



Trafficked Bodies, Stolen Lives: The Medico- Legal Politics of Organ Trade in Benjamin's *Body and Blood*

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ABSTRACT

*The paper critically examines Benjamin's medico-thriller novel, *Body and Blood* (2020) to expose the malpractice of organ trafficking in India. Initially published in Malayalam as *Sareera Shastram* (2017), and translated into English by Swarup B.R., the novel offers a realistic account of the illegal harvesting and trade of human organs under the camouflage of organ donation to the needy population. The story revolves around vulnerable youngsters and the polemics of their exposure to deliberately brandished accidents. These accidents subsequently follow a nebulous series of reiterative actions that comprise pharmaceutically injected coma in the injured youths, non-permissive extraction of healthy organs for unlicensed trade to accomplish megalomaniac aspirations of religious mafias, and eventually leading to inevitable deaths of innocent victims. Using interdisciplinary methodology, the article contributes to the eye-opening revelation about the new-age churches and their pretentious strategies to attract the young to operate the heinous medical crime of organ trafficking in the nation-state.*

Keywords: Harvesting, medical, organ, politics, religion, trafficking

INTRODUCTION

Organ trafficking is one of the least addressed categorical forms of human trafficking in India (Quader & Khan 2023). Despite the medical stakeholders celebrating their achievement of successful organ transplants over the years, this has eventually created an unbridgeable vacuum between the demand, and supply of transplantable organs. The accomplishment of this gap has unequivocally boomed national, and international markets in harvesting illegal organs at heavy price tags leading to organized crime of human trafficking in the South-Asian sub-continent, especially in developing nations like India. According to CRS Report 2021 on International Organ Trafficking, organ trade is defined as “a range of criminal activities, including illegal organ harvesting from a living or dead individual, and the illegal sale, and transplantation of human organs (1). The term human organs, according to The National Organ and Transplant Act 1984 refers to “the human (including foetal) kidney, liver, heart, lung, pancreas, bone marrow, cornea, eye, bone, or any sub-part thereof, and any other human organ (or any sub-part thereof, including that derived from a foetal) (47 US Code 274 E).

The Indian Penal Court on 8 July 1994 approved “The Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act” (THOTA) (Sahay 2018) to provide a regulatory framework to deregulate the commercialization of illegal organ harvesting in the country. However, this act despite engendering its role in curbing the menace to some extent, is still fraught with problems leading to inadequacy of the law itself in governing appropriate conditions of organ transplantation. In short, there exists massive, and sometimes even non-traceable gangs of organ trafficking mafias that deal in this unlicensed trade to generate unaccountable profits. And more to this, these criminals live among us as protectors of faith, and religion without creating the least opportunity for doubt or accusation. To unmask this hypocrisy, the paper critically interprets Benyamin’s suspense novel, *Body and Blood* (2020) as an incisive narrative of brainwashed, and vulnerable youth, forged accidents, untimely deaths, and the most heinous of all, illegal organ harvesting by religious megalomaniacs. Initially published in Malayalam with the title *Sareera Shastram* (2017), and translated into English by Swarup B.R., the novel explores relationships, faith in religion, and trafficking of cadaveric organs.

Benyamin drew the inspiration for his novel from documented cases in the illegal trade of organs. This includes the famous Delhi-based case of Dr. Deepak Shukla as an accused engaging in the Kidney Racket of 2016 as well as a few exposed organ harvesting cases in rural regions of Mullassery, and Thrissur in Kerala. All these cases involve people from impoverished

families and how these people were non-consensually made organ donors under charitable or religious camouflages. The author, in one of his interviews, discusses how his novel explores the interstice between “organ trafficking, religious dogmatism, and capitalism” (Hindustan Times 2020). He also stresses the relevance of fiction in addressing and uncovering the political issues governing the nation. Precisely, Benyamin’s work offers a social commentary on the undercurrent religious institutions that, instead of serving as protectors of faith, become a guised part of this ruthless medical tyranny.

