



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



# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME VI : ISSUE 2  
MARCH 2026

*Edited by Bro./M.E.C. Noshir Godrej Paghdiwalla, D.S.M.,  
Past Depute District Grand Master & District Grand Secretary  
Hon. Grand Secretary (Scot.)  
Past Depute Grand Superintendent & Grand Scribe Ezra  
Hon First Grand Standard Bearer (Scot.)*



*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.*

## **EDITORIAL**

### **Lighting the Path Forward**

Freemasonry, as one of the longest-standing fraternal institutions in the world, occupies a unique position at the intersection of tradition, ethics, and civic engagement. Freemasonry is more than an institution—it is a journey. A journey of self-discovery, of brotherhood, of service, and of purpose. As we look toward the future, we do not stand at the end of the road, but at the threshold of new possibilities.

This editorial is intended to explore the contemporary challenges and opportunities confronting Freemasonry, with particular attention to issues of relevance, cultural adaptation, membership engagement, and institutional continuity. It argues that the sustainability of Freemasonry will depend upon its ability to articulate its philosophical foundations in a language accessible to modern society while remaining faithful to its core principles.

Down the years, Freemasonry has historically functioned as a moral and philosophical system expressed through allegory and symbolism. Its emphasis on ethical conduct, personal refinement, and social responsibility has contributed to its endurance across centuries. However, in an era characterized by rapid technological change, shifting social values, and declining participation in traditional institutions, Freemasonry must critically reflect on its future trajectory.

Our rituals are ancient, yet their message is eternal. They speak of integrity in a world of compromise, of compassion in times of division, of truth in an era of confusion. The future of Freemasonry lies not in changing these values, but in living them more visibly and more courageously.

Our ceremonies, symbols, and customs connect us with generations of Freemasons who came before us. They are not relics of the past but living tools for moral instruction and self-improvement. The challenge before us is to ensure that every Brother understands not only how we work, but why we work? Every Freemason carries light—not only within the lodge, but into his home, workplace, and society. The world today longs for ethical leaders, for men of character, for individuals who serve without seeking reward. This is the space Freemasonry was born to fill.

The road ahead will not be shaped by grand declarations, but by small, consistent acts: a Brother mentoring a new initiate, a lodge supporting a struggling family, a Mason choosing integrity when no one is watching. This is how the Craft grows stronger.

Many young men today are searching for purpose, belonging, and personal growth—the very things Freemasonry offers. However, they may not always know who we are or what we stand for. Each of us plays a role in sharing the true story of the Craft through our conduct, our conversations, and our presence in the community. When they see Freemasons who embody dignity, humility, and service, they will ask to walk beside us. Our example will always speak louder than our words. Technology can support our labours: lodge websites, online notices, educational webinars, and digital libraries can strengthen engagement. Yet nothing can replace the power of face-to-face fellowship, shared ritual, and sincere fraternal bonds. Our task is to use modern tools without losing the essence of Masonry.

The preservation of ritual and symbolic heritage remains central to Masonic identity. Yet, institutional rigidity risks alienating potential members who seek relevance and authenticity. The challenge lies in achieving a dynamic balance: safeguarding tradition while allowing interpretative flexibility. Lodges that contextualize Masonic teachings within contemporary concerns—such as leadership ethics, mental well-being, and civic responsibility—demonstrate greater cultural resonance.

Freemasonry has endured for centuries because it transforms lives. As long as there are men willing to work on themselves, to serve others, and to walk together in brotherhood, the future of Freemasonry will be bright. Brethren, Freemasonry today stands at an important moment in its long and distinguished journey. Our traditions remain strong, our rituals meaningful, and our principles timeless. Yet the world around us continues to change—and with it, the expectations of those we hope to attract and inspire.

Charity is the heart of Freemasonry. Whether through local community projects, educational support, or assistance to those in need, our visible service demonstrates the relevance of the Craft. A strong lodge is not measured only by attendance, but by the positive impact it has beyond its walls.

The road ahead is one of opportunity. By deepening our understanding of Masonry, strengthening our bonds of brotherhood, and recommitting ourselves to service, we ensure that our lodges remain vibrant and meaningful for generations to come.

