novels were written in Romi. There were also lots of newspapers in Romi, but due to financial constraints they have folded up operations. Only two newspapers are presently being printed: Vavdradeancho Ixtt and Roti.

— Marshal Pereira, son of Teotonio Pereira (MLA of the first Assembly)



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