



GRAND LODGE OF INDIA

MW Bro. Rajeev Ramkrishna Khandelwal, OSM
Grand Master



FROM THE GRAND MASTER'S DESK

My Dear Brethren,

At the outset, let me wish you and all your family members, the best for the coming Festival season and I trust that these Festivals will bring lots of happiness in your life. As in the Country, much water has also flown down Freemasonry since I last communicated with you in June. Many remarkable activities have taken place since, some hard decisions have been taken and much progress has been made within our Institution.

The intervening period has seen some great Activities by all the Regions. However, one of the most remarkable and path breaking activities has been the Inauguration of the first fully equipped, state of the art Masonic Eye Centre at Freemasons Hall, Janpath New Delhi.

It was absolutely heartwarming for me to inaugurate the same in the august presence of Dr. Noshir Shroff, recipient of the Padma Bhushan award. The Regional Grand Master of Northern India, RW Bro Anish Kumar Sharma, along with his team of highly dedicated, devoted and committed Brethren led by R.W. Bro. Subhash Chawla, VW Bro Dr. Ashish Gupta and RW Bro PK Sharma made this dream come true in a remarkable period of four months and deserve loads of appreciation. These Brethren truly personified the principles of "Where there is a Will, there is a way". It is in my personal knowledge that they lived this dream for four months and made it come true, by their single-minded pursuit to attend the feat. The Eye Centre will cater to the entire Northern region and will perform IOL and other Eye Surgeries at a highly subsidized cost to the poor and needy, by the most competent Ophthalmologists. Dr. Shroff, a one-time

Mason himself, has agreed to be the future guide to this hospital. Money for the Eye Centre came not only from the Masons, but even from the families of past Brethren, which is remarkable. It shows the need to be in touch with the families of our deceased Brethren. I must convey my special thanks to the family of late W Bro. Mohd. Suleiman Japanwalla and W Bro. O.P Bhargava for their most generous contributions for the Eye Centre. May their tribe grow. I am also thankful to RW Bro Suryanarayan Rao for contributing a handsome amount for the new Grand Lodge project "Operation Jyoti", to be announced at the coming Grand Festival.

This period also saw the Grand Lodge taking the extreme step of removing two of our Brethren from our midst by expelling them from the Grand Lodge. This happened in the Especial Communication of the Grand Lodge held on 21stSeptember at Agra. We had to take this extreme step in direct correlation to their extreme actions of Masonic impropriety and behaviors, bringing utter disrepute to our Institution. One of them got the Masonic property of Kanpur sealed by Government authorities with his string of false and misleading complaints, which included baseless allegations that even anti-national activities are conducted within the Temple, heartily laughing in videos at the time of the sealing, making videos and circulating the same to all, as if a personal war has been won. He had no remorse for his actions and seemed to enjoy the discomfort and trouble of the rest of the Fraternity. The fraternity of Kanpur, well wishers and RGM Northern India gave him enough opportunities to correct his demeanor, but all in vain. In one Whatsapp message he even threatened to make the RGM North "Late" RGM North. His many actions of Masonic Impropriety in the Past had gone unpunished and that made him feel larger than the Institution itself. Before I proceed, let me remind you of a short Poem:

***Sometime when you're feeling important;
Sometime when your ego's in bloom,
Sometime when you take it for granted you're the best qualified in the room.***

***Sometime when you feel that your going would leave an infallible hole,
Just follow these simple instructions and see how they humble your soul.***

"Take a bucket and fill it with water, Put your hand in it up to the wrist,

Pull it out and the hole that's remaining is a measure of how you'll be missed.

You can splash all you wish when you enter, you may stir up the water galore,

But stop and you'll find that in no time it looks quite the same as before.

The moral of this quaint example is for you to do just the best that you can,

Be proud of yourself but remember my Brother, there's no indispensable man."

My Brethren, this Poem holds good for Freemasonry as well. Long after we all would have gone, the Institution will still survive, with much better people in charge. Our Job is only to do our best, so that our Peers would proudly say 'He has Marked Well'. Freemasonry is tolerant, but the limits of Masonic Demeanor are equally important. Crossing them brings unhappiness all around.

My brethren, we at the Grand Lodge agree that many errors and misprints have occurred in the previous two Editions of our Ritual Book. Our Board President, RW Bro. R. Sushil Raj and his Team are now correcting all those Errors, and the Grand Lodge will soon bring out the corrected copies for the benefit of all brethren. Our idea is to replace your past two Editions with a free copy of the Ritual book at Trichy. I convey my thanks to the Board President for his dedication and foresight in many matters. His ideas and timely inputs have helped us all on many occasions.

Brethren, Freemasonry has worked well for so many years without any Vision Statement, Mission Statement as well as Long Term Goals. However, it is now felt that we need to have each one of these for our future workings. Whenever we meet an outsider, a question is posed about these aspects and we have none to answer. At the Yercaud Masonic Retreat, I had exhorted the Brethren to suggest each one of the above, but as of now, nothing has been received. I now exhort each one of you to apply your mind and suggest a suitable Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Long Term Goals for our Institution. The one adopted by the Grand Lodge will be suitably acclaimed at Trichy.

My Brethren, I take this opportunity to invite you for the Grand Festival 2019, to be held at Trichy under the Stewardship of VW Bro. S. Valliyappan and RW Bro. C. Sitaram and their team of the dedicated members of the Organizing Committee. I also exhort each one of you attending the Grand Festival to come prepared with the Agenda Papers, as many important Constitutional Amendments will come up for passing, as unanimously approved by the Grand Board. These amendments will affect the long-term working of the Grand Lodge and are orientated towards absolute Administrative Transparency at the GLI, Regional and Lodge levels. There are many noteworthy temples and places of interest near Trichy and an extra day will be well spent by you. We will also have a Workshop for the masons at Trichy and the President Board, Myself, the Grand Secretary and Treasurer will be there to interact with you and take questions and suggestions from you. The details will be forwarded to all Lodges soon.

**Rajeev Khandelwal
Grand Master**