Misconceptions regarding Freemasonry persist, often fuelled by secrecy and lack of public engagement. Contemporary organizational theory emphasizes the importance of transparency and narrative clarity. For Freemasonry, this necessitates a more coherent public articulation of its aims: fraternity, charity, moral development, and service. Strategic use of digital communication platforms may serve as a vital instrument in reshaping public understanding.

The adoption of digital tools presents both opportunities and risks. Online education platforms, virtual meetings, and digital archives can enhance accessibility and knowledge transmission. However, excessive reliance on technology may undermine the interpersonal bonds that are foundational to fraternal life. Sustainable development will require integrating technological innovation without compromising the experiential depth of lodge culture.

Freemasonry's legitimacy in the contemporary world will increasingly be evaluated by its tangible contributions to society. Effective engagement in education, healthcare, humanitarian relief, and community development strengthen both public trust and internal purpose. Civic engagement is not peripheral to Masonic identity; it is an essential expression of its ethical framework.

The future of Freemasonry will be shaped by its capacity for thoughtful evolution. By reaffirming its philosophical foundations, modernizing its modes of communication, and expanding its social engagement, Freemasonry can continue to function as a relevant moral institution. The road ahead demands neither abandonment of tradition nor uncritical modernization, but rather a reflective synthesis of both.

### **FRATERNAL VISIT OF OUR CHERISHED GUESTS FROM THE GRAND LODGE OF SCOTLAND**



At the dawn of the onset of the New Year 2026, we, at the District Grand Lodge of India were honoured by the visit of dignitaries from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, namely Bro. William Semple – the dynamic and affable Grand Secretary - together with Bro. James Bell – Past Depute Grand Master who spent time with us from 11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The visit was as fruitful as could be, and the memories of which, would last with us for long long times to come.



*Clockwise from Top Left: 1. Visiting Dignitaries. 2. With the Dist. Gr. Secretary. 3. At the District Office. 4. Welcome at the Airport.*

The visit served as a significant milestone in strengthening the fraternal bonds between the District and the Grand Lodge. A core component of this visit was an exhaustive review of the District's administrative protocols and financial records. It is with great pleasure that we report that the visiting dignitaries expressed complete satisfaction, finding no anomalies in our operations whatsoever. The visiting dignitaries arrived for a week-long series of engagements, and the interactions permeated an aura of mutual trust and confidence during the course of a scheduled review of the District's governance framework and fiscal health.

In the interest of maintaining the highest standards of Masonic regularity and transparency, the GLS delegation conducted a thorough inspection of the Governance Records and Minute Books, Financial Stewardship and Accounts, meticulous nature of the documentation and the adherence to the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.



1. Welcoming display at the District Notice Board. 2. At a darshan of Siddhivinayak. 3. Rangoli welcome. 4. With our Brethren and Office staff.

A comprehensive review of the District's balance sheets, investment portfolios, and benevolence funds was performed when no discrepancies, unauthorized expenditures, or bookkeeping errors were identified. At the conclusion of which the visiting dignitaries commended the District for its prudent management and transparent reporting and appreciating the District Grand Lodge of India for its "exemplary dedication to the craft."

They returned to Edinburgh not only with memories of warm hospitality but with the absolute assurance that the District Grand Lodge of India is a beacon of administrative competence. To find such a vast organization running without a single anomaly is a testament to its integrity.

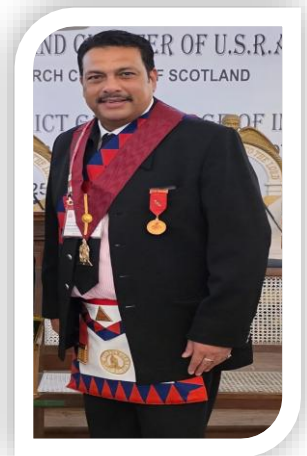


The visit concluded on a high note of mutual respect. The visit reinforces our District's reputation as a well-governed and fiscally responsible body. This successful inspection ensures continued trust and autonomy in our local operations.

