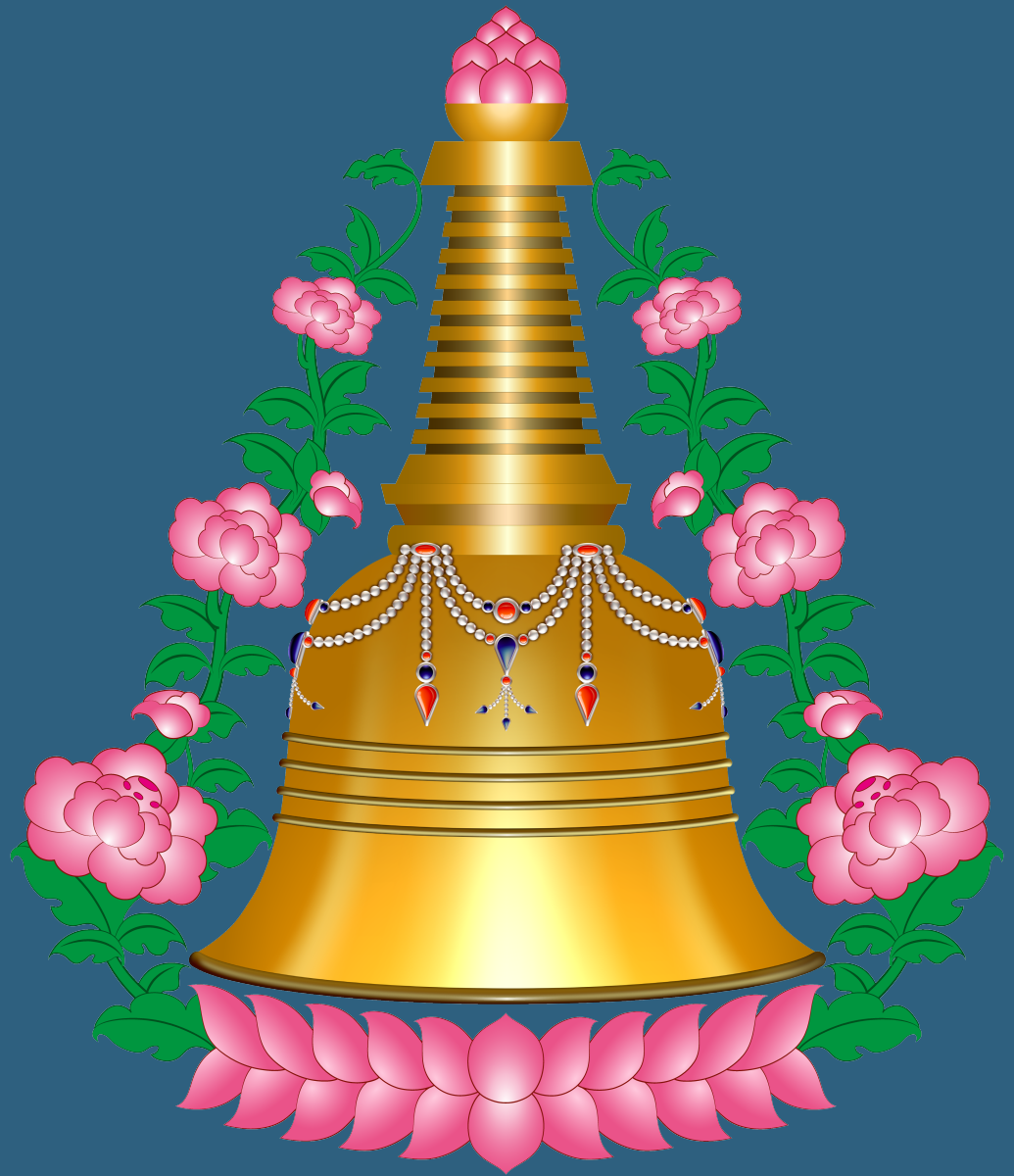
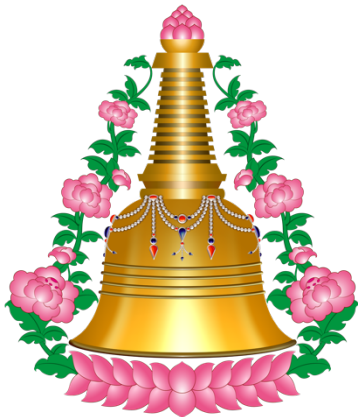


About the kundeling monastery,



its history and its presentday developments

ABOUT THE KUNDELING MONASTERY, ITS HISTORY AND ITS PRESENT-DAY DEVELOPMENTS



THE ANNALS TO ITS ORIGINS

The name Kundeling translates as “The Island of Perpetual Happiness.” The original Kundeling Monastery was founded in Lhasa, in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, China, around the year 1796, by the 8th Kundeling, Tagtshag, Baso Jetung, Hotukutu, *Yeshe Losang Tenpay Gonpo* (1760-1811), also known in brief as, the 8th Kundeling Tagtshag *Tenpay Gonpo*.

After the defeat of the Gurkha troupes who had laid siege to Lhasa, in 1792, by the contingent of armed forces dispatched by China’s Chien-Lung Emperor (1736-1795), the 8th Dalai Lama Jampel Gyatso (1758-1804) with the patronage of the same Emperor had decreed, that a monastery commemorating the victory be erected under the guidance and ownership of the 8th Kundeling.

The Chinese appellation such as, ‘Yung-an ssu,’ (Monastery of Everlasting Happiness) and the Tibetan, ‘Ganden Tenshug Chokhor Ling’ (*The Dharma Wheel Turning Park of the Firmly Placed Ganden Tradition*), was conferred upon this Monastery by the 8th Dalai Lama in 1794 and the Emperor Chien-lung in 1795 respectively. ‘Kundeling’ became the cognomen by which many would simply refer to the monastery, since then, as it is known by the same, even today.

The Kundeling Monastery would also in due course of time, come to be considered as one of the four Royal Monasteries of Lhasa. These were: Kundeling, Tengyeling, Tshechogling and Tshomoling. The Kundeling Monastery was located west of the old city of Lhasa, at the foot of the Barma Ri, one of the three famed hills of Lhasa. Lhasa’s three mountain hillocks are known in Tibetan as Marpo Ri (The Red Hill), Chagpo Ri (The Iron Hill) and Barma Ri (The Central Hill).

The Marpo Ri is where the famed Potala Palace, the abode of the successive Dalai Lamas, stands, while Chagpo Ri housed the renowned Medical Centre of Lhasa. Barma Ri was considered to be the abodes of the Lords of the *Three Clans* (rig.gsum mgon.po,rom) Avalokiteshvara, Vajrapani and Manjushree.

The icons of these three divinities were placed on an elevated site of the Kundeling Monastery. There also stood a shrine dedicated to the Chinese warrior God Kuan Kun, who is regarded as none other than the mythical King Gesar. This Temple has been popularly referred to in Lhasa as the Gesar Lhakhang.

THEOCRATIC TIBET AND THE HEGEMONY OF LAMAS

Tibetan political history is riddled with ambiguities, so its written records are speculative. Its annals are rather copiously steeped in Buddhist-related developments from its advent in the land in the 8th century AD. Given the Tibetan engrossment with only the Buddhist scholastic and monastic institutions, the only possible credible leadership to run the land had then to come from amongst the eminent Buddhist heads—the Lamas.

The ruling hegemonies that followed were initially under the heads of the Sakya school. This would later be followed by the Drikung and Karma Kagyu schools and finally taken over by the Gelugpa. Since then, authority over both religious and temporal affairs has duly become the prerogative of the institutions of the Dalai Lama. This would commence with the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Gyatso (1617-1682) under the patronage and suzerainty of the Ching Dynasty.

