

Gift a life, appeals foundation on organ donation drive

NEW DELHI, Nov 12: With a million conversations and a long road trip across India, a kidney donor has launched a drive – to persuade people to gift a life.

Radio jockey Anil Srivatsa and his team at the Gift of Life Adventure (GOLA) Foundation, which he set up three years ago, are on a 20,000-km long drive to raise awareness on organ donation.

“Thousands of people are on dialysis because no one in the family is ready to donate a kidney to them. This is because of some fears they have about organ donation,” Srivatsa told this news agency.

‘Drive India’ is the fourth expedition of the GOLA series, which began after Srivatsa donated his kidney to his ailing brother in 2014.

The first initiative came soon after

that, when Srivatsa and his brother undertook a seven-day cycling adventure in the hills of Spain just six months after the surgery to focus on the fear and stigma around organ donation in India.

“I am trying to show people that I am living on one kidney, and I am living as active a life as I did before. So don’t be afraid to save a life in your home,” said Srivatsa.

The three-month long ‘Drive India’ initiative, which began on October 20, will take Srivatsa and his team across India to start a dialogue with people about organ donation.

The drive covers not only major cities, but also takes the team – four people in two cars – into the heart of rural India with the aim of educating people about

organ donation and inspiring them to sign up as donors.

The GOLA Foundation has also developed an app called the ‘Million Donor Project’ for this. The app automatically sends a message informing the user’s family members when they choose to sign up for organ donation.

“The app is only meant to break the ice at home, as a lot of people don’t know how to approach the subject. The aim of the ‘Million Donor Project’ is to start a million conversations at homes,” said the host of a talk show on the radio – and later Internet – on relationships and sex to throw light on topics most of India is too shy to talk about.

The team is also making people aware about the process of donation. – PTI