The paper is divided into three major sections. The first section discusses the Christian ethics involving the transplantation of human organs by citing authentic written sources from Christian treatises. It also scathingly critiques how modern-day religion exploits the ethical considerations for the purpose of illicit trade, and profits. The second section examines how the medical industry has violated its fundamental working principle of saving lives, and instead have indelibly contributed to the racket of organ harvesting. Finally, the third section of the paper explains the legal procedures available for curtailing the illicit practice of organ harvesting in India, and to punish people who engage in this crime.

Benyamin’s medico-thriller novel *Body and Blood* (2020) offers a scathing critique of the religious indoctrination of vulnerable youth in India. The title of the novel alludes to Christian theology with specific reference to the holy union of body, and blood in the sacrificial figure of Jesus Christ while he was crucified. Benyamin’s choice of this strategic title is deliberate as it optimally juxtaposes the elements of sacrifice, faith, redemption, and divine love with the thematic concern of the novel which is largely based on an organ trafficking business run by power-hungry representatives of Christianity. As opposed to salvation, and spiritual nourishment (as depicted in the figure of crucified Christ), the blend of body, and blood becomes a symbol of betrayal at the hands of those who claim to be protectors of God, his faith, and his people. Through the title, Benyamin’s narrative is an enticing journey to unveil the exploitative vandalism of the human body for profits by religious institutions. The novel showcases how people of religion, instead of embodying the values of empathy, compassion, and altruism are unremorsefully deceptive to their young followers.

The novel begins with Midhun, a resident of Delhi who meets a minor road accident leading to his hospitalization. Surprisingly, Midhun is declared brain-dead, and as per an already registered certificate, his organs are transplanted to people sic donor recipients in urgent need. Midhun’s three friends Ragesh, Rithu, and Sandhya, despite initially being devastated raise

suspicion about Midhun's sudden death owing to a minor injury incurred during the accident, and eventually, the three friends unravel a sinister conspiracy, and disturbing nexus between the organ trafficking circles, and Pastor Sam Philips, leader of the Christian Missionary Group. Spanning across Delhi, Goa, Chennai, Kasol, Bhopal, and Pune, the narrative fuses mystery with existential theology and presents a disgusting face of convoluted religious faith. The narrative voice interrogates: How can anyone who was really normal until morning suddenly take a turn for the worse? Can a small wound be so fatal? Is there no medicine to bring such people back to life? (20)

In addition to these interrogations, the primary argument that the article emphasizes is the ethicality of organ transplantation. There is a huge outcry on one well-known belief that one organ donor can save multiple lives. However, many people or institutions do not support this argument since it engenders the commodification of human life as well as the physical violation of the human body leading to premature declaration of death. Erica Graham in her article, "A Biblical Approach to Cadaveric Organ Transplants" demystifies this argument by stating:

The current status for cadaveric transplantation is retrieval from heart-beating donors. A heartbeating donor is brain dead with circulation artificially maintained by a ventilator. The ethical permissibility of this standard is questioned by some Christians. Christians do not believe in bodily resurrection which provides one basis for permitting organ transplants. Christians also view the body as having intrinsic worth because of the presence of the image of God (15)

Graham's statement resonates with what Paul Ramsey (2012) links with medical ethics on the integrity of the human body, and the dynamics defining the dying process. The Biblical reference to life and death dates back to Genesis 1:27, 9:6 that God created man in his own image, and Exodus 20:13 where God commands: "You shall not murder" emphasizing the piety of human life, postulating that only God has the decision-making power over life, and death, and human intervention in the acts of God are strictly prohibited. J. I Packer (2007) presents a strong commentary on this religious decree and affirms: "Human life is thus the most precious, and sacred thing in the world, and to end it or direct its ending, is God's prerogative alone. We honor God by respecting his image in each other, which means consistently preserving life, and furthering each other's welfare in best possible ways (77-78). However, theologian Mark Rooker (2010) reinterprets the sixth commandment by emphasizing the belief that the life of others is as important

as one's own, and it is our utmost duty to defend and protect such lives with unwavering sincerity.