Regency was promulgated as the interregnum to handle state affairs during the primacy of the successive Dalai Lamas. In doing so, the 7th Dalai Lama may have prognosticated the future events of impotence that became idiosyncratic of the institution of the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan rulership has virtually been a theocracy with the Dalai Lamas as the God-kings. Under the circumstances, the Kundeling Lamas would have to serve as Regents to the Dalai Lamas.

There has never been a panacea capable of curing the chronic ills inherent in governments, arising from the juxtaposition of Religion and Politics. Moreover, the stability and lives of the Dalai Lamas were often jeopardised, more so from within their own courts. The courts of the successive God kings galore, with endemic plots of assassination, poisonings, coup detect and forgeries, were engineered by inimical forces within rather than from outside.

Threats from adversaries and their diabolical designs left the successive reincarnating Dalai Lamas rather vulnerable during the early years of their youth and much depended upon the integrity of the ruling regents. Several regents, particularly their aides, were notorious for debauchery and being master minds to treason. The Kundelings, who had also played active roles twice as regents, were, however, known to be unblemished — unaffected by the intrigues and conspiracies of their times.



THE SUCCESSIVE KUNDELINGS AND THEIR PROFILES IN BRIEF

The First Kundeling, Baso Je Chokyi Gyaltzen (1420-1473). He was a celebrated master admired for his great learning and skills in the exegesis of the Sutra and Tantra classics; he would eventually be foretold of his future destiny by both the master Tsongkhapa and the Buddha Vajrayogini. As per their wishes, he would ascend the Golden Throne of Tsongkhapa to become the sixth *Ganden Throne holder*. Later, regardless of the many administrative and teaching assignments, he would have to carry on. He would also, become the 2nd in line, as holder of the sacred *Ganden Oral Transmission Lineage*.

The ‘*Ganden Emanation Scripture*’ (dgah.lden sprul.pay lek.bam,rom) would also be handed into his custody by his Guru, the famed Togden Jampel Gyatso (1356-1428). Base Je would open the gates to liberation for many a fortunate disciple, particularly the *Three Vajra brothers, Cho Dorje, Palden Dorje, and Dorje Pelwa*, to whom he would pass down the sacred *Ganden Oral Transmission Lineage*.

These three great adepts were known to have reached enlightenment in one lifetime, through their diligent application of the teachings and meditation. Baso Je too, would reach enlightenment while serving in his administrative capacity as the *Ganden Throne holder*.

It is important to note that, the active involvement of the Kundelings and the contributions that they are credited with to have made into the socio-political system of central Tibet—particularly Lhasa—is counted from the times of his Eight incarnation. Moreover, from the First to the Seventh, the affixed titles, such as ‘Baso Je’ and ‘Tagtshag’, were intermittently used, and their contributions were purely spiritual.

The sobriquet Kundeling was affixed to the 8th incarnation of the said line of Baso Je. The proper account of all the said lines of his incarnations would have to be sought from other sources. There is little scope for elaborating on the lines of the Baso Je Tulku* (posthumously renamed thereafter as the Kundeling Tulkus) here.

The 8th Kundeling Tagtshag, Tenpay Gonpo and his successive incarnations have had a protracted history of engagement with Lhasa’s socio-political fabric and with that of the Dalai Lamas. It may have been his destiny, or the predicament of having been left with no choice, that he would follow the decree of Emperor Chien-lung (1736-1795) and be appointed as Regent of Tibet.

The first time he undertook such responsibilities was from May 26th, 1789, until September 28th, 1790. Merely a year after his resignation, the Emperor reinstated him to the Regency once again, this time for a longer spell from 1791 to 1811. In 1809 addition to his other assignments, he also located the reincarnation of the deceased 8th Dalai Lama in discovering his reincarnation, the 9th Dalai Lama *Lungtok Gyatso* (1806-1815).

The 9th Kundeling Tagtshag, *Ngawang Losang Tenpay Gyaltzen* (1811-1848) served as a Tutor to the 11th Dalai Lama *Khedup Gyatso* (1838-1855). While authoring several *Cha.yig* (Monastic Constitutions) for well-known monasteries and a chronicle for another, he was granted the title of Tung-shan Hotukutu by Imperial Decree from Beijing.

The 10th Kundeling Tagtshag, *Ngawang Palden Chokyi Gyaltzen* (1850/1854-1886) was granted the title of Tung-shan in 1879 and consequently appointed as Tutor to the 13th Dalai Lama *Thupten Gyatso* (1876-1933) he was nominated Regent by Imperial Decree on 8th November 1875.

The reputed Indian Sanskrit scholar and British Agent, Sarat Chandra Das, paid a visit to him in June 1882. This Kundeling has been proclaimed as an able statesman and a benevolent administrator. It is said that during an outbreak of an epidemic in Lhasa, he devised means (both spiritual and medical) whereby thousands of juveniles were saved from the disaster.

Hence, the Lhasa people nicknamed him 'Kundeling Lhandum' ('Kundeling of the chicken pox'). During a grain shortage, he ordered his own private granaries to be opened and disposed of for public consumption.

The 11th Kundeling Tagtshag, *Ngawang Thupten Kelsang Tenpay Domay* (1888-1918) lived for a brief lifespan of thirty years but seems to have achieved enough to have inspired the faith and devotion of the erudite Gelugpa savant Dobi Geshe Sherab Gyatso (1884-1968). The latter paid glowing tributes to this Kundeling (who, incidentally, was one of his preceptors) by providing a biographical sketch of his scholarly and spiritual achievements, besides composing a poetical homage to the lineal succession of the incarnations of the Kundelings. This Kundeling was granted a title and the silver seal of a Sama-ti pakshi (Hui-lung chan-shih) by the incumbent Chinese Emperor in 1900.

The 12th Kundeling Tagtshag, *Losang Thubten Jigme Gyaltzen* (1924-1956) was a unique and somewhat controversial figure, evoking diverse opinions about his persona. To some, his profile of not toeing the line in the conventional catholic lifestyle of the standard Gelugpa Lama was viewed as degenerate. He seemingly promoted the Tibetan Opera (Lhamo) of dance and drama, while engaging in practices from the Nyingma tradition. Yet, to others, he was a great practitioner of the Chod teachings and a concealed yogi—an eccentric and flamboyant one at that—with hidden mystical powers, so it was claimed.

It was alleged to be the first time in Tibetan History that a British official, Hugh Edward Richardson, visited a Lama of his standing in the year 1937. The 12th Kundeling was amongst the dignitaries who accompanied the 14th Dalai Lama (1935-) on his maiden visit to Beijing in 1954. A year or so later, he left Lhasa for India to seek medical treatment. While crossing the Nathu-la pass in Sikkim, he is said to have proclaimed to the accompanying party that, he would never again return to Lhasa. He died in a hospital in Calcutta after an unsuccessful surgery, in 1957. He was the only high-ranking Tibetan Lama to have passed away in that Indian City.

A BRIEF PROFILE OF THE 13TH KUNDELING RIMPOCHE

The 13th Kundeling Tagtshag, Losang Yeshe Jampel Gyatso—or Kundeling Rimpoche—as he is better known by that nom de plume—was born in the Indian City of Calcutta on January 13th, 1959. He is the first in the line of successive Kundelings to have chosen rebirth outside Tibet. Although his natural parents were ethnic Tibetans, he had been adopted by foster parents of mixed ethnicity. From youth, he possessed a strong inclination towards things spiritual.

His circumstantial upbringing and conditioning had stood in strong contrast to those of his predecessors. As a result of spending sixteen years of his childhood in a cosmopolitan city and receiving education in a Roman Catholic school, he was not tailored into having to become ‘the idiosyncratic Tibetan lama.’

