



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



# NEWSLETTER

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*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 necessarily that of the Scottish District.*

## **THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA**

In a momentous occasion, the Freemasons' Hall at Mumbai, a cherished landmark in the city under the ownership of the English and Scottish Constitutions, celebrated the grand inaugural of its extensive restoration after a devastating fire that swept through the building in 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Members of the Masonic community in Mumbai, including the English and Scottish DGMs, the PGM of the Irish Constitution, the ARGM of the RGLWI, local Brethren of the Craft and the Holy Royal Arch gathered for a ceremonial event that marked the beginning of a new chapter for this historic site.



The scourging fire had caused significant damage to the structure, destroying cherished artefacts and parts of the roof, flooring and ceiling in the Lodge and Chapter rooms had caved in, even the wings of the ceiling fans had melted.

In the interim period following the incident, a coalition of Brethren from the two Constitutions forming the Joint Hall Committee together with the structural engineer, architect, and volunteers had come together under the leadership of the DGMs and Trustees to restore the temple to its former glory. The planned restoration process is meticulous, focusing not only on rebuilding the Temples but also on preserving the historical integrity and architectural significance of the building.

The envisaged restoration of the Masonic Temples shall go beyond architecture; it symbolizes hope and revitalization for the Masonic fraternity of Mumbai. Once this historic landmark is put back on its feet, it shall stand proudly once more serving as a reminder of the powers of the Masonic community, their perseverance, and the enduring legacy of traditions that bind the Brethren together.

In the evening hours of April 21 2025, in a poignant ceremony symbolising resilience and renewal, the Freemasons' Joint Hall Committee in Mumbai meticulously planned the inauguration of the restoration process by invoking His Heavenly blessings somewhat on the lines of the laying of a cornerstone for their envisaged renovation of the Masonic Temples after a devastating fire destroyed their 127 year-old Heritage structure.

Initially, Rt. Wor. Bro. Percy Driver -DGM of the DGLB elaborately recounted the series of events pursuant to the raging fire and expressed his gratitude for the ensuing steps initiated by The FJHC in negotiating with the statutory authorities. He was confident of the Brethren Pan-India joining hands by contributing their mite in restoration of the Heritage structure. Bro. Kersi Limathwalla, Rt. Wor. DGM of the DGLI, in an inspiring speech, expressed his hope that the reconstructed Temple would prove to be a testament to the endeavours and determination of the Masonic fraternity of Mumbai, citing how the antient Temple in our historic annals was similarly destroyed and restored to its pristine glory.

The entire gathering, in their resplendent regalia of various colours marched in procession to the ravaged Lodge room which bore a garland of flowers as a symbol of honouring the past and embracing the future aspirations amongst the ruins. The traditional oil lamp was lit by the dignitaries as an invocation of a symbol of positive energy in the determination of rebuilding the temples. An apt prayer drafted by Bro. Jamsheed Master was recited in unison collectively by all and a Benedictory invocation for a successful restoration was delivered by Bro. Noshir Paghdiwalla.



The occasion marked not just the reconstruction of a physical edifice, but the rebirth of a spiritual and communal stronghold that had stood for nearly nine decades before being consumed by flames. The ceremony centered around the ravaged meeting halls, lovingly revered despite the scars etched upon it by the annihilating fire. Chipped yet unbroken, weathered but not defeated. The oil lamp was reverently positioned in the northeast corner—a location rich with symbolic weight in Masonic tradition - where light first meets the aspirant, where learning begins, and where the journey towards wisdom is symbolically kindled.

The event was more than ceremonial; it was cathartic. It transformed loss into legacy, fire into foundation, and memory into monument. And as the final chants faded into the warm summer air, a renewed sense of purpose settled upon those gathered, as firm and steady as the cornerstone resting in the earth—a cornerstone not just for a building, but for the future of a community.

The gathering thereafter moved to the Framji Petit dining Hall where they partook of light refreshments.

## **EDITORIAL**

### **Masonic Wages**

The wages which our ancient brethren received for their labors in the building of King Solomon's Temple are now no more paid in that manner anywhere. In the lodge, we use them only as symbols, except during the dedication, constitution and consecration of a new lodge and also in the laying of cornerstones, when once again the fruit of the land, the brew of the grape, and the essence of the olive are poured to launch a new unit of brotherhood into the fellowship of lodges; to begin a new structure dedicated to public use.

Corn, wine and oil have been associated together from the earliest times. In ancient days the grapes in the vineyard and olives in the grove and the grain of the field were not only considered as wealth, but the measure of trade; so the wages received by our ancient Brethren by way of wine, oil, and corn were to them what currencies are today.