## **A MESSAGE ON CONTINUITY AND STABILITY**



Pending the conduct of fresh elections, the Brethren of the District Grand Lodge of India and the Grand Chapter, USRAFIC, are informed that, in accordance with directions received from the Grand Lodge and the Grand Chapter respectively, **Wor. Bro. Zubin Sam Amaria - Depute District Grand Master** and **M.E.C. Gautam H. Depute Grand Superintendent** have been instructed to assume the role of **in-charge** of their respective Districts. This interim arrangement ensures the smooth continuity of the Scottish Masonic Craft and Chapter administration until the completion of the electoral process and the installation of the duly elected incumbents.



### **"PETALS OF PURPOSE:**

#### **Strengthening the Bond Between District and Daughter Lodge"**

The District officials had a pleasant experience of visiting Lodge Universal Peace No. 1208 S.C. at Hyderabad.

Hyderabad, the capital of Southern India's Telangana state is a major centre for the technology and industry, and is home to many upscale restaurants and shops. It boasts of many historic sites in the city that was once the Qutub Shahi dynastic capital.

Ensclosed within the central business area of the city lies a monument that bears significant Historical Masonic value in as much as it houses the oldest surviving Masonic building in the world where Masonic meetings continue to be held. Goshamahal is a suburb in Hyderabad City. Derived from the word gosha meaning secluded women in purdah and mahal referring to a palace where women lived in seclusion.



*Group Photograph at the main Foyer of the Temple.*



*Group photograph in the Temple after the meeting .*

The Goshamahal Baradari is probably the only well preserved palace built by the Qutb Shahi rulers, as almost all their palaces were destroyed during the long siege of the kingdom by Aurangzeb. It is a central historic landmark — a Qutb Shahi era palace built in the late 17th century (1680s) by Sultan Abul Hasan Tana Shah. It's one of the few surviving palaces from that dynasty in Hyderabad.

In the early 20th century, the palace was handed over by the Nizam to the Freemasons and today serves as an active Masonic lodge, one of the oldest. On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Bro. Jatindar Singh was installed in the Eastern Chair in a most impressive and exemplary manner under the proficient and accomplished hands of Bro. Noshir Paghdwalla, Past Depute DGM & District Grand Secretary, whose mastery of ritual lent great distinction to the proceedings.

Following the installation ceremony, a distinguished team from the District conducted a deeply moving and splendid ceremony of rededication. This sublime ceremony was led by Bro. Noshir Paghdwalla and ably supported by a distinguished District team comprising Bro. Rummy Khan, Bro. Furokh Santoke, and Bro. Gautam H.

Adding to the splendour of the evening was the presence of Ladies and non-masons, who were afforded a rare and meaningful glimpse into the beauty, symbolism, and timeless values of Freemasonry, thereby enhancing the spirit of universality, goodwill, and brotherly love that so fittingly characterises Lodge Universal Peace. The occasion reflected the enduring strength, harmony, and continuity of the Lodge, standing as a testament to a hundred years of dedicated service to the Craft.



*Explaining the finer nuances of Freemasonry to the ladies*

### **“REKINDLING THE LIGHT: “FROM DORMANCY TO DEVOTION” THE REVIVAL OF CHAPTER GANESH GAVANKAR NO. 787, SOLAPUR”**

In the unfolding tapestry of Royal Arch Masonry, there come moments when dormant embers are gently fanned back into radiant flame, reaffirming the timeless truth that the Light of the Order, once bestowed, never fades but merely awaits renewal. Such a moment was witnessed on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025 during the visit of the Grand Chapter U.S.R.A.F.I.C. to its daughter Chapter Ganesh Gavankar, No. 787 S.C., Solapur—a Chapter which, after a period of quietude extending over the last few years, stood once again poised to resume its noble labours.

This visit was imbued with deep fraternal significance, symbolising not only the enduring bond between a parent Chapter and its progeny, but also the collective commitment of the Companions to preservation, revival, and continuity of the Royal Art. It was a gesture of encouragement and reassurance, affirming that no Chapter, however long inactive, is ever beyond the loving reach of the Craft.