His interest in Tibetan Buddhism made him leave home, which eventually resulted in his joining in 1979, the monastic college of Drepung Gomang (rehabilitated in the Tibetan refugee settlement of the Mundgod town in Karnataka, India). This was the historic seat to which all the Kundelings from the 8th onwards had been admitted. Here, he was eventually re-instated as a Tulku (incarnate) due to the association with the name of Kundeling—though not officially assigned to the nomenclature of his predecessor.

It was during this sojourn that the Rimpoche would meet his principal Preceptors, the Venerable Kyabje Song Rinpoche (1907-1982), the 9th Dagom Rinpoche (1953-2007) and the great Mahapandita Geshe Losang Tendar (1920-1998) and trained in cultivating faith in the teachings through their compassionate guidance. It was due to their blessings that he came to not only appreciate the value and potential of the monastic vocation but also the glaring problems that it faced due to the degeneration of its values.

His perseverance and undaunted nature made him forge ahead, which would appear as non-conformist towards the established system to some of his monastic peers. With his belief in and zest for democratic ideals, creative modernisation and social interaction, he would become the first ever Buddhist Lama, to initiate social services for the poor and the underprivileged amongst the Indians.

Two years later, in 1996, he was obliged to question the Tibetan Leader’s decree in ‘outlawing’ the Gelugpa Buddhist practice of the protective deity Dorje Shugden. In the event, all the living and deceased great lineage Masters of the Ganden tradition were transformed into pariahs! The 13th Kundeling had reluctantly in an overnight, become a spokesperson to safeguard the *Ganden Oral Transmission Lineage* (dgah.lden snyen. brgyud,rom).

He fearlessly voiced his opposition to the ban on all available forums of governmental, media and human rights organisations and pointed directly at the Spiritual leader (which no single Tibetan had dared to do then); he became an object of vitriolic attacks and vilification campaigns. There were attempts to manhandle him and dislodge his work in India by concocting accusations and bribing local officials.

He had, since 1989, become a spiritual teacher and guide to many. Both students and friends would urge him to settle in Europe for his safety, but he politely turned down the request. And regardless of his many hardships, he chose to remain in India. In 1993, he left his monastic residence to settle in the city of Bangalore. On 3rd May 1994, he established the Atisha Charitable Trust (ACT) within this city in order to realise his dreams.



Rimpoche is widely travelled and strongly advocates the revitalisation of the Buddhist tradition and its monastic communities. He has propagated the adaptation of Buddhism to mainstream society. He has regularly detested ecclesiastic shows of pomp and courtesy, preferring an unpretentious lifestyle and forthright communication.

CONCERNING HIS RECOGNITION

Rimpoche’s recognition as the reincarnation of the 12th Kundeling, within the Drepung Gomang Monastic seat followed the pattern of the great saintly adepts Phabongkhapa Dechen Nyingpo (1879-1941) and Khangsar Dorje Chang (1888-1941). The authority to recognise

the 13th Kundeling may have been invested in the 14th Dalai Lama, but fate had decreed Rinpoche to be proclaimed as such, by others.

The incumbent Mongolian 72nd Abbot Ngawang Nyima (1907-1990) and Authorities at the monastery had invoked the sanctions laid down by tradition whenever the circumstances concerning recognition would appear complicated by political or other related controversies. And so, by merely not affixing the appellation of the predecessor's name, the title of a 'Datsang Tullku' (i.e., an incarnate of the faculty) was invested in him.

It was widely known among the elite few that the famed Phabongkha Rinpoche was unofficially believed to be the genuine reincarnation of the great Changkya Rolpay Dorje (1717-1786). Khangsar Rinpoche was the true candidate for the reincarnation of the 11th Kundeling.

In fact, both these Lamas were considered the actual reincarnations of their aforesaid respective predecessors. However, candidates other than the two were invested in the seats due to the existing bureaucracy and the age-old flaws evident in the recognition of Tulkus.

The theocratic regime of the Dalai Lamas of yore and their charge d'affaires were no aliens in resorting to debauchery in the recognition of Tulkus. Planting Tulku candidates that helped in consolidating its supremacy and tampering with the process of recognition to capture domains was a practice that was an open secret.

Attempts to foil the investiture of the reincarnate candidate of the 9th Panchen Lama, backed by the Chinese, in 1944, would fail as the regime would later claim to have reluctantly acknowledged the same. After coming into exile, the same regime, then sporting the name Tibetan Government in Exile (TGE), declared the 10th Panchen a traitor, and decades later, after his death, they transformed him into a visionary and patriotic Tibetan!

Throwing its full weight around the Chinese-approved incarnate candidate of the 16th Karmapa, and further augmenting it with a spiritual aura of "having received signs of the authenticity of the new 17th incarnation in a dream!" Engaging in subterfuge to disrupt the Chinese-endorsed 11th incarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, as was reported by the BBC, and hoisting an opponent candidate of their own are but some examples of its exploitation of the Tulku system.

Woser Gyaltzen, even though a monk serving in the capacity of a manager to the 12th Kundeling's Labrang (property complex), in Lhasa, was immoderate in his lifestyle and given to loose morals. The Labrang was widely known for its wealth serving as a bank for the higher echelons of civilians and monastics.

The overindulgent lifestyle of this manager had transformed the Lama's domicile from a monastic abode into a den for frivolous activities. His unbridled exorbitant lifestyle had squandered generations' wealth, yet nobody had questioned the latter about its fate.

On the Lama's departure for medical treatment to India, Woser remained in Lhasa, carrying on with his pleasure-seeking escapades. The untimely demise of the Lama in Calcutta City in 1957 was a mere distraction for the manager.

Customarily, the demise of Lamas is often followed by scores of ritual obligations and a demanding list of preparations to begin the search for reincarnations. Woser made no effort for three decades, though married and comfortably settled later in exile, in the North Indian City of Dheradhon, India.

Regardless of the latter's reputation, the Dalai Lama would assign him a ministerial post in his Government in Exile. Three decades later, this manager would visit his homeland in Lhasa and declare that a grandchild born to a relative there was actually the incarnation of his master—finally reborn!

On his return, the Tibetan leader would legitimise his claim, by placing his seal of recognition. Anyone familiar with the perfidious politics involved in the recognition of Tulkus can see through the deception engaged and from this story unfolded.

ABOUT WIDESPREAD DEBAUCHERY IN THE CHOICE OF TULKUS

Today, the recognition of Tulkus is a mere tool for political gains, at the mercy of rival factions consisting of sanctimonious figureheads and their cohorts, each invoking the higher moral ground of a 'hallowed mandate' than the other—in staking their hoisted candidate to claim the legacy of a deceased Tulku.

The surreptitious objective does not merely involve taking on the nomenclatures or sacred legacies of the predecessor Tulku, but fundamentally the ownership of his domain, all mundane possessions and the vast followings! Lhasa's accounts are flooded with tales of the many who coveted the seat of the Dalai Lamas.

Whosoever would become the incumbent occupier of the Potala palace seat automatically acquired the religious allegiance of all Tibet and beyond. Again, the ambitious drive of opposing factions spoken of earlier was never motivated by altruistic or even nationalistic concerns; it was rather a lust for the power, fabulous wealth and vast domain of the latter. Regardless of whether the God-Kings had wished it so for themselves, the fact remained that the invested incumbent, Tulku, would become the richest baron throughout Tibet.

The recent impetus behind the Indian authorities sealing off the estate of the late 16th Karmapa at his seat in Rumtek around 1985, was provoked by concerns that its fabulous assets could fall into the wrong hands. There were even apprehensions to the effect that the Chinese would lay claims to the invaluable artefacts!