The corn of the Bible is not the corn we know as of today but a more apprehensible translation would be simply "grain." The Hebrew word 'Shibboleth' means both an ear of corn and a flood of water. Both are symbols of abundance, plenty, wealth. Scarcely less important to our ancient brethren than their corn and oil was wine. Vineyards were highly esteemed both as wealth and as comfort.

Oil was also used not only as a food but also for lighting purposes; more within the house than in the open air, where the torch was more effective. Oil was also an article of the toilet; mixed with perfume it was used in the ceremonies of anointment, and in preparation for ceremonial appearances. The quotation in our Entered Apprentices degree reading - "... precious anointment which ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard" - doubtless referred to olive oil, suitably mixed with such perfumes and spices as myrrh, cinnamon, galbanum and frankincense. Probably oil was also used as a surgical dressing. Nomadic peoples, subject to injuries, could hardly avoid knowledge of the value of soothing oil.

Corn, wine and oil form important and necessary parts of the ceremonies of dedication, consecration and constitution of a new lodge. Hence corn, wine and oil - the produce of the land - are natural accompaniments to the dedication of a lodge, which hopefully enables it to prosper; reap an abundance of the first fruits of Masonic cultivation and a rich harvest of ripe character from the seeds it plants.

Corn, wine and oil, poured upon the symbolic lodge at our Masonic ceremonies are essential to Consecration and dedication to the services of the 'Most High'. From earliest times consecration has been accompanied by sacrifice, a free-will offering of something of real value to those who thus worship. Hence the sacrifice of corn, wine and oil - the wealth of the land, the strength of the tribe, the comfort and well-being of the individual - at the consecration of any place of worship or service of God.

Like other things in our ceremonies, the idea today is wholly symbolic. The Grand Master orders his Deputy (or whatever officer is customary) to pour the corn; the Senior Grand Warden to pour the wine, the Junior Grand Warden to pour the oil upon the Lodge. The corn is poured as an emblem of nourishment; the wine as an emblem of refreshment. And oil as an emblem of joy and happiness.

In the laying of a cornerstone, the Grand Master also pours, or cause to be poured, the corn, the wine and the oil, symbolizing health, prosperity and peace. Fruits of the land are poured upon the cornerstone to signify that it shall form part of a building which shall grow, be used for the purposes of proper refreshment, and become useful and valuable to men.

It probably matters very little what varieties of grain, oil and juice of the grape are used in these ceremonies, the symbolism will be the same. To be quite correct, barley or wheat should be used for the corn, olive oil for the oil, and sacramental wine for the wine.

Corn, wine and oil paid as wages to our ancient brethren were the "Master's wages" of the days of King Solomon. Masons of this day receive no material wages for their labors; the work done in a lodge is paid for only in coin of the heart. But those wages are no less real. They may sprout as does the grain, strengthen as does the wine, nourish as does the oil. How much we receive, what we do with our wages, depends entirely on our Masonic work.

A brother obtains from his lodge and from his Order only what he puts into it. If a Brother merely stands and waits and watches and wonders, he will not be able to ascend into the Middle Chamber where our ancient brethren received their wages. On the other hand, if he works for the joy of working, does his part in his lodge work, takes his place among the laborers of Freemasonry, he will receive corn, wine and oil in measures pressed down and running over and know a fraternal joy as substantial in fact as it is ethereal in quality; as real in his heart as it is intangible to the profane world.

For all of us, then, corn, wine and oil are symbols of sacrifice, of the fruits of labor, of wages earned. For all of us, so mote it be.

## **WORDS OF WISDOM**

**Freemasonry takes Time** (Courtesy: M.E.C. Rinesh Hegde.....Source: Masonic find))

Freemasonry is not something to be rushed. It is not a checklist of degrees or a title to collect. To treat it that way is to miss the essence of the Craft entirely.

Freemasonry is a journey, measured not in how quickly one moves through the degrees, but in how deeply one absorbs their lessons. Each ritual, symbol, and lecture is a tool for reflection, meant to be studied, questioned, and lived. The process takes time because transformation takes time.

Advancing too quickly through the Craft risks reducing it to ceremony without substance. A Mason who rushes may gain the title but miss the meaning. The work is internal. It is the slow, deliberate labour of refining thought, disciplining emotion, and elevating character.

True growth doesn't happen between floorwork and festive boards. It happens in quiet study, in hard conversations, in the moments when Masonic principles challenge your comfort and force you to grow.

