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THE GREAT ILLUMINATOR

Vairochana

The eye of new awareness

Special Issue **KAGYU MONLAM**

WELCOME TO
KAGYU MONLAM

KARMAPA INAUGURATION
& TEACHING AT NALA

KARMAPA AT
LADAKH

REMEMBERING
SHAMARPA RINPOCHE

SHAMARPA RINPOCHE'S
LAST INTERVIEW



Cover Photo

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Dedication

“Vairochana” offers this dedication to the Triple Gem, or the three treasures, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

Wishing everyone an inspiring and enjoyable read ahead!

Pasang Sherpa

བཀའ་བརྒྱུད་སློན་ལམ།



Kagyumonlam

Dear Dharma Friends,

It is my heartfelt pleasure to welcome you to the 2015 Kagyu Monlam here in Bodhgaya, India, the very place where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. Kagyu Monlam is the most opportunity each year for everyone in the Kagyu lineage – from His Holiness Karmapa and the high Rinpoches to lay disciples from all over the world - to gather together and recite prayers for world peace. It is also the time when we come together to meet as a dharma family and friends to share our joy of the practice and reminisce about the events over the past year.



The Kagyu Monlam, a historic event begun centuries ago old Tibet, was reinstated by Shamar Rinpoche himself in 1994. Since 1996, we have been practicing under the great Maha Bodhi tree under the guidance of His Holiness Karmapa and Shamar Rinpoche. Since Shamarpa's parinirvana last year, His Holiness incorporated aspiration prayers for the swift return of Shamar Rinpoche into the daily sessions. These prayers are recited at the end of each day. We will continue that tradition again this year and hope that our prayers are answered quickly!

I wish you a wonderful time this year at the 2015 Kagyu Monlam, and rejoice in your good merit to join us here with His Holiness and your Kagyu family. Please take part in the group prayers under the great Bodhi tree at the Maha Bodhi Temple, make offerings to the magnificent Maha Bodhi Buddha statue, and do kora around the Maha Stupa. It is your tremendous merit that has brought you here. Please share your good merit with all sentient beings by engaging in and enjoying all the activities of this precious event.

Yours in the dharma,

Karma Tsering
Kagyumonlam Chairperson

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SHARMINUB FOUNDATION

श्यामिनुव फाउण्डेशन



SAVE THE DATE!

WE CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO JOIN US ON

MAY 19, 2016

FOR GROUP ASPIRATION PRAYERS DEDICATED TO
THE SWIFT RETURN OF SHAMAR RINPOCHE ON THE
2ND ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PARINIRVANA.

SHARMINUB INSTITUTE FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES

Sharminub Institute for Buddhist Studies is nestled in the hills by the coveted Raniban "Queen's Forest" outside Kathmandu. The project is the brainchild of the late 14th Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche. His vision was to build a world-renowned institution of



advanced studies in Buddhist history, philosophy, and practices and Himalayan languages, cultures, ecology, and geopolitics.

Sharminub will be much more than just a classroom. It will be a place for advanced research and the translation of important buddhist texts into Nepali and western languages. The campus will house a world-class comparative religions library, where scholars of all traditions come together to learn and engage in constructive discourse.

There will be several large meeting halls for both domestic and international conferences. A commercial center and medical clinic are planned to meet the shopping needs of both the campus and the surrounding community. At the top of the campus, views of the Kathmandu Valley, there will be a resort, guest house and elegant rooftop restaurant.

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A
Warm
welcome to the 2015
Kagyu Monlam!

Images by Magda Jung & Tokpa Korlo

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2015 Kagyu Monlam, led by His Holiness Thaye Dorje, the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa. Kagyu Monlam is one of the most important events of the year. It is the exceptional time when Karmapa, high Rinpoches of the Kagyu lineage, lamas and lay practitioners gather from all over the world to meet, share, and practice together for the benefit of all sentient beings. We rejoice in your participation, celebrating our auspicious connection with Karmapa and the Karma Kagyu lineage.



Monlam – The Path of Aspiration

The Tibetan word Monlam can be translated “Path of Aspiration”. Although many different aspiration prayers are recited during the Kagyu Monlam each day, the main prayer is Sangcho Monlam, The Noble King of Prayers of Excellent Conduct, also known as the Samantabhadra Wishing Prayer. This prayer comprises the final verses of the Avatamsakasutra and is a profoundly effective method of developing limitless bodhicitta. When the prayer is recited in unison at Kagyu Monlam, its power is increased one hundred thousand times or more. This contributes to the well-being and spiritual development of all sentient beings, helping all beings progress on the bodhisattva path.

At the 2009 Kagyu Monlam, Shamar Rinpoche gave an extensive teaching on the meaning of The Noble King of Prayers of Excellent Conduct. Shamarpa explained that Buddha Shakyamuni taught the Samantrabhadra Wishing Prayer to urge practitioners to emulate the aspirations, intentions, and actions of great bodhisattvas, such as Samantrabhadra, for the benefit of all sentient beings. By doing so, disciples can connect with the power of the wish-fulfilling accomplishments of the bodhisattvas, who mastered the Paramitas and are able to bestow the blessings of their accomplishments.

Kagyu Monlam – A Precious Event

The Kagyu Monlam event is held every December at the Bodhgaya Temple, where the Buddha achieved enlightenment while meditating under the great bodhi tree. Bodhgaya is the main pilgrimage site for Buddhists of all traditions and is the sacred place that we can easily contemplate and connect with Buddha’s enlightenment and accomplishments.

At Kagyu Monlam, hundreds of enlightened masters, lamas, and lay disciples of the Kagyu lineage recite meritorious aspiration prayers for world peace. The Kagyu Monlam tradition was revived in 1994 by



Shamar Rinpoche in Lumbini, birthplace of the Buddha. Since 1996, Thaye Dorje and the late 14th Shamarpa Mipham Chokyi Lodro led the supremely meritorious event. After the passing of Shamarpa Rinpoche last year, the 2014 Kagyu Monlam was dedicated to his swift return, when many prayers were also recited at the end of each day for the fulfillment of this supreme wish. It is said that the effect of reciting an aspiration prayer a single time at this holy site, and in the presence of great bodhisattvas such as His Holiness Karmapa, is more powerful than reciting it a million times on your own.



The Six Paramitas are the heart of the Mahayana Path and this particular prayer is the heart of the Paramita of Aspiration, a component of the Paramita of Wisdom. Shamarpa explained that by accomplishing one Paramita in the proper way, all Paramitas will be perfected. The perfection of the Paramitas is the realization of limitless bodhicitta, which is none other than the attainment enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.



The **Kagyu Monlam Group Prayers**

His Holiness Thaye Dorje, the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, explains the meaning of the Great Kagyu Monlam and the group aspiration prayers.

Corresponding to the individual aspirations and inclinations of his students the perfect buddha, Buddha Shakyamuni, gave an immense variety of dharma teachings. Yet all of these serve the purpose to gather the two accumulations and to purify the two types of obscuration.

The foremost among these methods enabling a practitioner to gather the two accumulations is bodhicitta based on great compassion and the virtue accrued thereby. On this basis, the fruition of the enlightened state with its two buddha-kayas is attained and the unsurpassable method to accelerate this attainment is the practise of dedication and aspirations (mon-lam).

A spiritual path comprising the practises of dedication and aspirations is not found in any other religion. It is thus an extraordinary feature of Buddhism: virtue is dedicated towards all beings' complete enlightenment and aspirations form the link to this unsurpassable fruit.

Ascertaining this practice to be specific to the Mahayana, the noble Nagarjuna once said: "The bodhisattvas' aspirations, their vast conduct and their dedication were not taught in the shravaka-path".

As to the difference between dedication and aspirations: dedication requires roots

“ Venerable Shariputra, if, for example, one drop of water falls into a large ocean it will not vanish, but become inexhaustible, never-ending until the all-consuming fire at the end of an aeon. Likewise the roots of virtue fully dedicated to enlightenment will not vanish, but become inexhaustible, never-ending until one's achievement of the heart of enlightenment.



pointed", "accumulated", "accumulate" and "aspiring this for that purpose".