Apart from this were two claimants and one pretender to the throne of the Karmapa and their contending supporters, each claiming to be the rightful owner of not just the spiritual legacy but with their eyes fixed mainly on the domain and possessions of the late Karmapa.

Whether the hapless followers of a deceased Lama fighting for the sanctity and continuity of a pure spiritual lineage or the faction of contenders to the wealth and domain of a deceased Tulku. As was in Lhasa, so also in exile, the choice of a Tulku has become a matter of political clout, and not a spiritual choice.

Interestingly, the shadow of the Tibetan leadership has seemingly been omnipresent in every prominent 'Tulku scandal.' A reality check and unbiased scrutiny will reveal the modern-day trend of the Tulku Recognition Affair, as but a tool in the hands of the powerful to fulfil their hegemonic ambitions.

Followers of the Tibetan head would later fabricate claims to the extent that Kundeling Rimpoche had grudged the title of the 13th Kundeling for himself. "He was angered by the leader's decision to recognise another candidate and hence would go out of the way to malign the latter", they claimed.

Shugden adherents and Rimpoche supposedly had harboured animosity against the God-King's perceived drive towards a democratic, non-sectarian and harmonious Tibetan society. They have all been paid by the Chinese P.R.O.C to dismantle the peace-loving exiled community of Tibetans!

For all the grandiloquent claims to working for peaceful co-existence with a scientific temper and uniting wisdom and compassion. The Tibetan penchant to distort and engage in a facade is as good as it is legendary! It is no secret that the incumbent God-King's choice as candidate for the 13th Dalai Lama, Thupten Gyatso, was itself a classical affair of scandalous proportions, ever to have taken place in Tibetan history!



THE KUNDELING MONASTIC COMMUNITY IN INDIA CONCEIVED WITH A DIFFERENCE

As indicated, the idea of the Kundeling Monastery in India arose mainly due to Rimpoche's own inclination to create a model community and partly due to the need to salvage the community of the deity Dorje Shugden's adherents—ostracized and expelled from the mainstream Gelug practitioners.

The foremost reasons for commencing his small community of the KM, earlier in Bengaluru from 1997 and then from 1998 onwards in Mysore continuing as such even today, were envisioned solely for the purpose of the preservation of the sacred *Ganden Oral Transmission lineage*, as stated before.

Prior to the formation of his community, KR had forsaken his residence in his monastic seat and settled in Bengaluru in the year 1994, in the company of two monks and the Dutch nun Sumati Arya, who followed him as Secretary and had first pioneered the concept of the ACT.

The newly acquired freedom of being relieved of his obligations to his monastic seat and the possibility of embarking upon the road to realising his dreams was nevertheless possible, solely through the kindness of his ardent supporters and benefactors, the couple Frans and Nel Van Dam.

The initial years of running projects relating to funding kindergarten schools in Indian villages and supporting monastics in the Gelugpa seats became possible only through their untiring support and that of a small entourage surrounding Rimpoche.

The Atisha India Tibet Funds, an organisation formulated by the van Dam together with Ger Lodewick and the late Art van Tien hoven, two respected Dutch members, had facilitated funds towards Rimpoche's projects. The KMC and ACT were conceived and continue, even today, as a result of their skills and well-motivated efforts.

Many of his Gurus explicitly and privately had encouraged him to hold on to the legacy of the Kundelings as his very own, which concerned the practice lineage of the Ganden Oral Transmission. In assuming the name of Kundeling for himself, he declared to others that he had no qualms with anybody else sporting the name 'Kundeling.'

KR did not hesitate to display deference to the Kundeling Tulku instated by the Tibetan head. He even paid a visit to the feisty young Tulku and would later jokingly remark, that he had no reservations should anybody decide to recognise even a third candidate 'younger and brighter' or even clone a fourth!

When KR visited Lhasa in 2003, he displayed no inclination to visit the opulent monastic estate of the Kundelings there, even when he was in an advantageous position. If it was merely about megalomaniacal gains, subservience to authorities in Lhasa or the Tibetan head in exile would be all required.

That KR does not take recourse to sycophancy, lives in a remote area in the vicinity of an Indian Village, engages in serving rural areas, shuns publicity and maintains a humble lifestyle should speak volumes of his intentions on carrying on as the Kundeling!

THE ORDEALS AND THE GRADUAL ADVANCEMENT OF THE KMC

It was then in the year 1997, that Rimpoche would initiate the idea of his own monastic community. The road to the ideal community in the form of KMC was not strewn with roses. In 1998, with a new batch of five little monks joining the existing community, progress gradually began to figure.

The Teachers for the community, particularly Tibetans newly appointed, had proven to be inspiring. But, most of them, native Tibetans, were not willing to be a part of a Monastery that would not be Tibetan but Indian and built on modern concepts.

The Tibetan followers of the Dalai Lama were engaged in virulent attacks on Rimpoche and his Monastery and ceaselessly attempted to undermine his work. The Government's permission to receive funds from foreign countries was blocked due to the said instigation, making the survival of the monastery at times precarious.

The Tibetan Leadership's Shugden mania manifested in their *modus operandi* that evidenced their objectives, which was two-pronged: one was meant for victimising adversaries and the other for using a 'carrot-and-stick' policy of providing favourable positions and attractive economic possibilities for those that would kowtow to his diktats.

As one of the high-profile Shugden protagonists, Rimpoche became the main target for aggressive attacks. Following this, his monastery, too, would bore the brunt of the outcome. Rimpoche and his community have been accused of being on the Chinese payroll, acting as their agents and constituting a threat to the leader's security. He was being insinuated for even threatening the harmony between Tibetans and Indians.

He was assigned abusive sobriquets as, the 'False Kundeling' and a 'Self-proclaimed Lama' (Nga. Lama,tib). The cacophony of such tirades by followers of the Tibetan Leader, although inspiring many investigating bodies in central and State Government agencies in India, eventually lost its vigour, as there was no evidence to substantiate the Tibetan perfidies. Only a handful of courageous monks were willing to stand by KR and his monastic community. And ultimately it was these precious few that actually mattered.

The fact that the Monastery's progress had been hampered because of KR's multifarious roles and position as protagonist for the Shugden cause had, on the other hand, also proved to be a blessing. In his vision, he desired the Monastery to avoid stereotyped roles of dependency and over-identification with its founder.

In the early years, the KM would always have to subsist and function from rented locations, first in Bangalore, then 1998 moving to Mysore City. It must be clarified that rental demands had pinched the frugal finances of the Monastery, thereby motivating the repeated changes. The basis for the monastery to be housed in the city was proximity to basic amenities of daily requirements.

The KM had existed in the heart of the said city, undistracted by the hustle and bustle, contrary to the convention that calls for a Monastery to be situated neither too close nor too far from a city. This would, however, last until the year 2011, after which the KMC would finally settle down in a property acquired by the ACT.

THE CONSEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS AS OF TODAY

KR desired for his work and projects for Indians to find their genesis within the vicinity of the Mysore City. With self-dependability as an objective, he also believed that the patron/priest syndrome, with which Tibetans historically have hunted for patronage the world over, needed to be dismantled gradually.

In his view, it was outdated and encouraged a parasitical orientation. It was a fact that KM was, and is still, supported by its major patrons, the van Dam and the Atisha India/Tibet Funds, in the Netherlands. The perusal for self-dependency remains a vision, continued effort, and hope of the ACT.

A dividing line exists between this Monastery and all other portly and baroque structures of Lamas and their monasteries in the Tibetan Diasporas, worldwide. Many of these monasteries are directed by their

heads, who also happen to be celebrities, invoking historical legacies and sanctimonious profiles to their credit and are often aligned or in conformity with the Tibetan leadership. The KM and its Head have become the antithesis of these.

