

**District Grand Lodge of India S.C.**  
&  
**Grand Chapter of U.S.R.A.F.I.C.**

FREEMASONS' HALL, SUKHADWALLA MARG, FORT, MUMBAI 400 001.



# NEWSLETTER

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Edited By : Bro./M.E.C. Noshir Godrej Paghdwalla  
District Grand Secretary/Grand Scribe Ezra



**This Newsletter is only meant to convey the news and events under the jurisdiction of the Scottish District, but is not its official periodical. The views expressed herein are solely that of the Editor, and not that of the District.**

## **EDITORIAL**

Effecting timely changes in any sphere of life leads to many positive aspects – the major being that it leads to retaining an edge and also remaining relevant in one’s area. Change encourages innovation, develops skills, enhances efficiency and leads to better opportunities. Any organisation in today's fast-moving environment that is looking for retarding the pace of change is likely to be sorely disappointed. The world is changing everyday: the work culture is changing, operative trends are changing, technology is changing and even the economy is changing. Any organization that fails to embrace change can easily wind up as being labelled as outdated.

No longer do we dial a rotary phone, get a busy signal, and try again and again and again until we get through. No longer do we have to laboriously contact people, in person, to find out about any issue; instead, we can search online through search engines as well as through social media sites. Today's burgeoning communication technology represents changes that allow organizations to learn more, rather quickly, than ever before. Has not the advent of e-mail put us on a no-time-lost speed of communication?

Change is the need of the hour for every individual; every organization; every entity. Engaging in the same old methodology which is turning to be obsolete can lead to failure. This need to change is of the highest priority. Failure in recognizing the very urgent requirement to change heads to many serious and critical problems. Change refers to bringing a shift in the way the activities are performed; work is done; problems are solved. Basically, a new approach to deal with everything which would give a positive and successful outcome. This process of change is not easy and is time-consuming but at the end of it, we realize that it was worth it.

My mention about change is solely on account of the changes being effected by our Grand Lodge for the better or effective performance of Scottish Freemasonry in general. Grand Secretary has, reportedly strived incessantly during the past few months to plan out and implement a radical change in the functional aspects. The concept has been well contemplated and most likely shall be ready for implementation subject to the same being approved by Grand Lodge, which in turn, shall culminate in its functioning been brought up to date with the times.

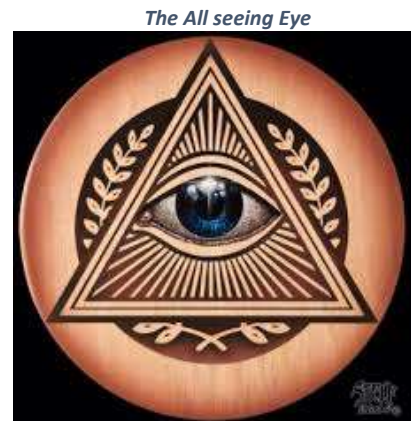
One of the spokes in the wheel of change has already been set in motion by the holding of a meeting of young Masons globally on a virtual platform. Vide our earlier newsletter, we had implored the young Masons in our midst to play an active role in this commendable endeavour to promote youth involvement. After all, youth are the jewels in our crown, who shall - in all probability - assume the reins at the helm in the times to come. Perhaps for the first time in living memory, the youth have been urged to come forth with the full range of disciplines at their command. The concept being to make best use of the latent talent and expertise available within.

### **THE DEPTH OF SYMBOLISM IN FREEMASONRY – An overview**

The “All Seeing Eye” is symbolically meant to represent the eye of God, which reminds us that God is always watching over us and assessing our actions and thoughts.

It is also known as the Eye of Providence and has been around since 1797 when it was published in the then Freemasons’ Monitor.

It is perhaps at the apex of Masonic Symbols as far as recognition is concerned. The Eye, representing the all-seeing eye of God, serves as a reminder that humanity's thoughts and deeds are always observed by God - who is referred to in Masonry as the G.A.O.T.U. Typically, the Masonic Eye of Providence has a semicircular glory below it, and is sometimes enclosed by a triangle.



Most commonly, Freemasons associate the letter “G” with God. Freemasons use the letter G within their symbolism quite frequently. However, this is not the only meaning associated with it and there is a bit of contention around what it actually means.