The practise of dedication and aspirations is extremely important in that they change even a tiny amount of virtue into something extremely vast and inexhaustible. The Buddha taught this for example in the Arya Akshayamati Nirdesha Sutra:

"Venerable Shariputra, if, for example, one drop of water falls into a large ocean it will not vanish, but become inexhaustible, never-ending until the all-consuming fire at the end of an aeon. Likewise the roots of virtue fully dedicated to enlightenment will not vanish, but become inexhaustible, never-ending until one's achievement of the heart of enlightenment".

In general, whatever type of virtue one practises on the Mahayana path, one sets out with generating great compassion and bodhicitta. One then does the actual practise based on wisdom which does not conceptualize in a perceiver, perceived and perceiving, and finally, one has to seal the virtue by means of dedication and aspirations.

Furthermore, the Buddha taught in the vinaya-sutras that whatever minor or major virtue is practised during the various days commemorating great dharma-occasions such as the Month of Miracles, the

of virtue to be dedicated whereas mere aspirations don't. The original Sanskrit term for (the Tibetan word) "Ngowo" (which in English translates to "dedication") is "parinamana". It literally means "complete change". The original Sanskrit term for (the Tibetan word) "Monlam" (which in English translates to "aspirations") is "pranidhana". It literally means "fully settled", "one-



Month of Vesakh, the Descent from Heaven etc. at sites associated with the Buddha's activities such as Bodhgaya, Lumbini etc. is – due to the power of the place and time – multiplied a hundredfold, a thousandfold etc. Therefore, to practice the accumulation of virtue such as making offerings to the Three Jewels with a large monastic sangha-community is said to be especially powerful. In the same sutra it is taught that the monastic sangha symbolizes the Three Jewels, that they are authentic recipients of offerings and the main reference for the accumulation of merit.

Thus it is extremely important to make offerings at special places to the monastic sangha, to seal the accumulations of merit deriving from teaching, debating, meditating, gathering and reciting by means of practising the dedication and the aspirations, and to do so carefully and sincerely.

It is just as Milarepa, the foremost of siddhas, said: "The great meditator who practises in a cave and the benefactor who provides for his living will – due to dependant occurrences – attain buddhahood together, and the heart of dependant occurrences is dedication."

Likewise, regarding the practise of aspirations: Shantideva taught in his Shikhsasamuccaya that the ten types of countless aspirations of bodhisattvas as taught in the sutras are subsumed in the "Aspirations for Excellent Conduct". Then there are further great aspiration prayers such as the "Aspirations from Maitreyanatha's Hagiology" directed towards the attainment of enlightenment once the ten paramitas are fully perfected. Furthermore there are the "Mahamudra-Aspirations" associated with the Vajrayana etc. They all constitute the skillful path enabling oneself and others to attain enlightenment swiftly. Thus they are held in high esteem by the buddhas and the bodhisattvas.

On April 10th, 2007, I, Trinley Thaye Dorje, who is blessed by carrying the name of the 17th Karmapa, have made these aspirations and wrote this at my residence in Kalimpong so that all participants who are fortunate to take part in the great Kagyü Mönlam at the supreme place Bodhgaya (in India) will generate a pure state of mind

Dhagpo Kagyu Ling



- Above: From left to right, 17th Karmapa, Jigmé Rinpoche and Shamar Rinpoche, laying the foundation stone of the Institute in Dhagpo, 2002.
- 1st on the right: 16th Karmapa with the donor of the land of Dhagpo, 1975
- 2nd on the right: Shamar Rinpoche inaugurating the new Institute of Dhagpo, 2013

Dhagpo Kagyu Ling was founded in France in 1974, following the wish of the 16th Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje. He designated Dhagpo to be his European seat and, responding to the wishes of his European disciples, gave five directives, known as the 5 wishes, in order for the Buddha's teachings to take root in Europe in an authentic and lasting way.



Following the 16th Karmapa's paranirvana, Shamar Rinpoche, Mipham Chokyi Lodro, together with Jigme Rinpoche who had been named not only by the 16th but also by the 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje as his European representative, continued to oversee the development of the projects in accordance with the Karmapa's wishes.

Thanks to the unceasing efforts of many other great masters as well as dedicated volunteers and students, the 5 wishes of 16th Karmapa were progressively fulfilled over the last 40 years and still continue to evolve:



- More than 70 study and meditation centers were created in many major cities throughout France and neighboring countries.
- A **Reference Library** was established in Dhagpo to allow the collection and preservation of fundamental Buddhist texts with the intention of rendering them accessible to all.
- An **Institute** to ensure the translation as well as the transmission and study of texts was inaugurated on June 13, 2013 by Shamar Rinpoche.
- Ten **Three-Year Retreat Centers** were built under the guidance of Gendun Rinpoche, giving practitioners ideal conditions for practicing the profound transmissions of the Karma Kagyu lineage with the aim of realizing the meaning. More than 500 individual 3 year retreats have been accomplished there since its beginnings in 1984.
- **Monasteries** with Temples for those who wish to consecrate their lives exclusively to intensive practice.

Today, Dhagpo Kagyu Ling and all its affiliate centers, under the full guidance of Thaye Dorje, His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, are a thriving network of communities, with close ties to the numerous world-wide projects that Shamar Rinpoche had established during his life time with the aim of preserving the authentic Buddha Dharma.

For more information on Dhagpo Kagyu Ling's program please visit our website www.dhagpo.org or facebook.com/dhagpo

Karmapa's Healthcare Project in Nepal

The Karmapa's Healthcare Project e.V., abbreviated KHCP e.V. is a non-profit charitable association, which is based on donations, willingness to help and scientific knowledge. The Project pursues a humanitarian approach and not a religious missionary or political approach. 100% of the donations are used for medicine, equipment, surgeries and services of local doctors. All Western helpers, including the board of directors, are unpaid volunteers who work without compensation.

In close collaboration with His Holiness the 17th Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje, the KHCP was founded in Kalimpong, India in 2005. Since then, more than 20 monasteries and schools in Nepal and India are supported.

The KHCP focuses on healthcare, medical prevention and education. Its goal is not only to provide healthcare for the monks and nuns of the monasteries and schools, but also to cater to the needs of poor population in local areas. Mobile medical and dental camps are a good method to achieve this goal. At our annual medical camp in Bodhgaya, we provide up to 5,000 treatments in a single week. The last grand campaign in Kathmandu was the annual medical camp during the Mani Thung Chur Puja at the Manang Monastery of Sherab Gyaltsen Rinpoche at Swayambhu. In June 2014, a medical camp was set up at Sharminub Institute to offer emergency medical services for ten of thousands of people who attended the cremation ceremony of Künzig Shamar Rinpoche. Shamar Rinpoche was a strong supporter of the social activities of KHCP.

Over the next several years, we are planning to establish small clinic rooms in the monasteries we serve, which will also function as contact points for the local population to receive services.

Collaboration with hospitals and health NGOs

Since 2012, KHCP formed a collaboration with Dhulikhel Hospital Kathmandu and its Director Prof. Dr. Ram Sheestra.

What was at first planned as a medical contact point has now developed into a platform for a combination of both medical and social work. The following is a short overview of the features in development:



- Local doctors and medical staff are hired by the KHCP and also get the opportunity for further training
- Students of medicine from East and West can do internships with the KHCP
- Socio-medical topics are developed together
- Monks and nuns can learn in the environment of Dhulikhel Hospital by being guest observers or by taking part in workshops on medical topics
- Since the KHCP also puts great emphasis on a social-scientific approach, academic studies can be conducted

For further information and to make a donate, please visit our website at www.karmapa-healthcare.org



*Inauguration and
Teaching at Nala by*
THAYE DORJE
HIS HOLINESS THE 17TH
GYALWA
KARMAPA

Images by Tokpa Korlo





November 6, 2015

On October 31, 2015, Thaye Dorje, the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, arrived in Nepal to lead the inauguration and consecration ceremonies of Dhagpo Sheydrub Ling, a Buddhist boarding school for young boys. The magnificent project, founded by Maniwa Sherab Gyaltsen Rinpoche, is located in Nala, a small village south of Kathmandu, on a high hill overlooking the small, picturesque valley.