Thus, the KMC, now in the Arasinakere Village of Mysore District, stands as a distinct departure from whatever its domain, infrastructure and policies may have been in Lhasa—impressively huge, opulent and traditional, as it may have been—through the ages.

Since its founding, the KM has been one of the pivotal projects of the ACT. The Trust disperses its charge to supervise the financial management, through the remittances received from its benefactors who allocate funds for the Monastery. The limitation of funds and sponsors has been clearly understood by the Community as the price it has paid for its defiant stand.

Rimpoche's tours to various countries are the other vital source of financial revenue for the community. A slow but steady growth of interest from the outside seems to have mushroomed, giving a premonition for a brighter future for the KMC.



THE MEANING AND OBJECTIVES OF A MONASTIC COMMUNITY

It would be useful to grasp the objectives of monasticism and its daily pursuits to understand the engagements and progress involved within a monastic Institution, such as the Kundeling Monastery.

A monastery is 'a place of dwelling' (vihara,skrt. gra.tshang,rom) where people intent on segregating from the life of a householder and all its related mundane goals are motivated to live a life dedicated to the training in ethical discipline, study and contemplation.

The monastic maxim stands as "*less desire and more contentment*" by pursuing a standard that inculcates' lesser goals (i.e., less meaningless projects) and lesser activities.'(i.e., hyperactivity that brings imbalance) Far from being a sedentary lifestyle of people escaping the hardships and responsibilities of a secular life.

Monastic life is meant for somebody who understands the futility of mundane existence and its related involvements and seeks liberation from such temporal goals. The ultimate goal for all those appreciating the teachings of the Buddha is to seek everlasting peace and happiness.

Aspirants to the path understand from the Buddha's teachings that the goal is tenable by firstly striving to overcome perpetual enslavement to stereo-type existence and, thereby, seeking liberation and ultimately striving for enlightenment, to benefit all living beings.

Mundane existence and obsessions with it nurture a maniacal attachment towards wealth, possessions and loved ones. Hence, 'Sustaining those that are beloved only to harm those that one despises.' The endless labouring towards the amassment of wealth and generating progeny and disputes that lead to extreme moods is idiosyncratic to the mundane life of a householder.

Joining the army requires commitment even to lay down one's life to guard the nation, and in a Boarding School, one stays away from home to cultivate discipline and learning. In a rehabilitation centre and a Correctional Institute (Prison), it is about overcoming dangerous, addictive lifestyles and reforming criminal tendencies posing danger to society.

Men and women, on the contrary, undertake a monastic vocation to live in a monastery or nunnery to tame their minds to free themselves from obsessive, non-virtuous lifestyles. The ultimate purpose of

isolating themselves is to be free from ego-centric orientations that nurture discrimination. Following the rules and living a disciplined lifestyle is achieved by taking vows and observing precepts.

Three fundamental attributes can describe the life of a monastic in brief: It is about changing one's name, clothes, and mind. The last becomes the ultimate criteria—a transformation of the mind—breaking free from mass hysteria! Negative tendencies or afflictions of the mind are obstructions that must be removed to become truly free. Until this goal is achieved the path or means serves as a vehicle.

All teachings, vows or precepts, discipline and training are understood to be temporary solutions, so long as the negative tendencies that remain deeply embedded in our minds, as our nature, are totally eradicated. The Buddha's maxim to his monks was, 'to go forth into the world, for the happiness of all, for the welfare of all.'

THE ROUTINE WITHIN THE KUNDELING MONASTERY

The daily routine of monastics is based on a lifetime of commitment to the vows or precepts (samvara,skrt. sdom.pa,rom) that they have undertaken upon having received the ordination (Pravajya,skrt) from their respective Preceptors (Acharya).

The Pratimoksha,skrt (self-liberation) vows originate from the canon of the Vinaya (ethical discipline), a set of teachings ordained by the Buddha. It outlines the number of precepts that are to be held, according to the *Six Kinds of Ordination*. (so.so thar.pay rig.druk,rom)

Besides these are the Individual Charters (Cha.yig,tib) amongst a host of monasteries that the KM has fashioned for its own purposes. Nevertheless, this will only be summarily touched on due to the voluminous nature of its contents.

The constitution involves A. *Conduct within the monastery and outside*, B. *Discipline at prayer, study, dress attire and meals*, C. *Hygiene, health care and work etiquette*, D. *Holidays and recreations that are permissible*.

THE DAILY PROGRAMME

A daily routine in the KM involves an early morning prayer session, which commences at 6:00 AM and concludes at 7:30 AM. Breakfast and tea are served at around 7:30 AM. A memorisation session takes place at around 8:30 AM, concluding at 9:30 AM. There is a second tea break after this.

The morning Tibetan language and grammar classes commence at 10:15 AM and finish at 11:30 AM. A lunch break takes place immediately, continuing until 12:30 PM. The afternoon English classes and subjects begin at 1 PM and wind up at 3 PM. A Tea break takes place at around the same time.

The routine times between 3:30 and 5:30 PM are alternatively held between holding classes or self-study and doing one's homework. An early evening Dinner is served at 5:15 PM. The evening engagement from 6:30 to 7:30 PM is often followed by the evening prayers unless substituted by classes.

If there are classes for the senior members, the juniors will engage in a late-evening recitation. This happens sometimes around 8 PM to 9 PM. After which, the day's programmes come to an end, and it is time to retire to bed.

This schedule is supposedly observed from Monday to Friday evening every week, with exceptions on Saturdays and Sundays. However, during community duties, the schedule is tentative.

THE EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM

Since time immemorial, the standard pedagogic syllabus in the Buddhist monasteries has mainly focused on spiritual training and the study of the Buddhist scriptures. The Buddhist seats of the Nalanda Maha

vihara and others were known to teach other sciences and the religious texts of other non-Buddhist schools.

The dialectical engagements as a compliment to the rigorous scriptural memorisation, exegesis and its study would later become a standard routine within the major Gelugpa seats, in Tibet.

The Gelugpa monastic seats of Sera, Depung and Ganden were innovations, improvised from previously existing seats of learning. But, the routine and observations developed Tibetan features, that did not completely follow the Nalanda seat of the bygone past in India.

Additionally, private monasteries would further, develop a programme that differed from the seats, which moreover involved the study of medicine, astrology and ritual dance. Again, some would focus on the meditation and practice of the teachings, with its monastic inmates living the austere lifestyles of hermits.

The freedom to define monasticism in terms of what its itinerary could involve or be adapted to seemingly existed in old Tibet. But this hardly appears to have been the case with the Tibetan monastics since they had come into exile. It is equally bizarre when some monastics claim to be upholding the hallowed Indian traditions of Nalanda!

It is an anomaly that exposure to modern norms, such as interactions with civil society and followers of different faiths and ideologies, is not viewed enthusiastically—except for the affluent West and Southeast Asian communities. Regardless of the glaring contempt to exposure, the monastic seats today talk about incorporating the study of modern science!

The presumed attempts at modernisation by Tibetan monastics in exile are to ape modern-day secular colleges or universities in issuing certificates and holding interfaith dialogues. But there exists a chasm between exiled monastics who have little or no communication with their neighbouring communities in their vicinity, except for commercial purposes.

Taking the bygone paradigm of monastic training, the KM has adapted its study curriculum from a variety of models that existed in old Tibet. This monastery's study focuses on the Gelugpa training's spiritual heart, and its emphasis on Tsongkhapa's works, such as *The Graduated Path to Enlightenment* (Lamrim,tib), the Bodhicaryavatara and *Mind Training* texts (Lojong,tib). Visiting Lamas and Geshe are invited to teach occasionally.

