



Boxing Day

26 December 2025 , Dr Victor Monteiro and the origin of Goa Medical College in 1963

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We joined the MBBS Course in 1977

(Goa Medical College 1977 batch called GOMECO 77).

GOMECO 77 celebrated the First Christmas as Medical ( MBBS ) students on 25 December 1977. At that time there were no Ayurveda or Homeopathy or AYUSH Institutions in Goa

Goa Medical College started in 1963.

Late Prof Dr V.J.Monteiro, the Professor and Head of Anatomy Department later on became the Dean of Goa Medical College. He was a good , soft spoken, intelligent man, an excellent teacher who interacted with the MBBS students in a very friendly manner.

Prof Dr V.J.Monteiro a Goan was already working as a faculty in Bombays Municipal Medical College. It was due to the efforts of late Mr Alban Couto IAS ( Development Comissioner of Goa Daman and Diu in 1963 ) and Dr Joao Manuel Pacheco Figueiredo the Director of Escola Medica e Cirurguca de Goa and later the first Dean of Goa Medical College in 1963 that Dr V.J Monteiro and other luminaries of Bombay University and the Medical Colleges of Bombay were given entry into the newly established Goa Medical College in 1963.

Notable among them were Prof Dr Duarte Monteiro, Prof Dr Kenkre , Prof Dr V.J Monteiro, Dr Jolly Mascarenhas and others.

For the starting and launching of Goa Medical College, the credit must be given to Mr Alban Couto IAS and Dr Joao Manuel Pacheco Figueiredo.

The Government Ministry of Goa Daman and Diu took Oath and charge only in December 1963 headed by Hon D.B Bandodkar.

And GMC started in June 1963, taking its first Batch called GOMECO 1963.

Till date Goa Medical College is the only Allopathic Medical College in Goa.

Though announced several times in the media our higher authorities have not been

able to start a second Allopathic Medical College in Goa. The reasons are many .

This Goa Medical College is our Alma Mater and we are very proud of our Institution.

I will not write about the present standards of teaching , research , clinical care , surgical care , patient care , administration of Goa Medical College now . This is for another day , another piece of writing .

On 26 December 1977, our GOMECO 77 Class had a lecture by Prof Dr V.J Monteiro at 9 am.

Dr Monteiro started his class by saying today is BOXING DAY .  
I do not know how many of my GOMECO 77 Classmates remember this.

Any way, in 1977, many of us including the author heard about the term and day BOXING DAY for the first time. Prof Dr VJ Monteiro took his excellent lecture in his unique style asking Questions to many students and calling them by their first name. Prof Dr VJ Monteiro was God's GOOD MAN and an Excellent teacher , a good human being and easily approachable.

Prof Dr V.J Monteiro taught many GOMECO Batches and served as Dean Goa Medical College. He also served as Dean, Goa Dental College and Dean of Faculty, Medicine, Goa University. Dr VJ Monteiro was also Member GPSC.

The author interacted with Prof Dr Monteiro many many times. He was always cool and calm even in the Dean's Chair.

Many decades later the author as a Pathologist performed liver FNAC on him. Even at that time he was jovial and cracked a joke with the author. After a few days the author was on his way overseas for an International Conference. At the Dabolim airport, the author received a telephone call from Prof Dr Monteiro, saying he is very proud to have a student like the author. Dr Monteiro's Slides were sent to Dr Arun Chitale in Mumbai who was India's top Surgical Pathologist at that time for a second opinion. Both the reports were absolutely identical ie the authors report in GMC and Dr Arun R Chitales in Mumbai. The author was humbled to get accolades from one of his favourite teachers, that too on his death bed. That was Prof Dr Monteiro's greatness.  
May his Noble Soul RIP  
and Best Wishes to Dr Freeda and her family.  
Dr Freeda was the author's teacher in Physiology, a remarkable woman and teacher in her own right.

Coming back to BOXING DAY

This is observed and celebrated in Commonwealth countries . On this day Christmas Boxes , gifts and money are given to the needy and the employers give the boxes to their employees.

26 December is also celebrated as Saint Stephen's Feast.

On this day 26 December, many countries like Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong , Singapore, South Africa have a public holiday. Others like UK have a Bank holiday.

This custom was also observed right from the Roman times , Middle East empires and later in Europe. Some of these civilisation kept an Alms Box in the Churches for people to donate to the needy on this day.

On this day 26 December , the BOXING DAY, it is a custom to eat the leftovers of the Christmas meal such as Turkey and chicken made into sandwiches or curry.

In 2006, there was a BOXING DAY Cricket Test Match in MCG ( Melbourne Cricket Ground ) on this day.

In USA this day is not widely observed as a holiday except in Massachusetts and other places.

Hence our BOXING DAY was first noted and observed due to our loved and respected Teacher Prof Dr V.J. Monteiro.

It signifies Compassion. Sharing and donation.

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