The impressive monastery is home to over 100 young monks and the curriculum is designed to instill the view and qualities of their lama, Maniwa Sherab Gyaltsen Rinpoche, which will serve them their entire lives, whether they continue as monastics or pursue higher studies and join the workforce. The boys receive both a secular and non-secular education, including dharma teachings; Tibetan, Nepali and English languages; math; science; and health and hygiene. The school also organizes weekly football matches for the boys to encourage health and physical activity and various community service activities to teach them the importance of helping others.

The inauguration program began on November 2, when Karmapa arrived for the ribbon-cutting and welcome ceremony, which was attended by high ranking Rinpoches and thousands of lamas and Tibetan, Nepali and foreign lay devotees. In the afternoon, cultural performances were held in the spacious main courtyard and included several lama dances, folk dances and performances of traditional music. The next morning, Karmapa led the consecration ceremony for the monastery and a mandala offering was made to Karmapa by the lamas and monks of the school.

On November 4, a tsok puja, led by Karmapa, was performed in the morning and, after lunch, Karmapa gave an Amitayus long life empowerment to almost 7,000 people. Karmapa's program finished on November 5 with a Bodhisattva Vow ceremony and a teaching by Karmapa on Bodhicitta. In the afternoon, a mandala offering was made to Maniwa Sherab Gyaltsen Rinpoche in recognition and gratitude of his tireless bodhisattva activities and vast achievements.



Karmapa's Teaching:

On the occasion of this program, this ceremony, it is a good opportunity to once again offer our appreciation and gratitude to Drupon Rinpoche Sherab Gyaltsen, for having raised this wonderful Vihara, temple, or monastery, despite the obstacles that this country has recently faced. And it is not just for constructing this temple, but more than that. For many years, Drupon Rinpoche has put all of his energy into fulfilling the wishes of his teacher, my predecessor, the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje. Although this nation, this country and its people have strong roots in Buddhism, there is nevertheless a continuous need for support and effort to maintain this development and activity of the Buddha dharma, and I see all of the activities of Drupon Rinpoche as a reflection of what is required; so I thought that we should once again take this moment, this opportunity, to offer our appreciation.

I have also been asked to say a few words about the Buddha dharma. Since we have devotees here not only from various parts of Nepal, but also many dear practitioners and friends from various parts of the world, both the far West and the far East, I thought that if I say a few words and if, together we generate bodhicitta, that this is



probably the best way to make use of this time. So that is what I will be doing.

Most of us here are individuals who already have a connection with the Buddha dharma. Nevertheless, I am also sure that there are a number of admirers

and individuals with a keen interest, a genuine interest in the Buddha dharma who have come for this occasion. Therefore, I thought it's important to convey a few basic words about the message that Buddhism tries to convey, although most of us may have heard them many times.



What the Buddha dharma tries to convey, to try and summarize it in just a few words, is how to find essence in this life, or how to make this life meaningful. And this means, as a first step, to find a way to relate to cause and effect, particularly cause and effect in terms of karma. And by doing so, we automatically become aware of what is decent, what is not decent, what is proper, and what is not proper.

And by understanding these facts, over time, then not only does it help us improve our temporary state of mind, it also helps us reflect. It helps us realise that life is not just about this present existence, the memories and the experience of this present existence, but that there is more to it. It helps us realise that there must be a stream of consciousness,

relating to past memories, past events (even as far as past lives). Similarly, with the same logic, there is also a possible future, possible occurrences according to our actions in this present life.

In this way, going back to the words, ‘finding meaning in our life’, these words gain an even deeper sense. It is not just about following and being watchful of cause and effect in this life, but at the same time, by using the means of causality to find happiness not just in this life, but in future lives as well. With this kind of progression, we become more and more aware, more and more bent on accumulating merit, not just for this life, but for future lives as well. And in this manner, we become more and more noble as a person and eventually find meaning in our lives.



Through this journey of gaining a larger view or vision – or actually, more experience – then we automatically become aware that seeking only for pleasures or joys or comforts for future lives is also very tiring and very time-consuming. It first requires us to accumulate great amounts of merit through extremely hard work, and the end result, which is the experience of those comforts, is very short-lived and perishable. And not just perishable over the course of time but it can also perish within a very short space of time; sometimes it can be interrupted in the middle, or even in the beginning.

And so therefore, given these various facts, we become more and more aware that spending energy to accumulate merit just for a good

rebirth or for comforts in our life is not everything. Then we become more and more drawn, initially, towards liberation, or what is known as Moksha , meaning some sort of freedom or escape, in some ways, from these comings and goings, which is another term for the well-known samsara; meaning that it is an environment where there is so much happening and yet without much purpose, without much meaning. So therefore, this idea of Moksha , the idea of liberation comes.

Of course, over the course of time, this idea of liberation also improves. According to the Buddha dharma and according to its instructions, guides, we become aware that again there is more to this quest, or this journey of finding essence or meaning in

our life, that liberation, again, is not everything. According to the ways of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, there is in fact a method or a way where we can focus on accumulations and dedicating them, aiming them towards something that is timeless, towards something that is immeasurable, towards something that is almost, in a way, unlimited in terms of its benefit. And that method would be none other than using or directing our mind towards what is known as *changchub sem* in Tibetan or *bodhicitta* in Sanskrit, the English translation of which is 'enlightened mind', or the generating of our own mind towards enlightened phenomena.

Right now, the conditions that we are in are such that we have those opportunities, we have the time, we have all the requirements to actually direct, or one could almost say bend, our thoughts towards this enlightened path. There are many occasions where we may ourselves have been reborn as human beings, many times over, but without much benefit or result. We can see, even in this present life, that if we look we can see countless rebirths of human beings, because there is a presence of human beings around the world. But if we examine it carefully from the Buddha dharma's perspective, it is difficult to say that such existence is a precious one, simply because there is a lack of making use of this precious time to develop bodhicitta.

In our case, no matter what, the conditions that we have are such that it is extremely fertile to plant the seed of this wonderful organic plant, metaphorically speaking, that is *bodhicitta* – the 'tree of enlightenment', one could

say. Therefore, we must make use of this time and not waste it. As it is said in a prayer: if the *bodhicitta* has not been generated, we must find a way to generate it. Once it is generated, we must find a way to ensure that it does not decrease, but constantly make efforts to increase it. And not only increase it to an average level, but to increase and develop it to its fullest limit, which is of course limitless. So we must make the best use of this opportunity and make the most of it.

Having said all of that about the importance of generating bodhicitta, of course this is easier said than done without the proper requirements having been acquired. Although there are many requirements, the most essential one, which has been conveyed to all of us by none other than the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the past and, of course, also by those that are still present in our era, is generating and recognizing the nature of what is known in Tibetan as *jampa* and *nyingje*, in Sanskrit as *karuna* and *maitri*, and in the current English translation as compassion and loving-kindness.

These two main aspects of the mind are essential – something that we cannot do without. Having said that, whenever those two names are mentioned, it should be understood that it is implied that they are inseparable from wisdom:

not just common pity or sympathy, but a type of compassion, a type of loving-kindness, a type of caring that comes with understanding, with experience, with knowledge, and so this becomes very important.





For us, the first thing to do before truly generating bodhicitta is to find a way to recognize this. This means to understand the theory, the idea, and of course nowadays we can come across such knowledge far more easily than in the past, because there is a variety of available information that describes *karuna* and *maitri*. But, just the theory or the idea of it is not enough: we need to have a direct experience, a direct understanding of what compassion and loving kindness are. Otherwise, they just become one of the many things that we know and that are not actually of benefit.

Therefore, I think the first stage for us is to truly put all of our efforts into understanding the meaning of compassion and loving kindness, and this can only happen with the support of authentic teachers, those who have also the direct experience of these phenomena. So in this case, and even though it may present challenges on the way, now is the time we must put all of our efforts into accomplishing this part.