Memorisation of the Buddhist root texts and their daily repetition, attending Buddhist lectures and meditational retreats and learning the ritual corpus and its related paraphernalia of activities are all part of this monastery's training.

The other components of learning are the related secular subjects of Social Science, History and the local dialect. Learning, as it is understood, in its holistic sense, is not the mere parroting of books or the attendance of lectures in classrooms, as we know. It is through exposure to the objects of knowledge and experience, from directly acquainting oneself with the situation existing, that we gain a direct comprehension of the way things are.

Books, Journals and electronic and visual media do play an important role in information. News channels and documentaries on the celluloid screen are encouraged. KM also undertakes a daily and monthly subscription to English Newspapers and The National Geographic Journal. Educational tours to historical and religious sites—not necessarily Buddhist—interaction with civilians, and service to the people are all considered education.



THE MONTHLY RITUAL ENGAGEMENTS

Aside from the stated engagements, those special days on the Mahayana Vajrayana Buddhist calendar are commemorated with special ceremonial engagements. To cite an example, there is a Chintamani Tara rite (Chintamani Dol.chog,tib) dedicated to this Goddess for the success of the prime objective of reaching enlightenment and the immediate ones regarding the pacification of harm.

Then, there is the *Fulfilment and Restoration rite* (Kang.so,tib.) of the Dharmapalas (Protectors of the faith), the principal amongst these is, the Dharmapala Dorje Shugden.

Dharmapalas are considered to be manifestations of the enlightened Buddhas. Due to their proximity to the human world, they are better placed to act in removing obstacles and bestowing provisions, to successfully accomplish the spiritual path.

Gurupuja (Lama Chopa,tib.) is another ceremonial engagement observed on the 10th and 25th days of the Tibetan calendar. It is a part of the sacred commitment one has regarding one's Spiritual Guides, which is fulfilled on its observation. A Ghanachakra (Tshog.kyi Khor.lo,tib) is performed in conclusion as a thanksgiving. The eatables and drinks amassed for the occasion were distributed amongst the participants.

THE YEARLY RITUAL ENGAGEMENTS OF THE KUNDELING MONASTERY

A catalogue involving a list of ritual engagements is carried on for a period of 25 days in a row in the month of December by monks with expertise in this field, who are invited from other monasteries. This is followed later by another round of 8 consecutive days of ritual observations once a year. These shall be briefly mentioned by their respective names and purposes for which they are engaged. The yearly rituals are as follows :

1. The Thousand Offerings to the Venerable Tsongkhapa, (Je.yi Tong.cho,tib) is a liturgical manual practiced to accumulate merit and purify negative karma, by invoking and supplicating its principal object of devotion Lama Tsongkhapa, sometimes and here, in the manual, simply addressed as, 'Je' (Swami,skrt, The Lord). This manual employs the Seven Limbs of Offerings (Ashtangapuja,skrt) as the foundation for its practice, like all other manuals of liturgical rites. They are Prostrations, Making offerings, Confession, Rejoicing, Requesting not to enter Parinirvana, Requesting to turn the wheel of Dharma and Dedication.

It prescribes laying out a thousand offerings of the *Five Sense Objects*: water, lamps, flowers, eatables, and Incense, in addition to prostrations and praise. All material offerings are physically arranged while the liturgy of all the above-mentioned offerings is verbally recited. The sole objective of engaging in such offerings is to receive the blessings of the master, who himself is considered a manifestation of all the Buddhas and Manjushree in particular.

Purifying negative karma and accumulating merit, in other words, removing the *Two Obstructions* (to Ignorance and Omniscience) and amassing the *Two Accumulations* (to Merit and Gnosis) on the path to enlightenment, is the basis of all Buddhist practice. In recollecting the qualities of the Body, Speech and Mind of the Guru and his deeds on behalf of the teachings and sentient beings, one also strives to assimilate and emulate them

2. The Sutra offering rite of the Medicine Buddha (Men.la.yi Do.cho,tib), is a Sutra rite, which is one of the reasons why it is referred to as a 'Sutra offering.' The practice is also related to the Sutra genre of the Buddhas and is addressed to the seven Tathagatas, amidst whom the Tathagata Bhaishajya Guru Vaidurya Prabhavaraja or simply, in short, Guru Vaidurya, is the Principal Buddha.

The stated liturgy involves invoking the Seven Buddhas in Turns and individually propitiating each, by making the 7 Limb offerings and reminding them of their vows taken on behalf of all sentient beings. These 7 Tathagatas had, in the past, avowed themselves to help remove diseases and sickness and liberate those recollecting or calling on their names from lower rebirths.

3. The Four Parts of Hundred (Gya.Shi,tib) is A liturgical manual involving Offerings made as ransom to the four kinds of Mara: 1. *The Mara of Ignorance*, 2. *The Mara of Aggregates*, 3. *The Mara of Death* and 4. *The Mara The Son of God* (Devaputra,skrt.) These are our own afflictions of obscurations that arise as Demons that pose obstacles for us until we reach enlightenment.

These demons are metaphorical; in reality, yet, the obstructions that they create can hinder development and bring misfortunes as we remain under their influence. Their harms may, however, be neutralised through the power and compassion of the Triple Gem and that of taking recourse to the ritual means of pacification and creating merit. The motto in Buddhist practice is the ultimate eradication of the mental afflictions within oneself.

4. Averting Harms from Evil Spirits by the Heart Essence Sutra Practice (Sher.nying Du.dog, tib) Four sets of Twenty-five different types of offerings each are laid out to the four Maras mentioned in the four directions. Buddha Shakyamuni is invoked as a witness, offerings and supplications are made to the Triple Gems and the Heart Sutra is recited a number of times as a means to avert obstacles from the stated evil forces. Merely hearing and reciting it is said to amass great merit, and meditating on it is hence said to generate merit that is immeasurable.

The Heart Essence Sutra (Prajnaparamitahridayasutra) is the nucleus and basis of all the Mahayana instructions revealed by the Buddha. His teachings on emptiness refer to the lack of an inherently existing 'I' in beings and existence. The ultimate nature of all living beings and phenomena is dependent on causes and conditions and is, hence, empty of an inherently existing self. Realising emptiness is reaching enlightenment.

5. Averting obstacles through the practice of the Goddess Sitapatra (Du.kar Dog.chen,tib) This is a rite based on a manual that combines the Sutra of the Goddess and her dharani & mantra practices. It is a means to pacify the planetary and constellation harms and countless other obstructions, that ensue from a number of categories of non-human entities. There are many benefits enlisted from the mere recitation of this manual considered a sutra and dharani, commonly recited by many Gelugpas on a daily basis.

The Buddha himself is attributed with having taught this technique to pacify the stated hindrances to the king of gods by making the Goddess appear from his crown protrusion. Such identical references to the origins of divinities are also found in legends around the world, particularly that of the origin of the Greek goddess Athena.

A unique set up of offerings is made in the rite to this Goddess consisting of those made to the deity herself and others that form part of the Vedic divinities. (De.gye,tib, Ashtakula,skrt) A substitute, in the form of an effigy of the patron, is also made as a ransom, to appease worldly spirits.

6. Pacifying the Wrath of the Matrikas (Mamo.yi Thug.kang,tib) A specific rite that is performed in conjunction with the *Fulfillment Restoration Rite* of the Protectress Sreedevi, also called Mahakali. Specific offerings to the four aspects relating to the four activities are arranged in this rite as prescribed in the manual. A number of the offerings made to the Goddess and her entourage do have shamanistic backgrounds.

Though appearing as a hideous Feindess, Mahakali is considered inseparable from Saraswati the consort of Manjushree Buddha and the Goddess Tara, The Savioress. It is also interesting to note that

Mahakali, as a goddess, is worshipped in the Shakti cult of Hindu Tantrism and shares similarities to many of the matriarchal divinities of prehistoric origins worldwide.