*The Letter "G"*



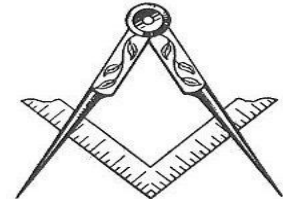
Some interpret it to represent 'Geometry' to remind Masons that Geometry and Freemasonry are synonymous terms described as being the "noblest of sciences", and "the basis upon which the superstructure of Freemasonry and everything in existence in the entire universe is erected.

Others believe it represents the word 'Gnosis', meaning the knowledge of spiritual mysteries, which is a big component of Masonry. Yet others contend that the letter G in ancient Hebrew had a numerical value of 3, which is highly referenced throughout history when talking about God.

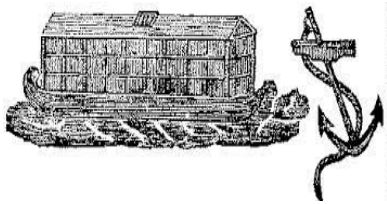
The Square and Compasses are really the most well-known or recognized symbol representing Freemasonry. The meaning behind it is quite literal, with the square representing morality depicting that Freemasons need to 'square [their] actions by the square of virtue and morality with all mankind'.

The compasses then measure the ability to wisely conduct actions within the range of certain boundaries. In other words, together the Square and Compasses remind Freemasons to explore their desires and passions without stepping outside the realms of moral behaviour.

*The Square and the Compasses*



*The Ark and the Anchor*



The anchor and the Ark is used a lot in Christian symbolism and has been adopted by Freemasons to have a similar meaning. Basically, it represents hope, as well as peace against stormy weather.

An anchor is used, quite literally, as a way of grounding a ship, and in the same way this symbol talks about living a life that is grounded in hope and peace.

The Masonic Blazing Star is said to be the pinnacle of a Freemason's journey. In Masonry, a man tries to use knowledge to guide him, much like a star that is blazing against a dark night sky.

It has been considered a sign of God's divine providence, the life-giving Sun, and as a guiding light to direct all Masons in thought and action. Like most symbols in Masonry, The Blazing Star has a long and storied history.

*The Masonic Blazing Star*



*The Masonic Gavel*



There are two meanings to this symbol. Firstly, it represents the authority of the Freemason yielding it, who might use his gavel to punctuate his ideas and command order like a judge in court does.

Secondly, it's a tool used to break off the rough edges of a stone. Used in this way, the Masonic Gavel can be a reminder for Freemasons to chip off certain vices and maintain a pure, moral and spiritual heart.

Back in the days of King Solomon, Masons gave corn as part of their earnings, kind of like a tax. These days it's used during dedication ceremonies, mainly, and sometimes to represent charitable giving to the less fortunate.

*The Masonic Sheaf of Corn*



*The Acacia Tree*



The Acacia tree is an incredibly hardy, durable tree, and as such has been used to depict immortality throughout ancient history. The Hebrew people used to mark their graves with a sprig of Acacia for this very reason.

Aligning with the Masonic belief in the afterlife, the Acacia Tree represents their enduring, immortal souls.

The Ark of the Covenant can be found in the Bible as God's promise to David. Freemasons draw significance and symbolism from it as today, it represents God's continued forgiveness of their transgressions. The Ark of the Covenant is a gold-plated wooden chest that, in Jewish and Christian tradition, houses the two tablets bearing the Ten Commandments that were given to Moses by God.

*The Arc of the Covenant*



*The Masonic Altar*



The Masonic altar is a sign of communion with the Creator of the Universe. In the days of old, Masonic altars were a place for communion with the Master Architect of the Universe. They were used to sacrifice animals to God and seek atonement for the sins of man. Like many religious entities, the Masonic Altar represents a place where communion can take place with God. It's where the Holy Book(s) are displayed as well.

A cable tow is attached to a Freemason's robe and represents a promise that he will help his Brother however much he can - as long as it's within the length of his tow rope. That's why the length of the cable tow rope is so important; it measures how capable the Brother is in terms of being able to assist his fellow Freemason.

*The Cable tow*



*Masonic Shoes*



A long time ago, people would confirm a verbal contract by taking off their shoe and giving it to the other person. Now the Masonic Shoe, also known as Blue Slipper, is a symbolic confirmation that what has been said will be done. The Masonic Shoe also called the Blue Slipper, is symbolic of a physical confirmation of a spoken deed.