Next, in the Eighth Commandment of Exodus 20:15, God instructs his followers, "You shall not steal." Packer (2007) associates stealing with an act of deprivation of another's property without permission. Connecting this idea to the central concern of the novel, the organ harvesting (or stealing) racket is an offense according to Christianity. Jones (2013) in his book, *An Introduction to Biblical Ethics* analyses the Eighth Commandment as the prohibition of anything of which man is a steward. For example, it is incorrect for medical personnel to take advantage of dying people (those on ventilators or those undergoing a pharmaceutically injected coma) such as Midhun. Both these commandments support the notion of corporeal invasion as blasphemy and should be strictly outlawed under all circumstances. Graham (2014) rightly sums this as:

God forbids stealing organs or taking advantage of dying persons to retrieve organs based on stewardship, and sanctity of life. One can therefore conclude by synthesizing the Sixth, and Eighth Commandments that Christians are responsible for defending the life of every person as bearers of the image of God and to appropriately steward resources given. Cadaveric organ transplants are supported by the Ten Commandments as an act of stewardship provided the method does not violate the sanctity of life (16).

Further to this, select references in Christianity proclaim the pious significance of organ transplantation. Mathew, chapter 10:8 reads: Sacrificing and helping others are consistent themes in Christianity, which teaches the principle of seeking for others would do for you. Enabling life to be lived as fully as possible is consistent with the teaching of the Son of God, Jesus Christ." David Ebor: Archbishop of York once declared: "I hope that Christian people will seriously, and positively consider organ donation. The ready willingness to donate an organ is a clear sign of that sacrificial self-giving for others patterned by Jesus Christ." However, despondently the teachings of Christianity have been unlearned, and ignored in this century as money-mongering agents and companies (including religious institutions as portrayed in Benyamin's novel) exploit faultless people for their benefit. These exploitative people are among us as the torchbearers of society especially in the medical profession. The next section illustrates the black marketing of human organs, and how the medical industry has been tainted by this crime and its impact on society.

BLACK MARKETING OF HUMAN ORGANS: A SOCIO-MEDICAL ANALYSIS

Procurement of human organs through the black market mechanism is much debated, and controversial. The first ever successful cases of organ transplants were witnessed in 1954. In India, the first organ transplant (of a kidney) was conducted in 1970. Post these achievements, the process of organ transplants has been both emotional and traumatic. In India, “around 5000 kidneys, 1000 livers, and 50 hearts are transplanted annually...and there is a need of roughly 2, 00, 000 kidneys, 50,000 hearts, and 50,000 livers for transplantation each year (cited in Nallusamy et. al. 2009, 171). This accelerating need for organs has led to illegal coteries and rackets of organ harvesting in the country. Saberi et. al. (2014) in their in-depth study on illegal organ trafficking have, through the interview method, evidenced 103 victims of unlicensed organ transplants in the southern, and eastern belts of India. These victims of HTOR (Human Trafficking for Organ Removal) are situated in the states of Tamil Nadu (14%), Karnataka (40%), and West Bengal (40%). The bone-chilling results of Saberi et. al (2014) findings are as follows:

The cases in Tamil Nadu ranged in age from 19-55 years, with an average age of 33 years in Erode, and 36 years in Chennai. Fifty-seven percent of the victims in Erode are females, and 87% of the victims in Chennai are female...all the victims interviewed lived in abject poverty with monthly income levels below the national average. The majority of the victims reported long-lasting health, economic, social, and psychological consequences. No matter the reason expressed for an organ sale, all victims reported they would not have agreed to the organ removal if their economic circumstances were not so dire. One hundred percent of the victims interviewed expressed that they need assistance to cope with these consequences (380).