This rite mainly focuses on purifying the degeneration of precepts held by practitioners such as Self Liberation, Mahayana and Mantrayana pledges (Samaya,skrt) and is said to bring about the displeasure of the Fiendesses (Mamos,tib) within the entourage and the Goddess Mahakali.

7. Making Awry (Rul,tib) is a Tantric ritual. is based on primarily generating oneself as a deity, in this case, Vajrabhairava. The *Fulfillment Restoration Rite* of the Protectors involved are then invoked for their protection. This is followed by a manual that is associated with the means of Making Awry, which is the main liturgy of the practice that is then recited.

Notwithstanding that the Buddhist teachings and the Lojong (Mind Training) Instructions explicitly teach taking all adverse conditions into the path. On the contrary, Tantric instructions do teach techniques for averting harm and obstacles. Whilst they may appear as poles apart, their approach is not viewed as contradictory. To avert the harm of hatred, slander, and magical spells is to help others, and are skilful means and therefore pure Mahayana conduct.

The merit of the holy beings and the *Power of Truth* are further invoked to remove the said harms, in conjunction with the said manual. Removing karmic retribution becomes possible when the said factors mentioned are involved. When such do not work due to heavy karma, the Lojong techniques are powerful in themselves to apply as an antidote.

8. The Wrathful Dedication of the 60 parts of Torma (Thug.chu.ma Thag.ngo,tib) belongs to a Tantric manual and is an ancillary practice related to the Yamantaka Tantras. The offerings are made of four parts of triangular-shaped tormas (sculptured out of flour and butter), each that lies flat with the markings of the sixty parts. These tormas are offered to the Dharmapala Kalarupa's entourage, also known as Yamaraja. They are further exhorted to remove all obstacles on the path.

The practice is engaged in order to repel hindrances in general and serious obstacles, such as untimely death or accidents that may occur due to Karmic obscurations. However, the ritual has a more profound implication related to removing subtle obstructions from dual perceptions rather than just mundane hindrances. It is observed daily as a concluding rite in the Gelugpa monasteries for both the mundane and supra-mundane objectives.

9. Accomplishing Prosperity (Yang.dup,tib) There are three underlined objectives for success, ultimately to be understood as Fortune and Abundance. These are; *Longevity*, *Merit* and *Wisdom*. Prosperity as a vocabulary for abundance is utilised also to imply the abundance of domain, wealth, livestock and entourage, but it nevertheless concerns the first three categories mentioned as the foundation of all else. There are different wealth deities that are deemed Dharmapalas in the Mahayana Vajrayana Pantheon and are invoked for the said benefit.

The deities involved in this monastery are Sita Mahakala, Sita Zambhala with 5 deities as entourage, and Gyalzey Sisum Pelbar, is an aspect of Dorje Shugden as a wealth deity. In the Buddhist teachings, it is generosity that is understood as the root cause for all prosperity in this and all future lives, though transient and incapable of producing ultimate contentment.

It is also the source of removing the temporary sufferings of the lack of provisions, hunger and poverty, hence serving as a means of sustenance and material happiness. It helps Dharma practitioners too, to accomplish their ultimate aims. It is mainly for these reasons and not the mere amassment of wealth that this rite is therefore performed.

10. The Rite of Making Prostration and Offerings to the Sthaviras (Ne.ten Chag.cho,tib) A special rite that invokes the 16 Arahats or Sthaviras, as designated. These apostles of the Buddha Shakyamuni had all achieved Nirvana (liberation) from cyclic existence, achieving the state of a *Foe*

destroyer (Arhat,skrt. Da.chom.pa,tib) Prior to his Parinirvana, the Buddha exhorted them to take abode in various locations on this earth, as long as his teachings last, so as to assist the human teachers and the teachings in this world.

Dharma was declared to be the ultimate medicine and antidote, removing all sufferings from sentient beings. That Dharma spreads and abides long enough to benefit beings again mainly depends on the Spiritual guides. The purpose of this rite is therefore dedicated to the spread of the teachings and increasing the lifespan of the Gurus. The Arahats invoked are all Mahayana and not those of the Small Vehicle, which is symbolic.

Pure moral conduct (shuddhashila,skrt) is what all Arahats are said to be the epitome of; as Great Compassion, the *Altruistic Intention* (Bodhicitta) happens to be the heart of the Mahayana teachings. It is, therefore, vital for all aspirants to imbibe pure morality and Bodhicitta to progress towards enlightenment.

11. The Longevity Rite of the Goddess Ushanisha Vijaya (Nam.gyal Tshe.chog,tib) is based on the practice of the Goddess based on techniques to increase Longevity, Merit and Wisdom. These three factors stand vital to having a meaningful and beneficial existence, without which living becomes meaningless. The Goddess is invoked as per her manual of practice (Sadhana, skrt), which comprises her visualisation, praises and mantra recitation practices.

The preparation for her rite undergoes the usual preliminary practices involved that are found in all of the ritual manuals and those within the practice manuals of Sadhanas involving deities. It also calls for the moulding of life pills (Tshe.yi Ril.bu,tib) and Nectar, which need to be consecrated. After that, the participants and benefactors of the rite are offered the same.

The rite is occasionally employed as a means to increase the lifespan of the Gurus, benefactors and practitioners on the path. The sick are known to also take recourse to this rite to heal themselves. Given the foundation of virtuous merit accumulated, pure motivation to practice Dharma and benefit others, it is possible to increase lifespan, even if one is terminally ill.

12. Dispatching of gifts and fumigation offerings to the gods (Gyag.ngen Lha.sang,tib) This is generally an open-air engagement of a rite to bring about the victory of the White forces over the Black—the good over the evil. There are gifts dispatched, which are, in fact, offerings made to appease the various powerful gods within existence, and a list of non-human entities.

The said entities are known in the Vedic lore of the Hindu tradition and also embrace the gods of Tibetan nativity, besides incorporating the local gods and entities abiding in the practitioner's area. The offering of smoke, to these entities, which is fumigation, is essentially to purify any action that may have affected the entities concerned, thereby resulting in retributive consequences of harm.

The smoke that arises is produced from burning various medicinal plants and herbs, particularly juniper, chrysanthemum, rhodendrum, sandalwood powder, camphor, and Naga pills. These and other eatables and drinks are also placed for the said entities. The said offerings are blessed and visualised as appearing to each of the entities as their desired objects, pleasing to the senses.

13. Thanksgiving, via The Fulfilment and Restoration Rite (Tang.rak Kang.so,tib) The Dharmapalas are invoked to make special Thanksgiving offerings to them on the successful conclusion to a list of ritual engagements. There are a number of Tormas dedicated to this purpose. Some of these are known as; Che.tor (Torma in relation to the objective), Thag.tor (Torma intended for wrathful purpose) Sheg.tor (The Torma offered on departure)

All of the Rituals mentioned above are conducted by visiting monks and Lamas, who are all connoisseurs in this field. The monks of the Kundeling, do also take part in the affair. Apart from this

list of rituals, there is sometimes an addition or two, all of which cannot be listed for the sake of brevity. Finally, two major rites of significant adherence are held in the conclusion of the above.

These are **The Million Ghanachakra Offerings in Combination with the Gurupuja** (Lama Chopa Bum.tshog,tib) and **The Million Ghanachakra Offerings in Combination with The Dorje Shugden Rite**, (Dorje Shugden Bum.tshog,tib). The focus here is its main objective, which is the *Purification of negative karma* (Papashudhi-karana,skrt) and the *Accumulation of Merit* (Punyasambharga,skrt), which are vital to the training in the daily spiritual practices of Mahayana Buddhism.