The highlight of this memorable occasion was the Installation Ceremony, conducted with solemn splendour and exemplary ritualistic precision. MEC Mohan Deshpande, MEC Mayur Khamitkar, and MEC Siddheshwar Wale were duly and fittingly installed as the First, Second, and Third Principals respectively, thus assuming the mantle of leadership at a most auspicious juncture in the Chapter's renewed journey. The ceremony was impressively performed by MEC Noshir Paghdwalla, Past Depute Grand Superintendent and present Grand Scribe Ezra, ably assisted by the learned and accomplished MEC Furokh Santoke - Past Depute Grand Superintendent officiating as Director of Ceremonies, whose combined experience and ritual mastery lent dignity, depth, and inspiration to the proceedings.

The installation stood as a defining moment—heralding not merely the investiture of officers, but the re-awakening of Chapter Ganesh Gavankar to active, purposeful, and harmonious labour. It marked a fresh beginning, grounded in tradition, strengthened by fraternity, and illuminated by hope for a vibrant and enduring future.

## **A SESQUICENTENNIAL GARLAND OF LIGHT AND LEGACY**

In the historic and resplendent city of Hyderabad, Royal Arch Chapter Chudderghaut No. 159 unfurled the golden banners of time as it joyously celebrated 150 illustrious and unforgettable years of continuous existence on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 — a milestone woven with honour, heritage, and hallowed tradition.



In a grand display of fraternal fellowship and Masonic splendour, a Deputation from a Grand Royal Arch Chapter graced its hallowed grounds in Secunderabad, marking a momentous occasion. The warm embrace of hospitality extended by the daughter Chapter was truly heartwarming, as they spared no effort in ensuring the comfort and enjoyment of their distinguished guests.

The picturesque accommodations provided at the local Boat club offered a serene and peaceful retreat, allowing for moments of reflection amidst the tranquil waters. The evening reception at the Sailing Club was a delightful affair, filled with camaraderie and joviality as Companions came together to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Indeed, the significance of a Royal Arch Chapter reaching such a remarkable milestone cannot be understated. To complete 150 years of dedicated service to the craft is a testament to the unwavering commitment and dedication of its members, a true testament to the enduring legacy of Freemasonry. As the Companions gathered to commemorate this auspicious occasion, the spirit of Bon-homie, camaraderie and unity was palpable, serving as a reminder of the bonds that unite us all in the pursuit of light and knowledge.

This landmark occasion shimmered with dignity and reverence as the Companions proudly witnessed a most august and deeply impressive Rededication Ceremony, conducted with ritualistic excellence by the distinguished Officers of the Grand Chapter, USRAFIC. The deputation was graciously led by MEC Gautam H., Depute Grand Superintendent with MEC Rummy Khan and MEC Furokh Santoke enacting the pivotal roles of the second and third Principals. MEC Noshir Paghdwalla assumed the important role of Director of Ceremonies, ably assisted by MEC Manohar Palwankar -Past Depute Grand Superintendent as his understudy.

Amidst an atmosphere suffused with harmony, devotion, and fraternal affection, the gathering stood as a living testament to the enduring spirit of Royal Arch Masonry. The echoes of the Chapter's glorious past blended seamlessly with aspirations for the future, ensuring that this sesquicentennial celebration shall forever remain engraved upon the hearts and memories of all who were privileged to be present.

In conclusion, the visit of the Deputation from the Grand Royal Arch Chapter to Daughter Chapter Chudderghaut was a shining example of the beauty and grandeur of Freemasonry. With hearts full of gratitude and minds ablaze with inspiration, the visiting Companions departed, carrying with them memories of a truly unforgettable experience. May the light of Royal Arch Masonry continue to shine brightly for another 150 years and beyond, a beacon of hope and guidance for all who seek the path of enlightenment.

## **LODGE ST. ANDREWS IN THE EAST No. 343, PUNE**

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Bro. Vispy Billimoria was Installed in the Eastern Chair as the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge St Andrew's in the East No 343 S.C.

Bro Gautam H., Immediate Past Master of the Lodge, performed the installation ceremony in the presence of a District Deputation led by Bro. Farokh Chinoy – Substitute District Grand Master and visiting Brethren from other Daughter Lodges.



We wish the Lodge and all the Installed Office-bearers a fruitful Masonic year ahead.