It is widely accepted that another hotly contested symbol, namely the Beehive symbolizes the need for Masons to work together to keep the world operating. Some believe that there is a deeper, more complex meaning behind it, but generally, this is the idea represented wherever The Beehive is present. In short, The Beehive is emblematic of the Masonic lodge and industriousness of Freemasons.

*The Masonic Bee-Hive*



*The Coffin*



Coffins usually represent mortality, but within the world of Freemasonry, the meaning behind them can get a bit murky. Sometimes coffins are represented with a Sprig of Acacia, which would depict immortality. Other times it has a 5 pointed star associated with it. The meaning behind the coffin, then, seems to be interchangeable with whatever context it's provided in.

Things get a bit geometrical here, so bear with me. The 47th Problem of Euclid - also known as Pythagorean Theorem - is symbolic of the need to 'square your square'. In everyday practice, this means to keep your life in order, and in building infrastructure, it is the method Freemasons follow when laying foundations.

*Pythagorean Theorem*

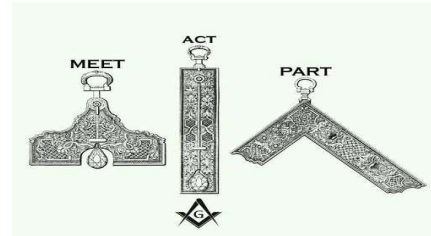


*Scottish Masonic Apron*



Known as the “unique badge of a Mason,” the Apron is the most recognizable item of a Mason’s attire. Masons wear aprons while at lodge, and at certain public events. The tradition dates back to the fraternity’s operative days, when stonemasons wore protective work aprons.

*Plumb and Level*



In stonemasonry, the plumb and level ensure surfaces are vertically and horizontally flush. For today’s Freemasons, the plumb is a symbol of justice, rectitude, and the importance of living in an upright manner, while the level is a reminder that all men are equal. You may have heard the phrase, “To meet on the level and part on the square.” That’s where it comes from!

*The Trowel*



One of a stonemason’s most important working tools is the trowel, used by operative Masons to spread mortar that binds stones together. In Freemasonry, the trowel is used to spread the “cement” of brotherly love and affection to unite a sacred band or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist, but that noble emulation of who can best work or agree.

The ashlar are two stone cubes placed near the Master’s platform in the lodge; one is rough-edged, delivered straight from the quarry; the other is smooth and ready for building. The rough ashlar represents man in his crude form, while the perfect ashlar represents the man, who, through the teachings of Masonry, has become more polished. We never become a perfect ashlar, but we work toward it.

*The Rough and Polished Ashlar*



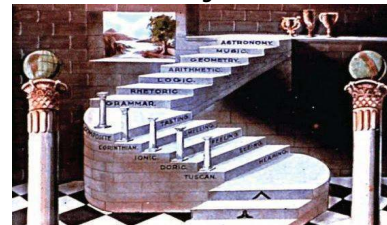
*The Columns*



Every Masonic lodge has representations of two pillars, replicas of the two columns that flanked the entrance to King Solomon’s temple. The pillars, named Boaz and Jachin, are said to represent strength and establishment.

The winding staircase is another symbol inspired by King Solomon’s temple, referring to the steps leading from the entryway to the middle chamber of the temple. It’s an allegory for a member’s progress from Entered Apprentice to Fellow Craft. The Winding Stairs become a symbol of the Mason’s mental and spiritual life and growth, of learning, study and enlarging horizons, of courage and Masonic character.

*The Winding Staircase*



### **DGLI VISIT TO LODGE UNIVERSAL PEACE NO. 1208, HYDERABAD**

The best reminiscences in life are of the people we love, the places we have been to and the memories we have made along the way. So true indeed, as we, the participants in Deputation (comprising of MEC Kersi J. Limathwalla, MEC Noshir G. Paghdwalla and MEC Nauzer M. Baxter) from the District discovered when we visited Hyderabad for a three days visit to Lodge Universal Peace No. 1208 S.C. and Chapter Chudderghaut No. 159 S.C. from 30<sup>th</sup> March to 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2023. Our Brethren and Companions left no stone unturned in their endeavour in making our stay comfortable. Altogether, we were overwhelmed by the good Brotherhood, good food, good times and good company laid bare for us during our stay.

It was, as if they meant to depict that they were delighted to offer the most hospitable welcome they could offer and prompting us to look around us at the amiable welcome brimming with brotherly concern. On 3<sup>th</sup> April, after deplaning, we were warmly received by Bro. Jatinder Singh and Bro. Nitin Sinha and treated to a leisurely lunch of delectable and savoury Hyderabad Biryani.