Even Chatterjee (2020) reiterates a similar connection between illegal organ trade, and poverty by stating:

A characteristic consumer-based market economy has the potential to convert anything into a marketable product and stimulate a hierarchal-based society driven by individual wealth, and purchasing capacity. This market-driven divide in society manifests the inequalities to a greater degree, reflecting a clear demarcation between affluence, and poverty. The commodification of body or body parts is an expression of the endemic poverty, social inequality, and marginalization of a certain population of people in financially less prosperous developing countries such as Brazil, India, and China.

It is a result of the limited choices available to poor people to lift themselves from a colossal financial crisis or, in certain cases simply due to being powerless to protect themselves from commercialization (596).

Kaushik (2022) considers this organ commercialization as a result of rising demand in developing, underdeveloped, poverty-stricken countries, and those nations which have lax regulatory structures (or its implementation), and norms governing this illegal trade. Benyamin's novel reflects this hierarchically conditioned powerlessness through the hypocrisy of religion. It showcases the schematic organization of churches in prioritizing wealth over spiritual integrity. Pastor Sam Philip's fellowship group orchestrates criminal transplantation of cadaveric organs through ideological manipulation and propagandist cultism. Despite the youth such as Midhun, and his friends do not belong to lower income groups (unlike those evidenced in Samberi et. al. 2014 study), these youngsters stand vulnerable to the counterfeit missionary culture by deliberately serving as puppets in the hands of Pastor Philip, and his camouflaged organ trading conspiracy. In the novel, Rithu, one of Midhun's friends articulates her resentment of Pastor Philip's fellowship program: "Through it was called charity, and all that, she saw it as a disturbing performance. Not only that, more than being a monthly program of the fellowship, she felt that it was a program designed to promote the Trinity Foundation" (88). About Trinity Foundation, the novel reads:

The Trinity Foundation was a private enterprise created recently by Dr. John Samuel, Pastor Sam Philip, and Advocate Ram Manohar Varma. The stated aims of the Foundation were to promote organ donation, find organ donors, create an extensive network of hospitals that could share information about organs available, and solve the legal problems of organ donors, and recipients...it achieved this by conducting awareness classes for the public, camps for finding donors, and recipients, charity work, the launch of a website, brochures, etc. (88).

Slabbert & Mnyongani (2011) reiterate that medical practitioners have always been confronted with the challenge of not only healing patients but for also prolonging life. However, medical hypocrisy of organ harvesting in India is an underlying practice where doctors and medical practitioners join hands with other surgeons dealing in this field. One such case that caught limelight was Dr. Amit Kumar (Cc No. 3/2011 ED vs. Amit Kumar) who, along with his brother Jeevan Kumar, started performing illegal organ transplant surgeries in Mumbai, Delhi and Haryana for monetary greed. As per the case proceedings:

Medical Council of India confirmed that the accused Amit Kumar is not a registered as practitioner of modern medicine. For kidney transplantation operations, the minimum qualification is Masters of Surgery with three years' experience. The hospital where kidney transplantation by the accused used to be done was not registered with the appropriate authority. A total of ten victims and two prospective victims were located and examined. During a search at the house of the accused, victims, and recipients were found there. It is mentioned that on average Rs. 12-15 lacs in cash was charged by accused Amit Kumar from Indian recipients, and US \$25,000- \$50,000 from foreign recipients (unpaginated).

Next, Hiranandani Kidney case is another case that caught public attention in 2016. In this, the famous Hiranandani Hospital was accused of conducting an illegal racket of organ transplantation. Five doctors were arrested from the hospital in addition to fourteen others including a donor, a recipient, and several middlemen, and agents. The police unravelled this racket through a suspicious lead and missing documents of a woman donating a kidney to her husband. However, during the raid, it was found that the man and the woman were not married, and it was a poor woman from a nearby village who was lured to become a part of this illicit organ trade. It was later alleged that many vulnerable people from villages in Gujarat were tempted by traffickers into selling their kidneys for 2 lacs, and later the same organs were sold in the black market for huge profits. Reading this intertextually with Benyamin's novel, while searching for the six people who were transplanted Midhun's organs, Ragesh, Rithu, and Sandhya discover the pricey amount at which cadaver organs are sold in the market, "a heart costs two crores, lungs one crore, liver eighty lakhs, eyes, ten lakhs, kidney, eight lakhs..." (213-14).