If we look at the past lineage masters of our Kagyu tradition, starting from the very founders of our lineage, we can see that they have become those great masters simply because of their effort, through sheer hard work and great effort. And so this is one trait that we as their descendants, one could say, must try to develop also and put hard work where it is needed, where it is truly needed. If we do that, then there is an opportunity where the realization of *bodhicitta* can actually happen, and from then on, the journey becomes far smoother, far easier than we can imagine.

One of the famous quotes by Shantideva, the *Mahabodhisattva* from ancient times, says that once we have generated *bodhicitta*, from then on – whether we are sleeping or eating or walking or going through our simple daily tasks – without much effort, the merit that has been accumulated will bear its



fruit effortlessly, almost like having a very high interest rate on the growth or the development of the *bodhicitta's* merit. So until we reach there, we must put all of our energy into recognizing, understanding what these basic truths, facts and qualities are that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are trying to convey: the qualities of *karuna* and *maitri*, compassion and loving-kindness. Of course, those are none other than aspects of the mind when it focuses on the most basic fact: seeking happiness or, more than that, seeking peace. And at the same time, the other aspect, the loving-kindness again aspiring or wishing to be free of any hindrances that could actually stop ourselves or others from acquiring this happiness or peace. And so that becomes our first goal – one of the main goals.

Before I recite the text which is both the procedure and the ceremony to generate bodhicitta, we must develop an intention, the motivation of the right kind, in order to proceed with that. This means, to

begin with, to be focusing on the individuals that are very close to us.

Of course, eventually, the aim is that we try to develop equanimity and closeness to all sentient beings, regardless of their various differences, history, backgrounds, and so on. And so in order to do this, the first step seems to be none other than thinking of the individuals that we have come to know in this life: from the moment of our birth, the very first beings that we came to know, such as our biological parents or siblings, and the relationships that we have developed either with our biological parents, or various other kinds and forms of guardians.

The idea of family has developed over the course time. And family seems to be the most important environment where we develop our practice of compassion and wisdom. Without it, then we have simply nowhere to relate to, nowhere or no way to find a connection to the



rest of the sentient beings. We can relate to a number of sentient beings in many ways and become extremely close to them only thanks to the connection we have developed with our parents and individuals that we have come to know in this life. Without this wonderful bridge we will never know how similar we are to the rest of the sentient beings. Therefore, to make use of this fertile ground of family is extremely important.

At the same time, of course, as beginners we must proceed with caution, meaning that there is a risk of being confused between our compassion and loving-kindness and the experience of attachment that has come to grow with time, the afflictive emotions. Therefore, we must proceed with caution, so that emotion doesn't get the better of us. Instead, tread with caution, with awareness, so that at every turn where normally we might express attachment and various kinds of

emotions, we must instead express compassion and wisdom. If we are able to do that, then we are making the best use of the environment that we are born with. And so with that kind of understanding, please generate bodhicitta, not just for this occasion, but for all times, from here onwards until our last breath in this life. By doing so, we will establish connections with our future lives so that we will continue this wonderful generation of *bodhicitta*.

In the Bodhisattva vow, please pay attention and follow very closely the intention of aspiring to benefit all sentient beings and wanting to accomplish all of that by yourself, through any means. One does not necessarily always have to do this in a grand and spectacular manner, such as vanquishing tens of thousands of foes externally; but more than that, from within, meaning through whatever means of applying compassion, applying loving-kindness and applying wisdom to actually vanquish the emotions, to vanquish the karmic debts from within, so that the root of all the obstacles and challenges is actually destroyed. So with that kind of understanding, then please, recite these words:

***Until I have reached the heart of enlightenment
I take refuge in the Buddhas.
In the same way, I take refuge in the dharma and the
assembly of Bodhisattvas.
Just as all the previous Sugatas, the Buddhas
Generated the mind of enlightenment
And accomplished all the stages
Of the Bodhisattva training,
So will I too, for the sake of all sentient beings,
Generate the mind of enlightenment
And accomplish all the stages
Of the Bodhisattva training***

With this, we have generated the enlightened mind, or bodhicitta. We have done this ceremoniously just now, but it should not be limited to just participating in the ceremony itself. More than that, the development of the bodhicitta has to take place within ourselves. That can only happen with our own effort, with our own energy, so every moment from here counts. Therefore, I ask all of you to do your very best, and thank you.

Karmapa on Pilgrimage in Ladakh

Images by Tokpa Korlo





On 26 August 2015, thousands of devotees greeted Thaye Dorje, His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, on Karmapa's first visit to the majestic land of Ladakh. Karmapa came to "Land of High Passes" to inaugurate the historic Karma Dupgyud Choeling Monastery and visit many sacred pilgrimage sites and monasteries.

At the Leh airport, Karmapa was officially welcomed by His Eminence Choeje Togden Rinpoche, Venerable Chime Rinpoche, dignitaries from monasteries of the Drukpa Kagyu, Drikung Kagyu, Sakya, Nyingma and Bonpo Schools, various lay sanghas, and thousands of Ladakhi and foreign devotees. Karmapa immediately traveled in a convoy of 200 cars from Leh to Karma Dupgyud Choeling Monastery along roads lined with piles of carved mani stones and thousands of devotees. The welcome ceremony at Karma Dupgyud Choeling took place in the old shrine room where Venerable Chime Rinpoche and his team, offered a mandala to Karmapa.

The Karma Dupgyud Choeling Monastery is the historic seat of Venerable Chime Rinpoche and was founded originally by the previous Venerable Chime Rinpoche, who built the monastery at the direction of the 16th Karmapa. In a terrifying storm in August 2006, Karma Dupgyud Choeling Monastery was destroyed by intense flooding and mud flows. The monastery lacked funds to begin construction right away but, in September 2008, the young Chime Rinpoche laid the first foundation stone for the new monastery.



In the years that followed, construction could only occur during five to six months each year due to the harsh climate in Ladakh. It took more than seven years to complete the reconstruction along with the help and dedication of many monks and locals who did the construction work.





The opening ceremony, held on 28 August, was led by Karmapa with more than 3,000 guests in attendance. The day began with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a butter lamp offering and prayers in the main shrine room.

Speeches were given by Rinpoches and dignitaries in honor of the inauguration, including a short talk by Karmapa. Cultural performances were held in the afternoon, with elaborate lama dances by monks from various monasteries and traditional Ladakhi and Tibetan folk dances. The next morning, Karmapa led the consecration ceremony for



the new Lhakang (shrine hall), shrines and statues on the grounds of the monastery.

During the remainder of his 16 day visit in Ladakh, Karmapa traveled to various holy places and gave empowerments and blessings to many people.

His pilgrimage included the sacred Pangong Lake where Karmapa gave refuge vows to locals and made naga vase offerings; Changla Pass (the highest pass in the world), where Karmapa made prayers and offered prayer flags; and visits to many monasteries belonging to Drupka Kagyu, Drikung Kagyu, and Sakya schools.