### **“FRATERNITY AMIDST THE MIST: A MEMORABLE MASONIC GATHERING IN MUNNAR”**

Amidst the mist-kissed mountains and emerald expanses of tea gardens, the serene hill station of Munnar in Kerala unfolded its timeless charm to welcome Bro. Noshir G. Paghdiwalla, the Past Depute District Grand Master and current District Grand Secretary of the District Grand Lodge of India — who, accompanied by Bro. Manohar Palwankar – Past Depute DGM, journeyed to this scenic sanctuary to attend a memorable Masonic gathering hosted by Lodge Heather on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2026.

Nestled gracefully among rolling hills and veiled in cool mountain breezes, Munnar provided a setting befitting the dignity and harmony of the Craft. Nature itself seemed to stand in silent reverence as Brethren assembled in fraternal unity, their hearts warmed by fellowship and shared devotion to the noble principles of Freemasonry.



The Installation meeting of Lodge Heather No. 928 was conducted in an atmosphere of solemnity blended with brotherly affection, reflecting the high traditions and disciplined spirit that distinguish the Order. The entire ceremony of Installation at the hands of District Grand Secretary added both prestige and inspiration to the proceedings, his participation reinforcing the bonds that unite Lodges with the District across regions and distances.

The highlight of the occasion was the Installation Ceremony of the Right Worshipful Master, Brother Dr. Shobhan Babu by Bro. Paghdiwalla — an event executed with exceptional precision, dignity, and grace. The ceremony stood as a shining example of ritual excellence, each movement and word resonating with symbolism and meaning. Brother Dr. Shobhan Babu assumed the Chair of King Solomon amidst warm applause and heartfelt good wishes from the assembled Brethren. His installation marked not merely a change of office but the continuation of a proud legacy, promising a year guided by wisdom, zeal, and dedication to Masonic ideals.



*Rapt attention at the Festive Board*

The evening was further enriched by an aura of cordial fellowship, thoughtful exchanges, and the strengthening of fraternal ties at the festive Board to follow— reminding all present that beyond ritual and ceremony lies the enduring spirit of Brotherhood. The ladies of the Brethren contributing to the ornate splendour by huge floral decorations on every table, having fetched the blooms themselves personally from their own gardens.

As the gathering concluded, the tranquil hills of Munnar bore silent witness to a day of unity, tradition, and renewed commitment to the timeless values of the Craft. The visit of the District – not its first - will long remain cherished in the annals of Lodge Heather, remembered as an occasion where natural beauty and Masonic harmony blended in perfect accord.

**WHEN THE GAVEL PASSED:  
A PAGEANT OF MASONIC TRADITION NIGHT OF MASONIC SPLENDOUR  
AT LODGE ROYAL JUBILEE NO. 742 S.C. SOLAPUR**

A Tapestry of Tradition and Brotherhood was woven at the Installation of Bro. Capt. Parth Dawda as the Right Worshipful Master at Solapur on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025. This was under the benign auspices of the Great Architect of the Universe, when Solapur became the proud setting for a resplendent Masonic convocation on 31st January 2025, when a distinguished Deputation of the District Grand Lodge of India, S.C. paid a fraternal visit to attend the Installation Ceremony of Lodge Royal Jubilee No. 742 S.C.

The Brethren gathered witnessed an event conducted with remarkable grace, precision, and reverential adherence to ancient Masonic tradition. The ceremony was most ably performed by Wor. Bro. Noshir G. Paghdwalla, Past Depute District Grand Master and present District Grand Secretary, whose deep knowledge of ritual, commanding presence, and serene authority transformed the proceedings into a truly elevating experience.



From the opening moments, the Masonic Temple resonated with an air of solemn expectation, as time-honoured landmarks and sacred usages were unfolded with meticulous care. The Installing Master's flawless delivery, combined with his calm yet inspiring demeanour, imbued the ceremony with a rare blend of dignity and warmth. Each charge was rendered with clarity and conviction, reminding all present of the profound responsibilities, privileges, and moral obligations that accompany the Master's Chair.