According to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), "India is the world's largest exporter of exporter of human organs, and the majority of these organs are traded illegally. (Shimazono 2007). Globally rising demand for human organs causes a large increase in organ-related crimes, which rise in direct proportion to violations of human rights, especially in the most poor, and marginalized parts of society (Shroff 2009). Further, Shroff (2009) argues that doctors, nurses, and other medical staff play a crucial role in navigating the entire commercialization of illicit organ trafficking. For instance, in the novel, the character of Jane, one of the workers in the hospital tells Rithu to reveal the truth behind Midhun's sudden death due to so-called bleeding after the accident. On further inquiry, Jane says: "You have the intelligence to figure out. The rules of the hospital forbid me to say any more. I also need to protect the interests of the people who pay me

(the hospital, and religious committee in this case). Later in the novel, Jane reveals:

I was right there from the time Midhun was admitted. It is true that his bleeding was quite serious. Moving him to the ICU, and the putting him on a ventilator was totally justified. The first thing that puzzled me was the fact that he was not getting enough oxygen on the ventilator. I noticed this twice or thrice during my duty. The knob on the cylinder was turned very low. I don't know if someone did intentionally or not (145).

Pondering this further, Jane provides a clue to Rithu to notice why Midhun was brought to a private hospital instead of prestigious hospitals such as AIIMS or Safdarjung which are situated in closer vicinity to the accident spot. On the next meeting between Jane, and Rithu after a couple of days, Jane tells Rithu about the blood tests which were conducted coincidentally conducted two days before Midhun met with an accident. By providing all these hints, Jane as a staff of the hospital aims to compel Rithu to rethink the entire accident and untangle the mystery behind Midhun's sudden demise. Here Midhun is representative of all those innocent youth who die in manufactured road accidents, and their organs are transplanted without haste to people whose details are missing. To illuminate this, when Rithu along with Ragesh, and Sandhya begin searching for the six people who received Midhun's organs, a shocking truth is revealed that each of these patients was in different hospitals, and only one of the recipients named Manisha was from a poor family. The rest of the five recipients belonged to rich families and there exists no information on the whopping amount they must have paid to get Midhun's organs transplanted.

Finally, the shocking, and gruesome truth is confirmed with pastor Shanu's statement in the end. He informs the trio of friends about organ trading behind the veil of the Trinity Foundation. He also draws attention to the illicit activities going under the name of the fellowship program, and how many people are tricked into not always paying a heavy monetary compensation but also converting to Christianity. To prove this, Pastor Shanu exemplifies and articulates:

I'll tell you. Do you know what the contract was with the recipient of Midhun's kidney, Anantakumar Rao? The kidney and the treatment were free of cost. In lieu of which he had to become a believer, join the fellowship, become another living testimony of the fellowship for life, and retain his current name in spite of the change in faith (225).

The last sentence of Pastor Shanu's revelation unfurls another conspiracy which is retaining the original name after conversion. This is

because fellowships of the Trinity Foundation prefer having non-Christian names showcasing their power of conversion, and influence on people who are new to Christianity. This entire business of conversion, organ trafficking, forged accidents, and deaths of vulnerable youngsters is run by four members. Three of these members are Pastor John Samuel, Pastor Sam Philip, and Advocate Ram Manohar Varma. Surprisingly, these three members consider Christ as the fourth partner in this terrible blasphemy.