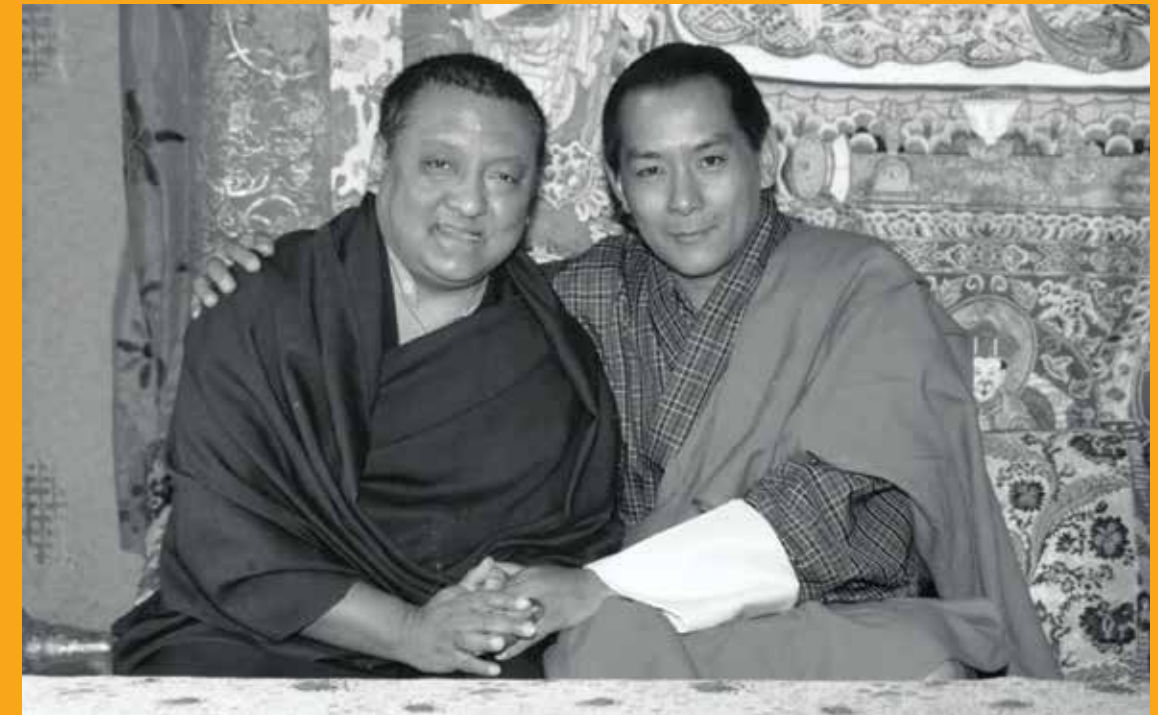
Remembering
*Shamar
Rinpoche*

Images by Salvador Magaz



Images by Salvador Magaz

The passing of the 14th Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche in June 2014 came as an immense blow to tens of thousands of devotees throughout the world -- and a sober reminder of the fragile, temporal nature of life.



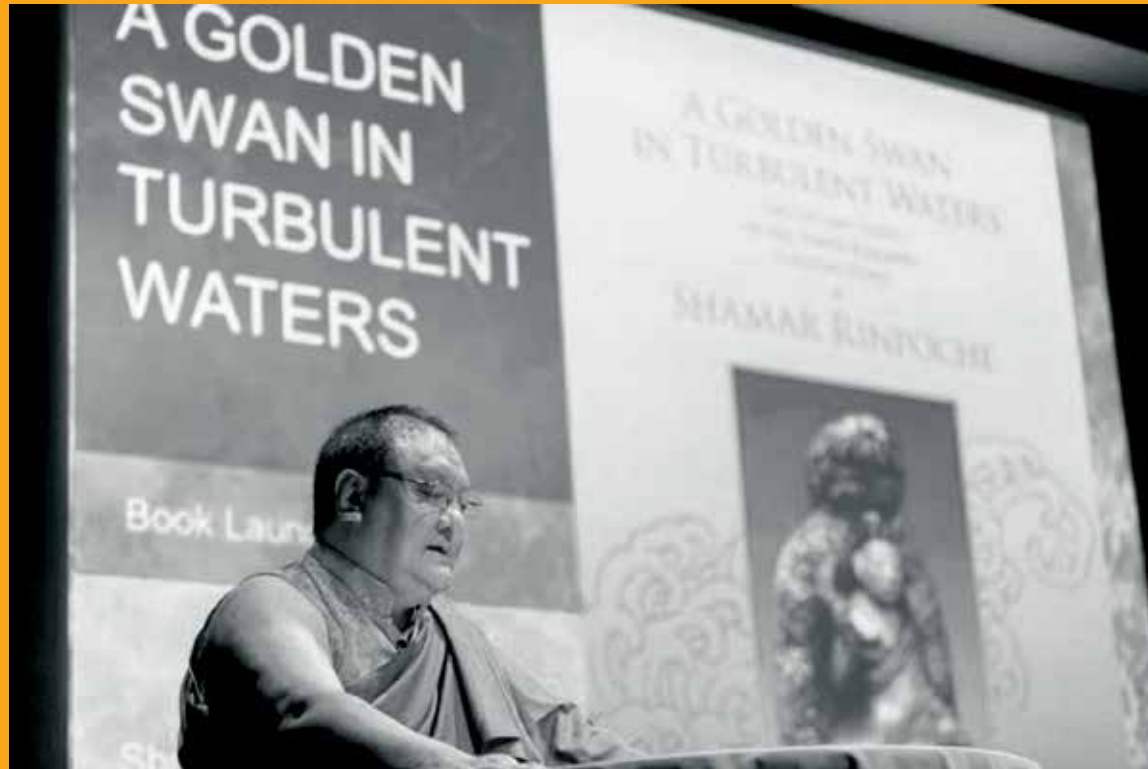
Shamar Rinpoche was many things in his life: an indefatigable champion of the Karma Kagyu, preserving the teachings and the teachers of the precious practice lineage, a profound teacher, a fatherly guide, and sometimes a ferocious force that leveled even the most stubborn ego. Apparent to all, he was a learned scholar and highly-realized vajra master. He was naturally inquisitive and learned many languages in order to share the dharma with all people, regardless of culture, country or race. Shamarpa was an accomplished scholar in both the sutra and tantra teachings of the Buddha and a master who perfected the highest level of Mahamudra. Possessing boundless compassion and kindness for all beings, he worked tirelessly on projects over 30 years to preserve and share the teachings of the Buddha with students around the world.

Beginning in the 1980's, after the passing of the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, Shamarpa assumed responsibility and administration of all Karmapa's monasteries, retreat centers and lay centers in the world.

He also worked tirelessly to complete many important dharma projects that were initiated by the 16th Karmapa, including construction of the Karmapa International Buddhist Institute in Delhi. Shamarpa also completed a huge undertaking to print many copies of the 225-volume Tengyur (Commentaries on the Sutras) that were gifted to temples and monasteries across the globe, and particularly in India, regardless of creed or sect of Buddhism. In those days, most monasteries did not have a copy of the Tengyur and did not have the funds to sponsor any printing due to its size.

In 1994, Shamarpa reinstated the centuries-old Kagyu Monlam tradition, which was first established in old Tibet. The first two years were held in Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Buddha Shakyamuni. After two years, in 1996, the Kagyu Monlam was moved to Bodhgaya, India when Thaye Dorje, the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, first participated in the annual prayer event.

Shamarpa had a great love of learning and a particular interest in developing education



centers throughout the world for both monastic and lay practitioners. In India, Shamarpa built Diwakar Buddhist School in Takdah, Darjeeling, a primary school which offers both secular and buddhist education to young monks, and Diwakar Buddhist Academy Shedra in Kalimpong, which offers a education in advanced Buddhist philosophy to older monks. In Tibet, Shamarpa renovated historic Yangpachen Monastery, the official seat of the Shamarpas in Tibet, and built a shedra there for the monks in residence at Yangpachen. In Nepal, he opened a 10-year Mahamudra retreat center at Sharminub for senior lamas of the Kagyu lineage and began construction of the expansive Sharminub Institute for Buddhist Studies for advanced Buddhist education for both lamas and westerners. The Sharminub project construction continues after his passing.

Starting in 1980, Shamarpa taught at Karma Kagyu Centers in Asia and the west that were established by the 16th Karmapa. In 1996, he began establishing Bodhi Path Buddhist Centers throughout North America, Europe, Central America and Asia. The Bodhi Path non-sectarian curriculum was designed by Shamarpa himself and is based on the 11th century Mind Training (Lojong) teachings of Atisha combined with shamatha and mahamudra meditation.

In January, 2009 Shamar Rinpoche founded the Infinite Compassion Foundation for the welfare of all beings and especially to promote animal rights. Shamarpa's goal is to promote the humane treatment of animals that are raised for consumption. Instead of promoting vegetarianism, Shamar Rinpoche instead advocates a transformation of the meat industry, such that animals will no longer be forced to live and die in brutal conditions.

