

KERALA: PHILANTHROPY

A KIDNEY FOR THE NEEDY

Multi-millionaire donates his organ, sets example

Kochouseph Chittilappilli, a well known name among entrepreneurs and the chairman and managing director of V-Guard, recently came up with a novel idea to save the lives of people suffering from incurable kidney ailments. He has started a network of kidney donors and recipients called the Kidney Foundation of India. This new banking system reaches out to renal failure patients.

However, the thing to be noted here



Chittilappilly and the recipient of the kidney Joy Ulahannan with his wife Joly before surgery.

is that Chittilappilli did not start this foundation just for the sake of running a foundation. He set an example by donating one of his kidneys to one Joy in Kottayam at the very beginning.

Now, Joy's wife will donate her kidney to one Shamsudheen in Thrissur. Shamsudheen's wife Sainaba will, in turn, donate her kidney to one Johny from Thrissur. Johny's mother will donate her kidney to one Biju, and thus the chain would go on. The cost of the surgery, however, will

be borne by the receptor. Sometimes relatives cannot donate their kidneys directly to their patient because of medical reasons.

The new kidney "banking" network is a boon to hundreds of nephrology pa-

tients and their relatives. Since kidney transplantation is expensive, it is usually out of the reach of poor people. Moreover, lot of scandals have come out surrounding kidney donations. Cases of the stealing of the vital organ from unsuspecting patients is also reported every now and then from different parts of the country. Sometimes it also happens that people willingly sell one of their kidneys.

Dr. R. Kasi Visweswaran, a retired professor of nephrology from

Thiruvananthapuram Medical College says that approximately 950 kidney transplantations take place in Kerala every month. About five per cent of the total Kerala population suffers from chronic kidney diseases (CKD). The disease is

generally not detected until about 75 per cent damage has been done to the kidney. Young blood pressure patients are prone to kidney diseases. Diabetics and obese, too, are prone to CKD. Smokers and people who crossed 50 are also at risk.

Nephrologist Dr Joji Ninan, Kochi, says that kidney ailments are alarmingly increasing in Kerala. In these circumstances, Chittilappilli's endeavour is a welcome step for the needy.

This yeoman service of the boss of a Rs 500 crore company has set an example for others to emulate. If the highest sales tax payer in Kerala for the last two years, and the leader of several multi-crore projects like Veegaland Water Theme and Amusement Parks in Kochi and Bengaluru, can donate his kidney the others can follow suit.

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