In fact, the basis of reaching the sacred goal of enlightenment and liberation fundamentally depends on the two focuses, as mentioned before. It is important to know that the two averred ritual participations are not the only ones, with the emphasis on the two focuses mentioned. These two rites are engaged in by members of the Kundeling monastery exclusively.

The Bum.tshog means 'A Hundred Thousand,' and 'Ghanachakra' means the 'Circle of the Entourage,' An Assemblage of Heroes (Vira,skrt Pawo,tib) and Heroines (Virani,skrt, Pamo,tib) assembled in a circle around the Vajracharya to present; outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings which in essence are ultimately bliss and emptiness.

The numbers are a calculation in terms of the objects of offerings that consist of eatables and drinks placed in the figurative amount. The participants in the ritual will repeat the liturgical text verbally making the offerings the same number of times. The repetitions are meant to tone the concentration, as mental torpor, distraction, and drowsiness can deter concentration, whereby even a billion recitations may bear no fruit.

These are the mammoth sacred engagements performed by the KMC alone and can be joined in by any guest attendants. The two said ritual performances occur during late December and the beginning of January, depending on the nature of other engagements that may crop up in January.

WORK AND RECREATION

The last but most equally significant is the management of the Monastery's Kitchen. This is the domain of its cook, who is the chef in charge of the routine meals and for the rare treats of buffets on marked occasions. All young monks, with the exception of the Disciplinarian (Gegu,tib), take their stints in the kitchen as Thabray (the kitchen assistant) to the cook. Whoever this monk in attendance is, he is free from the daily routine of the Monastery, for that day.

After every meal, all kitchen utensils and crockery are washed by the community members themselves. Besides cleaning their individual rooms, toilets and temple rooms, changing bedsheets, pillow cases and sweeping the compound ground are all diligently looked into. Sweeping and mopping is a daily affair and engaged in by the monks, as by turn, of the person responsible, for the day.

Saturdays are meant to be days for cleaning up and laundry. Bedsheets, pillowcases, and bath towels are washed on a weekly basis in the summer and after a 10-day period in winter. Monastic robes and daily wear, consisting of sporting clothes, night suits, and clothes for outings, are also washed in the same pattern. The making of Naivedyas (ritual eatables) and Balitams (main food offerings) also known commonly in the Tibetan as Tormas, are made by the community members.

Sports and games are a part of the recreation, the younger enthusiasts play football. Other games involve Table tennis, Badminton, Crosswords, Chess and Carom. Trekking up to the hill near the monastery and going on long walks in the vicinity are encouraged. The Kundeling monastery also keeps a good library of English, Chinese and Hindi films, mainly related to history, mythology, comedy and documentary.

Monks are encouraged to engage in Educational tours once every 4 months. Accompanying senior members in charge of shopping errands for the community or attending functions when invited provides the opportunity for exposure to the world beyond the walls of the monastery.

OUR OBJECTIVES AND ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF THE KMC

The Kundeling Monastic Community in India aims to salvage and preserve the Ganden Oral Transmission lineage, the growth and followings of which have been steadily demolished within the Tibetan diaspora.

This Monastery is charged with a spirit of ebullience and magnanimity. It may not have scholastic achievements to proclaim, the presence of accomplished seers within or, monumental projects undertaken to declare.

We attempt to make a difference by integrating whatever is relevant in the tradition with whatever is good in contemporary times. In other words, we strive to uphold what is sacred and aspire to be able to cater to the changing needs of the time, as a community of monastics and laity.

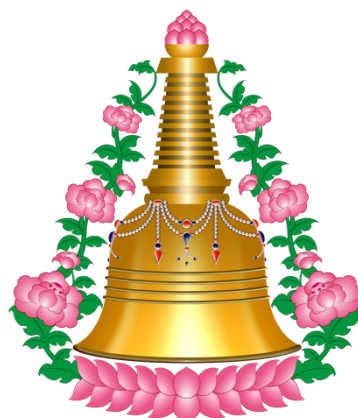
In a monastic community, everybody may not be capable of taking part in its educative curriculum associated with philosophical or ritual study, with some incapable of meeting the demands of rigorous intellectual training. In such cases, there has been an age-old convention of allotting such members other undertakings.

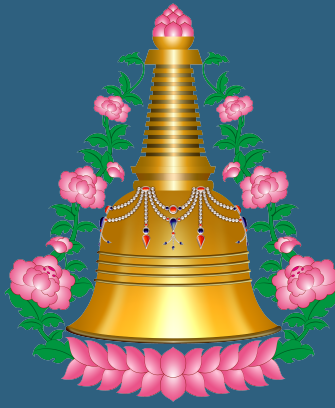
We endeavour to create an environment within the KMC where those who wish to solely engage in the meditational and practice aspect of the Buddhist teachings may be able to do so. While those wishing to engage in the manual tasks involving the community, will have the freedom to choose the nature of work. Or, rather, the opportunity to volunteer in any nature of service will be open to all.

In a synopsis, the community's future developments are three-pronged: First and foremost, to train monk members in the Buddhist teachings and that of the *Ganden Oral transmission Lineage*. That, if not future teachers of Buddha Dharma, then at least, the torch bearers of harmony and peace, or even sincere practitioners.

The second target is grooming a Community that would hopefully become either capable teachers, social activists or even good administrators. Last but not least, they become capable, hard-working individuals. They prove to be an asset if they choose to live elsewhere

It, however, possesses its saga of struggle, dedication and hard work in imbuing the best spiritual and secular training. It is that spirit embodied in a small monastic community of youngsters. Eventually, all of these are sustained, by the benevolence of but a courageous few, its indefatigable benefactors.'





Time Table

5:30 am.	Wake-up call. (The sacristan prepares the daily offerings on the shrine)
6:00 am.	Morning Puja (recitation of the liturgical chant ‘The Gurupuja’ in combination with the Six Preparatory Practices, known in Tibetan as Jorcho dang.del Lama Chopa)
7:30 am.	Cleaning time (cleaning of the monastery premises and individual rooms)
7:30-8:15 am.	Breakfast (washing of dishes is done by the monks themselves)
8:30-9:30 am	Memorisation (the monks concerned have respective passages of liturgies, depending on their individual capacities, which need to be learnt by heart)
9:30-10:00 am.	Tea Break (A special Prayer for tea offering, known as ‘The Incomparable Refuge,’ (Ten.pa Nyam.mey,tib) is chanted before taking tea. The cups are washed by monks in turns.
10:30-11:30 pm.	Tibetan Class (The teacher, guides the Grammar and Literature Classes)
12pm.	Lunch Break (Lunch takes approximately 45 minutes, after which the monks themselves wash the crockery and utensils)
12-1:00pm.	Interval (The majority of monks rest or relax in their rooms, the Kitchen helper, assisted by two other monks in turns, prepares the Torma construction known as “The Sixty Kalarupa Torma”)
1:00-3:00 pm.	The English Course (This is divided into two periods lasting an hour each with a short intermission in between. The first constitutes the English Grammar Class and the second alternates between Science, Maths, Geography, History, Social Studies)
4-5pm.	The Kannada Class and the Ritual Course (Twice a week the local dialect is taught, to encourage integration with the people of this State. The Ritual Class takes place on the other three afternoons)
5.30pm.	Dinner Break follows the same pattern as Lunch
6.30-7.45pm	Evening Puja (The chanting and recitation of the Kundeling Monastery’s unique collection of liturgies, referred to as Cho.cho Shel.don, in Tibetan. Every monastery has their own exclusive liturgies)
8-9pm.	Recreation (Allows for both recreation and exercising)
9-10pm.	Revision (an exercise in reassessing the passages memorized during the day)
10pm.	Conclusion (The monks retire to their rooms, take showers and go to bed)