Shamar Rinpoche is the author of four books, which range in topics from mediation to Mind Training (Lojong) teachings to creating sustainable democratic political structures in the world. His books include, The Path to Awakening, Boundless Wisdom, The King of Prayers, and Creating a Transparent Democracy.

Shamar Rinpoche's vast endeavors and dedication to alleviating the suffering of beings during his lifetime were clear evidence of his courageous conviction, infinite compassion and patience. He left a great legacy of dharma activity through his global projects and a treasury of profound teachings. He left our world too soon and yet in doing so, taught us the most precious lesson of all: don't waste a moment of one's life.

"Mind training is a practice which nurtures and develops Buddha Nature, that pure seed of awakening. It is the heart of every sentient being." Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche

Bodhi Path is an international organization of Buddhist centers and groups founded by the 14th Shamarpa, Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche. Our purpose is to explore the methods and wisdom of the timeless teachings of the Buddha, so that we can better understand and work with our mind and emotions.

Bodhi Path's nonsectarian curriculum is based on the teachings of Mind Training (Lojong), a profound system of contemplative practices that helps bring mindfulness, awareness and insight to our experiences. Bodhi Path centers offer high quality instruction in a lay context that is suited to the conditions of modern-day Dharma practitioners.

Bodhi Path consists of a global network of centers and Dharma groups in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, supported by a host of affiliated institutions that provide academic study, retreats, and monastic training. In addition, major Bodhi Path centers in Natural Bridge, Virginia (USA) and Renchen-Ulm, Germany (Europe) provide retreat opportunities and ongoing instructor training.





Shamar Rinpoche's **Grand Vision for Nepal** **SHARMINUB INSTITUTE**

In 1993, Shamar Rinpoche established Sharminub Foundation to formalize his activities in Nepal and create a lasting connection with its people. The foundation was created as the seat of Rinpoche's administration and the oversight body to construct and operate his many projects in Nepal.

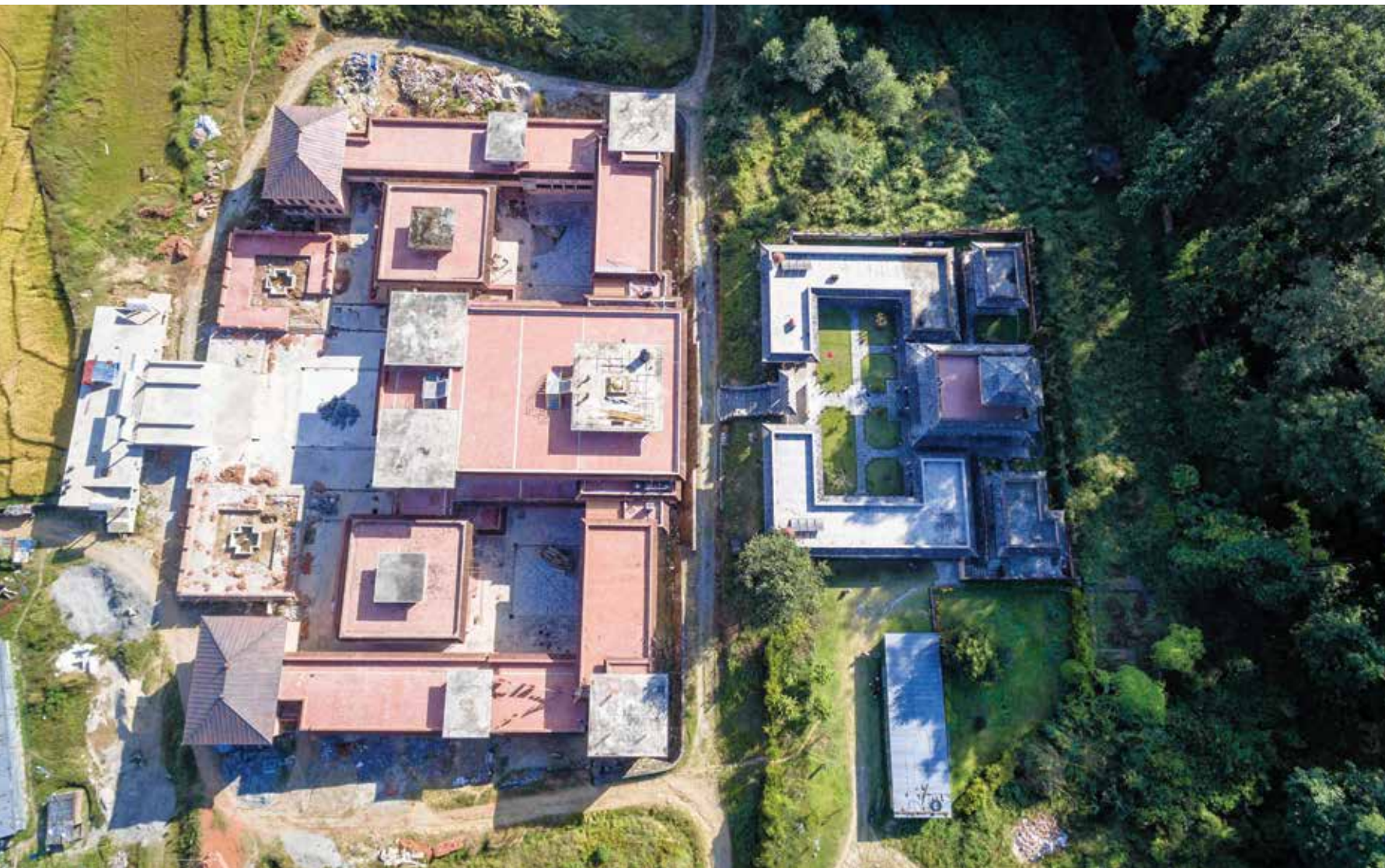
Shamar Rinpoche took great care in choosing the name Sharminub. In Tibetan, Shar means "to rise", Mi means "no", and Nub means "to set". Rinpoche envisioned Sharminub's activities as an inexhaustible and shining source of clarity and wisdom, like an eternal sun that radiates light in every direction.

Sharminub Foundation's activities are designed to spread the teachings of the Buddha through its monastic retreat centers and to promote research in Buddhist philosophy, art and science through Sharminub Institute, which is currently under construction in the Raniban region of the Kathmandu Valley. But more broadly, Sharminub Foundation was created to improve conditions for humanity and promote peace in Nepal, like so many other organizations Shamar Rinpoche established throughout the world due to his immense generosity and compassion.

Sharminub Foundation is governed by a five member board, personally appointed by Shamar Rinpoche himself. The board is comprised of local community leaders and businessmen, who are tasked with administering and organizing Rinpoche's activities, as well as constructing and operating his Nepal projects.

At the time of his death, Sharminub Institute was Shamar Rinpoche's most important project. The campus is located in the hills above Kathmandu, northwest of Swayambhu World Heritage site, and nestled at the edge of the coveted Balaju Raniban ("Queen's Forest"). When completed, it will be a college of advanced Buddhist studies for both monastic and lay students.

Rinpoche envisioned Sharminub Institute as a premier academic institute to train dharma teachers, who would then share the dharma to all parts of the world. The college will have a Shedra for monastic students, offering a Khenpo degree in advanced Buddhist philosophy. It will also offer traditional academic programs in Buddhist and Himalayan Studies for Nepali and western students. Ongoing public programs and seminars will offered on a variety of subjects including basic



dharma tenets, philosophy, meditation and even current events, such Himalayan ecology and the environment. Sharminub will be a place for all people to gather, learn and share ideas.

But the Master Plan for Sharminub Institute is more than just an academic school. Rinpoche envisioned Sharminub as a place for advanced academic research, where scholars from all religious traditions could gather for discourse and enrichment. The Institute will house a world-class comparative religions library and serve as a translation center for important Buddhist texts, thus sharing more of the vast treasury of dharma and other sacred texts with people around the world.

In order to create a financially self-sustaining campus, Shamar Rinpoche's Master Plan includes an international conference center; a resort for visitors with an elegant rooftop restaurant; a guest house for international workers living and working in Kathmandu; and a commercial shopping center and medical facility to serve both the campus and the



surrounding community. Phase 1 is expected to be finished in mid-2016, which will allow the Institute to open its classes and special programs.