The ceremony was further enriched by the presence of brethren traversing long distances from various daughter Lodges, whose enthusiastic attendance stood as a living testament to the enduring bonds of brotherhood that unite the Craft. Their participation added colour, strength, and solemnity to the proceedings, transforming the Installation into a grand celebration of unity, harmony, and shared Masonic purpose.

The visit of the District Grand Lodge Deputation led by Bro. Noshir Paghdwalla and comprising of Bro. Furokh Santoke – Past Depute D.G.M. both from Mumbai, Bro. Gautam H. – Substitute D.G.M. from Pune, Bro. Shashank Lengade – District Grand D.O.C., Bro. Rajesh Shingamakki – District grand Inner Guard, and Bro. Mahesh Bhirangi – Ruling Master of Lodge Cataract, all from Belgaum lent exceptional lustre to the occasion, symbolising the District's confidence, goodwill, and fraternal support for Lodge Royal Jubilee No. 742 S.C. As the gavel was finally entrusted to the capable hands of the newly installed Right Worshipful Master, the atmosphere was charged with hope, renewal, and a collective resolve to uphold the highest ideals of Freemasonry.

The evening concluded amidst heartfelt felicitations, warm fraternal greetings, and sincere expressions of gratitude, leaving behind memories that will long be cherished. This Installation Ceremony at Solapur shall stand recorded as a shining chapter in its annals.

During the stay, the Brethren of the Lodge and the District collectively joined hands in donating a R.O. Water Filtration Plant at a local school of children hailing from poor and downtrodden families, who were receiving education from some philanthropic individuals.

The lit-up faces of the individuals receiving this act of benevolence bore testimony to their genuine need for potable drinking water.



*Adherence to the noble cause of charity and benevolence*

## **MIST, MOUNTAINS, AND MASONRY: A CELEBRATION OF BROTHERHOOD IN MUNNAR**

Amidst the tranquil grandeur of Munnar, a memorable and spiritually uplifting Masonic occasion unfolded with rare splendour when a Distinguished Convocation on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026. The picturesque hill station of Kerala became the gracious host to the deputation from the Grand Chapter U.S.R.A.F.I.C. led by M.E.C. Noshir G. Paghdiwalla – Past Depute Grand Superintendent & current Scribe Ezra accompanied by M.E.C. Manohar G. Palwankar, whose visit lent dignity and significance to the proceedings of Chapter Camellia No. 871.

Surrounded by nature's serene majesty, Companions gathered in harmonious fellowship, united by the timeless principles of Royal Arch Masonry. The presence of the esteemed Grand Officer infused the Convocation with renewed inspiration, symbolising the unity and continuity of the Craft across Chapters and jurisdictions.



The Installation Meeting of Chapter Camellia was conducted with exemplary decorum and reverence, reflecting the highest traditions of Capitular Masonry. Every aspect of the ceremony bore testimony to meticulous preparation and deep understanding of ritual, creating an atmosphere both solemn and elevating.

The highlight of the gathering was the Installation Ceremony, performed with exceptional excellence and grace by Most Excellent Companions Pramod Krishna, Jacob Chacko, and Cariappa respectively. Their harmonious coordination, dignified bearing, and precise rendering of the ritual transformed the ceremony into a truly memorable experience. Each word resonated with meaning, and each movement reflected the profound symbolism that lies at the heart of Royal Arch Freemasonry.



*MEC Jacob Chacko, MEC Pramod Krishna & MEC Cariappa  
With the District Officers.*

The assembled Companions witnessed the proceedings with admiration and reverence, acknowledging the remarkable standard of ceremonial work displayed by the Companions of the Chapter. The occasion stood as a shining example of dedication to tradition and the living spirit of the Order.

Beyond the ritual, the gathering fostered warm fellowship and renewed bonds among Companions, reminding all present that the true strength of Masonry lies not only in its ceremonies but in the enduring companionship and shared pursuit of light.

As the Convocation concluded, the mist-clad hills of Munnar seemed to echo the harmony and goodwill that marked the day. The visit of the distinguished Grand Scribe Ezra will long remain cherished in the annals of Chapter Camellia — a memorable chapter written amidst nature's splendour and illuminated by the light of Royal Arch Masonry.