Freemasonry is not a race to the East. It's a lifetime apprenticeship to wisdom. The more patient you are with the journey, the more profound the reward.

So take your time. The Craft will wait. The Light is never in a hurry.

## **CHAPTER INDEPENDENCE & PERSEVERANCE NO. 71**

In today's dynamic world, organisations need fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to stay relevant. Encouraging young people to take charge of any organisation can bring energy, creativity, and adaptability. This aspect was evident in abundance during the installation meeting of Chapter Independence & Perseverance No. 71 convened and held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Apparently, the day to day activities of the Chapter have passed down the hands of seasoned stalwarts of Masonry to the able hands



Of youth who have now assumed and discharged with credibility important duties in the functioning of the Chapter.

Undoubtedly, young minds introduce fresh Innovation and Creativity with a modern approach to problem-solving. Their familiarity with digital tools provide enhanced efficiency and communication in addition to fostering a more inclusive and diverse work environment, thereby ensuring the sustainability and longevity of the organisation.

This leaves one pondering as to whether empowering young individuals to take charge of organisations benefits both the individuals and the organisation as a whole. By overcoming challenges through mentorship, training, and an inclusive environment, organisations can harness the potential of young leaders for a sustainable and innovative future.

### **TO ALL BRETHREN : SEEKERS OF LIGHT: A CELESTIAL SUMMONS**

Our Brethren from Lodge K. R. Cama No. 1366 S.C., Nagpur have conveyed a very joyous but unusual tiding of their envisaged plan of convening their Regular meeting in June in a unique manner. The preponderant singularity of their event being their contemplated **Masonic Convocation of Freemasons** shall be held at a breath taking altitude at about 19300 ft – literally at the Top of the World - on the Western Himalayas in Ladakh, India.

This attempt will perhaps be one of its kind – at least in India if not in the World - holding a Lodge meeting or for that matter any type of official meeting at such a high altitude upon the **highest terrain over sea and soul**, a beneath no ceiling but the sky itself. The purpose being to raise a Lodge where none has stood, to remind the world that the journey toward Light knows no boundary—not of stone, nor snow, nor sky. To affirm: that Brotherhood climbs still, even unto the roof of the world.

Ten brethren have reportedly already confirmed their attendance, but there is no limit to increase the number if there is good response. Any Brother from around the country irrespective of the Constitution to which he belongs and desirous of joining this expedition is welcome to join our Brethren from Nagpur in this singular experience. In the hush of the heavens, where stars brush the breath of the earth, and silence speaks in the tongue of the eternal— let it be known:

Upon the solstice, when the heavens lean closest to Man—on June 21, 2025, details of the planned adventure are:-

Day 1. Travel by train from Nagpur to Delhi on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to reach Delhi the next day.

Day 2. From Delhi in evening the brethren will be travelling in a Volvo bus for Manali.

Day 3. Reaching Manali early morning. Local sightseeing in Manali. Night halt.

Day 4. Manali to Jispa/Sarchu in Tempo Traveller, Manali – Atul Tunnel-Keylong- Jispa

Day 5. Jispa to Baralacha la -Sarchu to Leh via Atal Tunnel,

Day 6. Sarchu – Leh via Gata loops, Nakee la, Lachung la, Pang Tanglang la

Day 7. At Leh local sight seeing. Leh palace, Shanti Stupa, Sangam (Zaskar & Indus) Hall of Fame

Day 8. Leh to Nubra Valley via Khardung la (18,380 ft) visit Diskit Monastery & Hunder Sand Dunes, Double hump Camel Ride. Stay at Hunder / Diskit

Day 9. Nubra to Turtuk – Nubra. Remote Balti village bear the Pakistan Border. Great cultural experience and landscapes.

Day 10. Nubra – Pangong Lake (via Shyok)

Day 11. Pangong – Hanle. Visit Astronomical Observatory in Hanle

Day 12. Hanle – Umlingla – Hanle. Unling la 19300 ft World's Highest Motorable Road Point.

#### **Meeting of Lodge K.R.CAMA – at Umlingla.**

Day 13. Hanley – Leh Overnight in Leh

Day 14. Leh – Sarchu

Same route back, Tanglang la – Pang – Sarchu.

Day 15. Sarchu – Manali. Overnight in Manali

Day 16. Manali to Delhi by Volvo bus.