Sharminub Foundation also operates the Nerajana Retreat Center at the top of the Sharminub Institute campus in Raniban. It is a long-term retreat center for senior lamas of the Kagyu lineage, as a place to develop mastery of the Kagyu meditation practices according to Gampopa's tradition, which combines both the Kadampa and Mahamudra traditions. Rinpoche's goal for the 10-year retreat center was to develop true masters, in both theory and practice.

The Nerajana Retreat Center first opened with only five qualified retreatants, personally selected by Rinpoche, from 108 Kagyu lamas who volunteered to take the vows. Over time, four additional lamas joined the long-term retreat with Rinpoche's approval.

The Pharping Retreat Center is a traditional 3-year retreat center, also operated by Sharminub Foundation. This three year foundation retreat trains lamas in the basic teachings and practices of the Karma Kagyu lineage in a sequestered and uninterrupted environment, which is conducive

to rapid development and assimilation of the very essence of the teachings. Currently, 14 lamas from Kagyu monasteries in Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, and India are in strict retreat until 2017. Sharminub Foundation plans to construct new commercial spaces at the street level with retreat accommodations for lay practitioners on the second floor, in order to create a stream of revenue to support the retreat center's operating costs.

Shamar Rinpoche also had plans for a number of other dharma projects in Nepal, thereby expanding his activity in a country where he has a long and illustrious connection from previous reincarnations. His future projects include a Vajrayana Retreat Center in Matatirtha and a Lay Retreat Center in Thankot, which are under the Sharminub Foundation umbrella. Although the site plans and concept rendering have been developed for both properties, as well as the land surveyed and graded, these projects are currently on hold until the Sharminub Institute project is finished.

For more information on Sharminub Foundation and its activities, or to make a donation to the Sharminub Institute Construction Fund, please visit www.SharminubNepal.org.



THE KARMAPA INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST INSTITUTE



B.A. IN BUDDHIST STUDIES AT KIBI

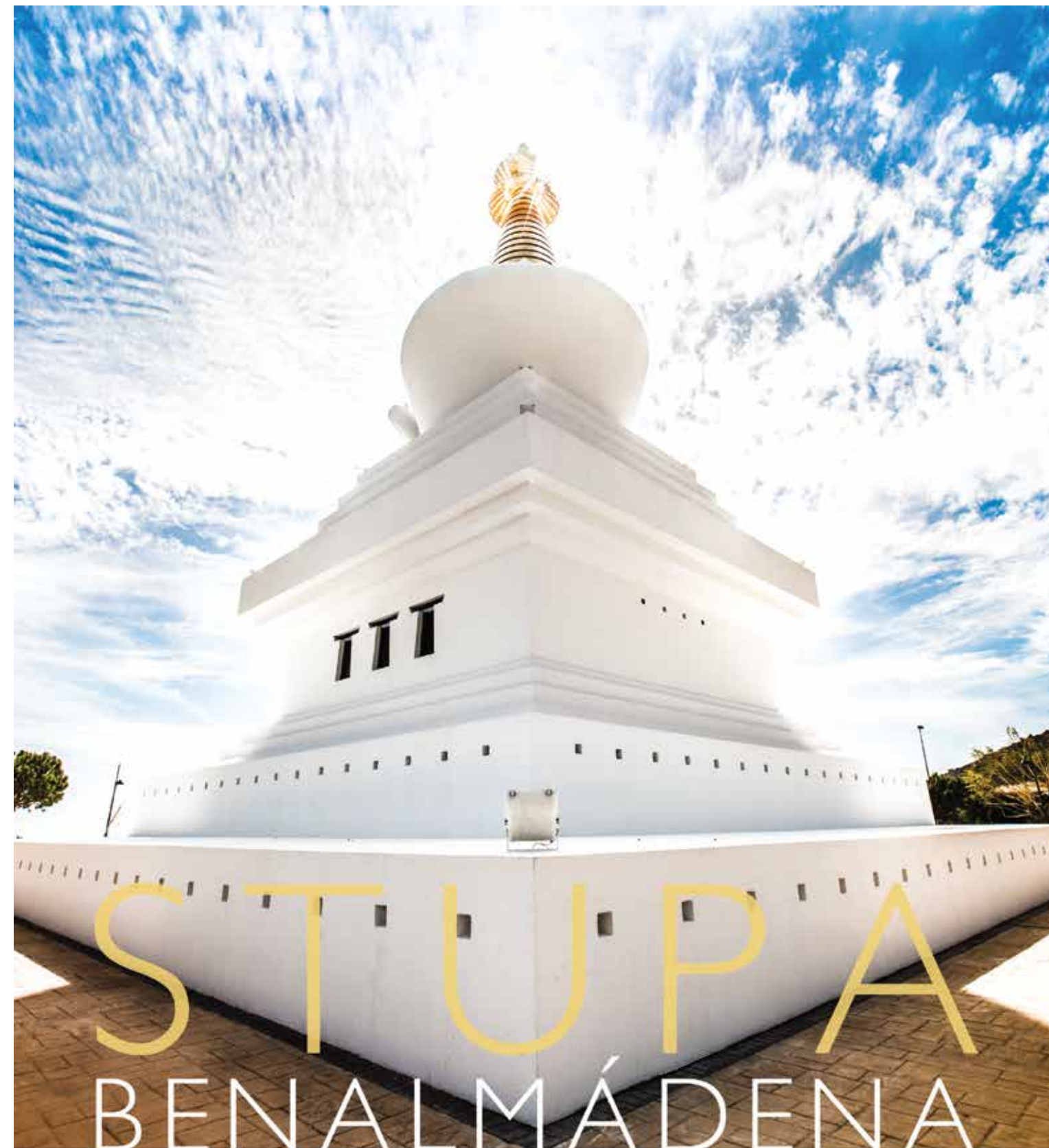
THE KARMAPA INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST INSTITUTE (KIBI) is an institute of higher learning in Buddhist Studies for both local and international students. Founded by the 14th Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche as part of his mission to fulfill the wishes of the late 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, KIBI represents the accomplishment of the aims of generations of great Kagyu masters. It is now under the management of the Karmapa International Buddhist Society (KIBS) — a charitable society founded by H.H. the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, Trinley Thaye Dorje.

KIBI offers a rich resource for studying the scriptures and great treatises of Buddhism as they are preserved by the Kagyu tradition, and analyzed by contemporary academic tradition. Under the direction of renowned Buddhist scholar, Professor Sempa Dorje, KIBI offers an accredited 3-year Bachelor of Arts in Buddhist Studies degree program, in collaboration with Mewar University. There are four main subject areas covered throughout the degree: History/Culture/Research Context; Religion; Philosophy; and Languages. The teaching faculty includes both Tibetan Khenpos and Professors, and the language of instruction is English.

Located in the south of New Delhi, KIBI is housed in a beautiful four-story building constructed in traditional Tibetan architectural style. Students live and study on site, together with the resident monks who live there all year round. Situated in peaceful surrounds, it overlooks the greenery of Sanjay Van, a large forested park. As the seat of His Holiness the 17th Karmapa, KIBI offers students the unique opportunity to study Buddhism while immersed in Tibetan Buddhist culture.

FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE B.A., ADMISSIONS, AND OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED AT KIBI, PLEASE CONTACT US:

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BUDDHIST LECTURES - MEDITATIONS - EXHIBITIONS

LOCATED IN SOUTH SPAIN, CONSECRATED AND INAUGURATED IN 2003 BY
THE 14TH KUNZIG SHAMAR RINPOCHE

ASOCIACIÓN CULTURAL KARMA KAGYU DE BENALMÁDENA

Photo: Takpa Karlo © stupabenalmadena.org

FINAL
WORDS
OF
ADVICE

SHAMAR
RINPOCHE'S
LAST INTERVIEW

Images by Tokpa Korlo



On May 27, 2014, Shamar Rinpoche gave his last interview at Dhagpo Kagyu Ling in France. In this short interview, Rinpoche's final advice to students elucidates several key concepts of Buddhism's timeless wisdom and discusses how one should approach meditation. In particular, his discussion of impermanence is an important reminder of just how fragile and short human life is.