*Raising a toast to camaraderie*



At the interactive meeting in the evening of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the Brethren gathered around for a fair exchange of views. Such healthy deliberations eliminate the misconceptions and magnify the good, and thanks to this artifice we manage to endure the burden of the past with the sprinkling of a hope of a prosperous Masonic future. At the ensuing regular meeting of Lodge Universal Peace in the evening of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with Bro. Naresh Kumar Ragi conducting the meeting from his Eastern Chair, all the Brethren, especially the



*The tete-a-tete*



*Within the Temple*

younger lot, rendered an impeccable account of themselves from their respective Offices. It was a pleasure to see the efforts put in by the Brethren and their dedication to perform the ritual perfunctorily.



*Posing outdoors*

### **INSTALLATION AT CHAPTER CHUDDERGHAUT NO. 159, SECUNDERABAD**

Next day, the Installation ceremony of Chapter Chudderghaut on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 witnessed the installation of MEC Nitin Ranveer Sinha as Zerubbabel, MEC Rajendra Settaluri as Haggai, with MEC Major A. Rangchand chipping in as Joshua in the absence of the regular electee MEC Ranjit Charles, who craved leave of absence on account of a pressing commitment.



*Post Installation group picture*



*Without the Temple*



*The three Principals as happy as can be*



*Cheers to the Order*

The festive Board to ensue was overladen with a visible preponderance of Amity and Camaraderie as the Companions raised statutory toasts, followed by toasts to their three Principals and also welcomed the prospective exaltees who were present as invited guests. It was elating to see a couple of youngsters who were intent on becoming Scottish Royal Arch Freemasons.

### **CHARITY DRIVE**

In a display of the maxim of Masonic commitment to benevolence, a Charity Drive was organised by Lodge Universal Peace No. 1208 S.C. and Chapter Chudderghaut No. 159 S.C. to an educational institution catering to the education of children belonging to the lower strata of society and nomenclated as "Sree Saraswathi Vidyalayam", a name reminiscent of the Goddess of Knowledge and Education. All the classrooms at the school were equipped with desks cum benches for the children from the donations from the Brethren and Companions with the District Benevolent funds chipping in with a considerable amount.



*One of the classrooms*



*The backdrop*



*On the makeshift dais*



*Addressing the students*

What was most impressive was a substantial donation in his personal capacity given in cash by Cmdr. Rajendra K. Sahgal, one of the Companions of Chapter Chudderghaut without any publicity or show of extravagance.

This type of a commitment towards aiding and assisting a deserving cause and sharing one's mite is reminiscent of the virtue of Charity amongst our members. We are proud of his generosity.

In the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, we were treated to a lavish dinner by Bro. Rajendra Setaluri on the pristine lawns of the local Boat Club abutting the famous Hussain Sagar lake, where we were invited to elucidate seven prospective youngsters on the nuances of Freemasonry who had shown an inclination to join our cherished Order.

*At the Boatclub-thanks to Bro. Rajendra*



Memories are the best gift of all. We, as guests, never forget the hosts who treated us kindly and the most cherished moments are those we spend together. Indeed, it's not what we have in life, but who we have in our life that matters. The fondest memories are made when gathered around a table and they are the treasure house of the mind wherein the monuments thereof are kept and preserved

### **A NEW DAWN AFTER DARKNESS FOR LODGE RISING SUN NO. 506, MUMBAI**

The Covid-19 pandemic was a social and also an economic crisis just as much as it was a health one – its repercussions, severe and far-reaching, are being felt across the world. To slow the spread of the virus, business houses, traders, educational institutions et al, evidenced their routine activities in a hiatus across the world. Only a year into the pandemic, almost half of the world's normal routine was affected. The effects Covid-19 had on day-to-day progress was perhaps unprecedented in recent times. The data collated from the World Bank, market intelligence and the United Nations' presentation elaborates on the fact that the equivalent of 255 million full-time jobs were lost, in terms of working hours, only in the year 2020, not harping on the subsequent years when the fury of the pandemic was at its zenith. Among the worst hit were workers in the informal sector of the economy alone. Any economic recovery will likely be uneven, leading to greater inequality in the coming years. Women have been harder hit economically by the pandemic because they are a large proportion of the workers in sectors severely affected by Covid-19, including accommodation and food services, and in front-line occupations, such as the health and social care sectors.