In the end we notice Benyamin, through his novel, critically condemns the pastors, and other representatives of the church, and Christianity. The author, as revealed in one of his interviews, has a high respect for people who willingly donate their organs as well as NGOs which are involved in this sacrilegious service. However, making organ donation forceful and earning from it (as depicted in the novel) is not at all acceptable. As already discussed in the previous section, the teachings of Christ are nowhere premised on the idea of trafficking in the name of religion or Christian service. Organ donation is a devout practice in Christianity unconvoluted by manipulations, monetary benefits, or conversion. This is the true purpose of religion which is misused by few who do not understand the authentic teachings of Jesus Christ, the people who make Christ one of their partners to salvage for the crimes they commit. However, the question if God atones such sinners or not is beyond the scope of its article but it is pertinent to look into the legal, and judicial framework so that people (belonging to a religion or otherwise) may at least be punished by the court of law. The next section substantiates the legal landscape of organ trafficking in India, and how the country protects blameless people and punishes those who are involved in the ruthless business of organ harvesting.

LEGAL LANDSCAPE OF ORGAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

To critically elucidate the legal landscape of organ trafficking in India, it is imperative to understand the regulatory procedures governed by the Indian Constitution. Article 21 of the Constitution reads: “No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to a procedure established by law” (Basu 2022). In *Kharak Singh vs. State of Uttar Pradesh*, the Supreme Court held:

By the term ‘life’ as here used, something more is meant than mere animal existence. The inhibition against its deprivation extends to all those limbs and faculties by which life is enjoyed. The provision equally prohibits the mutilation of the body by amputation of an armored leg the pulling out of an eye, or the destruction of any other

organ of the body through which the soul communicates with the outer world (AIR 1978 SC 1965).

However, the right to life also includes the right to a healthy body, the elemental foundation of all human activities. Article 47, as mentioned in the directive principle of state policy states, “The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition, and the standard of living of its people, and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the state shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except of medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks, and of drugs which are injurious to health” (constitutionofindia.net). Furthermore, in *Parmananda Katara vs. Union of India* (sci.gov.in), it was held that all doctors, and medical practitioners are obligated to uphold medical ethics, and extend medical aid to the injured lives without pursuing legal formalities. It also extended that the utmost duty of the medical community should be to protect life of innocent people. Or else put it, no law or regulation can intervene to discharge or delay the duty of medical practitioners to save the lives of their patients.

According to Article 3(a) of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (2000) of the United Nations as a part of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime:

Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, employing threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, of the abuse, of power or position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs (1).

In 2007, WHO estimated that nearly 5-10% of the annual transplants were made through illegal means. In 2011, it was estimated that illicit organ trafficking generated around USD 600- 1.2 million per annum playing a significant function in threatening the national organ donation system of the world. However, the complete modus operandi of organ harvesting lacks accurate data due to which this trade engenders an implicit existence in dark corners of the society. Before the UN’s Trafficking in Persons Protocol (2000), the Indian Government stepped ahead in formulating laws for eradicating the menace of organ harvesting in the country.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under the Government of India has implemented “The Transplantation of Organs and Tissues Act”

(THOTA) 1994 “to provide for the regulation of removal, storage, and transplantation of [human organs, and tissues for therapeutic purposes, and for the prevention of commercial dealings in human organs, and tissues] and matters connected therewith or incidental thereto” (Act No. 42, 1994). This Act is vested with the power to serve an appropriate authority to investigate complaints and breaches on any of its provision(s). The Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, responds to the steps pursued by state governments in curtailing illegal organ trade. He submits the following points (Government of India 2024):

- National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO), a national apex-level organization has been set up in pursuance of the mandate given to the Central Government under THOTA 1994, for establishing a network for procurement, and distribution of organs, and tissues to maintain a national registry for surveillance of organ donation and transplantation in the country. States/UTs have been requested to ensure that every hospital performing organ transplantation or retrieval needs to be linked to the website of NOTTO, and data related to both deceased and live donors and recipients of transplants is required to be uploaded in the National Registry maintained by NOTTO. Further, each donor and recipient of the donor organ will have a unique NOTTO ID in cases of both deceased as well as living donor transplants, and the same is to be generated by the concerned hospitals.
- NOTTO, alongside Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organizations (ROTTOs), State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organizations (SOTTOs), and other institutions organize awareness programs across the country to disseminate information about the provisions of The Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act and rules, so that people are cognizant towards the Government recognized process of organ donation permitted by the law, along with the illegality, and repercussions associated with indulgence in organ trade, in order to make it easy for them to comply with the provisions of law.
- All States/UTs have been advised to constitute an Advisory Committee as per provisions of the Transplantation of Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA), 1994 to aid, and advise the Appropriate Authority in discharging its functions of controlling illegal organ transplant activities.
- A letter was sent by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) after which, a note verbale has