Those Brothers of the Craft whose hearts are steady, whose steps are sure upon both path and principle, and whose lungs are filled with the rare air of reverence and resolve may get in touch with our Scottish Brethren at

Nagpur and contact details shall be provided on request. This is no ordinary ascent. It is a pilgrimage. A poetic labour. A Lodge not built—but *breathed*—into existence. Let every mountain in that terrain henceforth remember: that Masons passed this way in silence, bearing trowel and truth to raise a Lodge where none has stood, to remind the world that the journey toward Light knows no boundary—not of stone, nor snow, nor sky. To affirm: that Brotherhood climbs still, even unto the roof of the world.

Remember, *“There is no height to which the soul cannot rise, if led by Light and bound by Brotherhood.”*

### **AN EARNEST APPEAL**

It is with profound sorrow that we reminisce on the recent devastation caused by a ravaging fire to our cherished Masonic building in Mumbai on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025—a place where generations of Brethren have gathered in fraternity, shared in our ancient traditions, and upheld the sacred principles of our Order. Tragedy has befallen a place most sacred to our Order—a home where wisdom was imparted, friendships forged, and Masonic light kindled in the hearts of many.

What once stood as a proud symbol of our Brotherhood lies today in ruin. Two of our Temples, namely the Lodge room and the Chapter room housed in this esteemed structure, which have long stood as a beacon of Light, Knowledge, and Charity, now lie devastated by the ravaging fire, and their restoration calls for the collective strength of all who value their legacy.

Yet, undaunted by the challenges and rising from the ashes of destruction, the Freemasons’ Joint Hall Committee is now saddled with the undaunted task to restore the structure and make it even more glorious. The strength of Freemasonry has never been in bricks and mortar alone but in the unity and resolve of its Brethren. Today, we call upon you to answer this solemn duty — to give us your support, and to ensure that our cherished heritage property is restored to its former splendour.

As members of this noble Craft, we have always risen to meet adversity with unwavering resolve. Today, we seek your support to rebuild and restore this treasured edifice, ensuring that future generations of Freemasons may continue to find inspiration within its walls. Freemasonry teaches us the virtues of Charity and Unity. Now, more than ever, we must put these principles into action. The cost of rebuilding is exponential, and the need is urgent. **We therefore make this earnest appeal to your Lodge/Chapter as also individual Brethren/Companions to contribute generously toward the restoration fund. No amount is too small, and every offering shall be received with profound gratitude.**

Let it be said that when the call came, we answered—not with mere words, but with tangible support. Let us demonstrate that our Brotherhood is not merely one of words, but of action—proving that from the ashes, we can forge an even brighter future.

May the Grand Architect of the Universe bless and guide our collective endeavour.

Fraternally and sincerely,



***Noshir G. Paghdiwalla***

**Dist. Gr. Sec/Gr. Scribe ‘E’**

**Trustee – Freemasons’ Joint Hall Committee**

## **LODGE DR. SIR TEMULJI NARIMAN NO. 1516**



In the District of India, Lodge Dr. Sir Temulji Nariman No. 1516 S.C. ranks as the youngest Lodge amongst all others. Constituted on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1956 and Consecrated on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1956, it has the honour of having been named after an Illustrious Brother whose contribution to Scottish Freemasonry is immense. On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 the deputation from the District was witness to a commendable Installation ceremony performed by Bro. Ashok Nayak when he installed Bro. Dr. Roosevelt Koska in the Eastern chair in a flawless manner. May his performance prove to be worthy of emulation by the younger lot on the Lodge's roll.

### **KUDOS TO OUR CEREMONIAL COMMITTEE**

With deep admiration and profound respect, I extend wholehearted commendation to the distinguished members of our District's Sub-Committee for Ceremonials. Their performance during the past year has been nothing short of magnificent—an inspiring conduct of display of ritual mastery, precision, and reverence that has left a lasting impression.

The members of the Committee have taken upon themselves the task of improvising the ritual performance of the various Lodges and have personally travelled to the daughter Lodges to assist and guide the Brethren.

In addition, a booklet on ceremonials has also been finalised in collaboration with the District, which would prove to be of great help to our daughter Lodges. On Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025, they organised a virtual workshop on "*the Role and Duties of a Lodge Secretary*" which was attended by nearly 40 brethren Pan-India followed by an explanation of the various returns to be submitted to the District and the Grand Lodge.

*DGLI Ceremonial team at Secunderabad*



We appreciate that behind every seamless endeavour lies preparation, unity of purpose, and a sincere devotion to the Craft, thereby upholding the legacy of our fraternity — transforming ceremony into an experience, reaffirming the timeless values we hold dear - even having elevated it.

**VISIT US AT**