**Interview courtesy of
Dhagpo Kagyu Ling**

Rinpoche on Bringing Buddhism into Daily Life

Buddhism teaches the nature very perfectly. For example, everything ... everything is impermanent. Nothing is permanent, so you should be aware of this. Therefore, you should not be surprised when you see something change. It is not permanent, so you should accept it and understand that things are not permanent. It's a good subject. You can learn a lot from this subject called impermanence.

And, the life of living beings is not in permanent happiness. Sometimes you have short-lived happiness, but it will change. Inevitably, it will change. So, yes, change is inevitable. You should know that the life of living beings is always in some kind of unhappiness. If you go deeper into that nature, the stream of mind has no peace. Therefore, mind is not ultimately in the happy state of mind ... the minds of living beings, our minds. That's also something good to know.



This is also one profound subject that you will learn from Buddhism, and you can use this knowledge to improve your wisdom. Whether you are in any lifestyle, you can use this precious knowledge to improve your wisdom.

If you think there is a chance to be liberated or get out of this problem of suffering, yes there is. Why? It is naturally there. Naturally, you can eliminate the unhappiness. It is not that you have to depend on somebody's blessings. No, it does not depend on that. The cure is within you. As long as you have this problem, then you can solve the problem. It is also the nature, the nature of phenomena. You have liberation there. Your mind can be liberated from your problems, from your ignorance, because phenomena do not carry any substantial existence or ultimate existence. All phenomena carry the quality of illusion. Phenomena are in the state of illusion. This is also one profound subject that you will learn

The Buddhist view follows the nature of phenomena and, by knowing so, you can cure the problems. You develop the cure from within. Since the cure is within, it is called an antidote. Wisdom is the antidote. As long as you have ignorance, then you have the antidote of wisdom.

from Buddhism, and you can use this knowledge to improve your wisdom. Whether you are in any lifestyle, you can use this precious knowledge to improve your wisdom.

So all of this is good knowledge that you can learn from Buddhism. You can practice this and you can achieve this. Therefore, Buddhism is great knowledge. The Buddhist view follows the nature of phenomena and, by knowing so, you can cure the problems. You develop the cure from within. Since the cure is within, it is called an antidote. Wisdom is the antidote. As long as you have ignorance, then you also have the antidote of wisdom in you.



Rinpoche on Meditation and Daily Practice

Meditation was invented by knowing the problems, how to solve them, and how to increase wisdom to overcome all of your illusions. So then, meditation follows the nature. It is a natural antidote. You can learn meditation on how to improve your wisdom and how to overcome all your illusions and all your ignorance. When you learn it, this can apply or be implemented in every part of your life. It will bring great result. It will never mislead you.

Meditating as much as you can is better than making a special space and time for you to do it. The result of meditation very much depends on how familiar you are with it. Therefore, to be familiar with it, you have to do a lot. I use the example of how horses eat grass. You should do meditation as much as horses eat grass, without a special space and time. Whenever horses have free time, they go eat grass. It is the same for people who know how to do meditation. You should use all

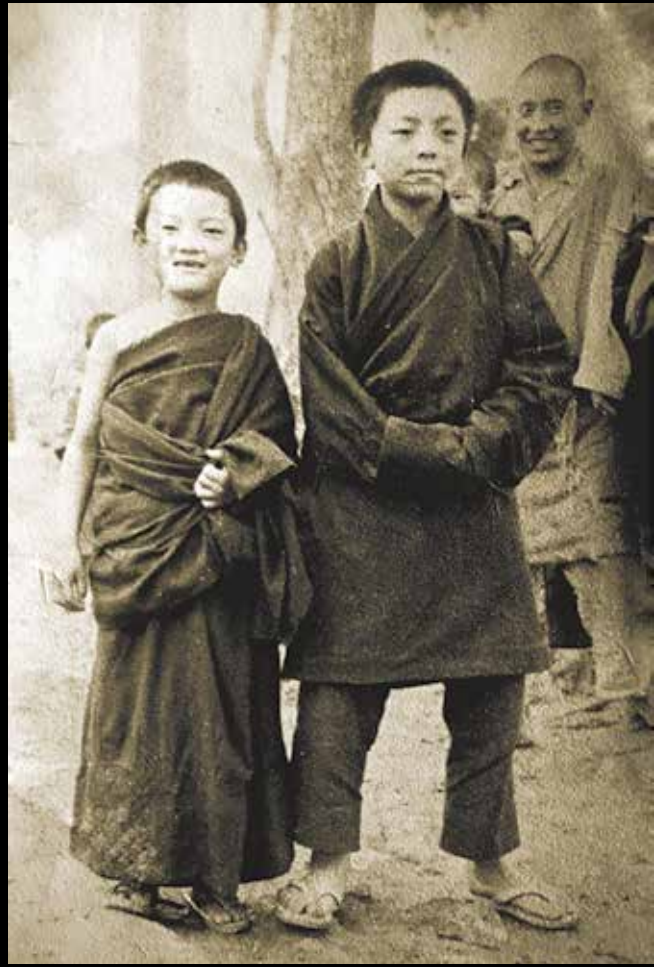
your free time for meditation, just as horses eat grass. Horses serve their responsibilities, but when they are free, they go eat grass. Same. We humans should go into meditation like that.

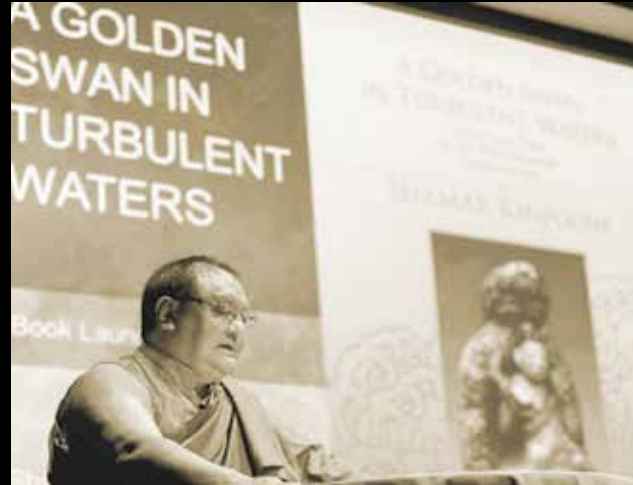
If you are very good in meditation and you go on retreat in a peaceful place, you can be more successful because you are free from all obstructions. But if you don't know how to meditate well, it doesn't make any difference. If you are very good in meditation, even

without a peaceful place, you can do it. Even in a busy city, you can do it. Once you've learned how to do the meditation and how to maintain the meditation, then you can do it even in a busy place. Counting the breaths and other techniques are better in a peaceful place, but these are the preliminary meditation practices and still that is not entirely necessary. You can do anywhere. But you won't be doing meditation by standing in traffic on a busy road. [Rinpoche smiles.]



Remembering
THE 14TH KUNZING SHAMAR RINPOCHE
MIPHAM
CHOKYI LODRO
1952 – 2014











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Founded by Shamar Rinpoche

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Under this motto, Himalaya Hilfe e.V. has been working in India and Nepal since 1993.

Following Shamar Rinpoches wish and together with him Sabine Wollmann and Ulli Goebel founded the nonprofit association in order to help needy people in the southern Himalayas and to offer them a better future. Since then Sabine and Ulli travel through the Himalayan region twice a year and personally distribute the donations to ensure that the money donated is used properly.

Our top priorities are:

- Supporting children and youths to enable them to attend school or have some form of continuing education
- Supporting various Karma Kagyu monasteries and monastic schools connected to Shamar Rinpoche and Karmapa Thaye Dorje
- Supporting elderly people with no financial means to secure their livelihood and medical supplies

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- Sponsoring a child to ensure the education
- Sponsoring a nun or a monk living in one of the monasteries or monastic schools
- Sponsoring an elderly person

Helping with:

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