In short, the pandemic threatens to undo decades of progress on various fields of human endeavour and it has set us back on decades of persistence in tackling global poverty. Inter-alia, Freemasonry has also been confronted by the pandemic spreading its tentacles on Masonic activity. Complacency, fear of affliction, deteriorating health due to restrained movements, many of our Brethren succumbing to its mortal jaws, etc. saw many of our Lodges and Chapters evidencing a retardation of activities and to some extent indifference and complacent attitude.

Lodge Rising Sun No. 506 S.C., a once thriving 153 years' old Lodge within our District was not an exception. In the last three years, its woes were multiplied by a number of Brethren being recalled to their Heavenly abode in the realms above; some became incapacitated due to advanced age and related affliction of ailments, while a few migrated to other towns due to the vagaries of their avocation. The result? This once booming Lodge evidenced a skeletal attendance and culminating in a struggle to counter non-formation of the requisite quorum.

*Installation day at Lodge Rising Sun*



*Members and Guests after the Installation.*



*Basking in the joy of rejuvenation*



Yet, every cloud has a silver lining, with persistent efforts to restart Masonic meetings, in the infinite wisdom of its members, as a last straw on the camel's back, it joined hands with Lodge Beaman No. 1069 and commenced joint meetings. The GAOTU favours the bold and the innovative, and other Brethren within the District came forward in visiting the Lodge at its meetings and .... wonder of wonders .... Lo and behold .... at its Installation meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023, the attendance both within the Temple as also at the Festive Board touched an

impressive figure of twenty-one, whereat fraternal bon-homie and camaraderie were preponderant. May their tribe increase.

It is an earnest plea that some of our Brethren who are conducive to the idea of assisting in the survival of Lodges which have fallen in bad times, to come forward at least with their presence at the meetings of the ailing Lodge to assist in its survival.

### **YOUNG AND NEW MASONS GROUP**

Brethren, as you are aware, the Grand Lodge of Scotland under the dynamic leadership of Bro. William Ramsay McGhee – Grand Master Mason and Bro. William Semple – Grand Secretary has been consistently introducing reforms for modernising our Order so as to keep time with the changes in the emerging World.

The concept of “Young and New Masons” group to be introduced across Districts and Provinces has been, inter-alia, introduced so as to enable the eligible masons of that category to gain Masonic Knowledge and to interact globally. Aptly, this group is to be made known as the Apprentice Pillars.

It is desired that such groups exist across all countries where Scottish Freemasonry prevails and such individual groups shall come under the umbrella of the parent Group in Scotland. In our meeting with the Grand Lodge of Scotland, we, from the District, have offered our fullest co-operation in this commendable endeavour and welcome the formation of such a group within our district to be nomenclated “DGLI Young Masons” or the like.

As a first step, we from the district, invite any brother who fits in in the criteria to take the leadership of the Group and to take this commendable idea forward. Those desirous to be at the helm, would have to reach out to all daughter Lodges Pan India, and personally cull out, collect and note down any information as may be required.

On request, however, a FAQ on the subject can be forwarded to those interested and now it is for the youth amongst us to take the idea forward.

### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

As has been known vide our earlier circulars, the Half Yearly Convocation of Grand Chapter Grand Chapter of U.S.R.A.F.I.C. and the half yearly Communication of the District Grand Lodge of India S.C. are both scheduled to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023. In consonance with the specific request of our local Brethren at Solapur, we have convened the meetings at Solapur and fervently hope that our Brethren from all over join us there. Details of the schedule has already been forwarded by us to all Brethren and Companions by way of both email and WhatsApp.

### **LAUGH A'WHILE**

A postman, on his route, picked up a letter from a mailbox that was addressed to God. The postman, seeing that the letter was not sealed, and there being no postage on it, opened and read it. It was from a man who was down on his luck and was asking God for help. The letter asked for ₹5000 to get his family through the next week.

The postman, being a Mason, took the letter to Lodge that evening, read it, and asked for donations for the unfortunate fellow. The Masons, wanting to help, took up a collection, and received ₹ 2500 from the Brethren. The Secretary placed the cash in a Lodge envelope, and gave it to the postman to deliver the following day, which he did.

Another day passed, and the postman again found an unsealed letter in the mailbox addressed to God. Again he opened and read the letter, which thanked God for the money, but instructed him to send it through Courier service next time, as the Masons kept half.