been circulated by MEA to all the Embassies/Foreign Missions in India apprising them about the legal provisions of the organ transplant Act in India so as to prevent illegal organ transplants involving foreigners. Rules of transplants involving foreigners have been shared with the Ministry of External Affairs for dissemination to Indian missions abroad, and the same have also been displayed on ports and Airports.

The aforementioned regulations have aimed at curtailing the cases of organ trafficking in the country in the best possible ways. However, this is not enough, and certain extra measures need urgent implementation. One such preventive initiative is the anti-human trafficking interventions of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. This comprises several guidelines to the state governments in dealing with the implementation of appropriate laws, and procedures in reducing the racket of illicit organ trade. In this, states have the opportunity to involve non-governmental organizations to prevent, rescue, and rehabilitate organ-trafficked victims. The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (ATHU) is expected to strengthen district police headquarters, standard operating procedures, and institutional coordination mechanisms to tackle different forms of organ trafficking in the country.

Despite these regulative measures, the menace of organ harvesting is still at its peak. To curb this, THOTA 1994 has laid down monetary penalties for those breaching the rule of law. The unauthorized removal of organs or tissues can lead to a monetary fine of INR 5 lacs, and three years of imprisonment while commercial dealing in organs or tissues, and falsification of documents can cause a fine between INR 5-25 lacs (depending on the gravity of the crime), and 1-3 years of imprisonment. Kuliala (2022) tries to offer a viable solution to the nuance of organ trafficking. He suggests, “To prevent cadaver transplant controversies, the inquest in the instance of RTA might be held in front of an executive magistrate with the assistance of a forensic medicine specialist who is a part of the cadaver transplantation team. “A committee comprised of representatives from the judiciary, government, medical professionals, and major civil society figures can be constituted with adequate legislative authorities to enforce the rule with criminal powers,” Kuliala (2022) continues.

CONCLUSION

The issue of organ trafficking is nothing new. However, now it is time to extract this disturbing menace from its roots. Benyamin’s novel *Body and Blood* (2020) as an addition to the medico-thriller, and suspense genre has illuminated the deep-seated imperil of organ trafficking unequivocally. The

author's narrative craftsmanship and meticulous research have appropriately exposed the hypocrisy of organized religion through its callous act of commodifying human life, and exploitation of vulnerable people. Although realistic, the novel serves as a cautionary narrative urging ethical, and legal vigilance against masked altruism. Literary narratives such as these play a pivotal function in spreading awareness about camouflaged criminal activities leading to the moral decay of our society. The role of such stories is to motivate call-to-action and eradicate organ harvesting at all levels.

This article has critically reinforced the essence of Christian religion, and how few individuals use religion, and faith as a garb to accomplish their evil plans. It has further delineated the role of the medical community in catalysing the business of organ trafficking by citing various examples, and cases from real life. Finally, the article has highlighted the crucial role of the judiciary in obliterating the crime of illegal organ transplantation. It has also discussed certain improvements that can reduce its overall impact as well as act as a warning sign to those engaging in this filthy trade. In conclusion, it is imperative to follow religion and have faith in God. However, following anything blindly could lead to disastrous results. Benyamin's novel is an eye-opener in drawing attention to the underlying prevalence of social evils like organ trafficking in society. It offers a scathing critique of the capitalization of the human body by megalomaniac people around. Only by raising voice against, and having adequate awareness of the laws, and ethics could one fight back to safeguard the lost human dignity.

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