

Himalayan Children's Fund News

Dear Friends,

While visiting India and Nepal earlier this year on behalf of the Himalayan Children's Fund I was able to meet with accountants for the monasteries and review our funding, visit the nuns studying at the University for Higher Buddhist studies in Sarnath, visit SMD, SMDBS and Tara Abbey, deliver letters and gifts from sponsors to their students, monks and nuns and bring you more information and photos.

In this issue, we will mainly feature Vajra Vidya Institute in Sarnath, India and save information about other projects for next time.

Enjoy!

-Debra Ann



Sponsorship Fees

For 2010/2011 school year:

Boarding Student	\$815.00
Day Student	\$330.00
School Monk	\$560.00
Shedra Monk	\$600.00
Nun	\$240.00
Additional for school nun	\$240.00
Monk	\$240.00

*Thank you to those who have already renewed!
Electronic reminders are sent individually
throughout the year according to each sponsor's
past schedule of payment.*

Earthquake Update

It has now been over two months since the devastating earthquake in Tibet and we are still receiving contributions every day. I am happy to report that as of June 7th HCF has wired a total of \$75,547.59 to Lama Dawa for the emergency and rebuilding efforts.

Bank Of America

I would like to acknowledge Bank of America for their kind contribution in response to the earthquake. Our branch Manager responded eagerly when told of the situation in Tibet and has been waiving all fees whenever we transfer funds to Lama Dawa for Tibet.



Thank you for your kindness and generosity Bank of America!

While visiting Vajra Vidya Institute in March I was given a tour of the new Shedra building. Sitting directly behind the monastery, this facility provides 8 light and airy classrooms, 56 rooms for housing monks, 8 rooms with attached baths for teachers and 8 for foreign or non monastic students. It greatly expands the capacity of the monastery campus and will be a very supportive environment for study.

The Shedra or Philosophical College is a critical part of monastic activity. It is an extremely rigorous education and the students who make it through the many years of study and practice have a solid view of Buddhism and have been trained to



teach. Students first learn to repeat exactly what has been taught and written by previous generations of great masters and then through the guidance of the Khenpos (teachers) they learn how to put contemplating and meditating together. "This is the source of how to study and meditate and the lineage rests on this activity" says Tracy Davis, a shedra student and translator from Portland, Maine.



The monks are very bright and good students and are highly devoted to Venerable Thrangu Rinpoche. They have a genuine and deep appreciation of what they have and many have been known to say, "Before, I always said I was a Buddhist - Now I know what it means to be Buddhist!"

To support VVI, whether through general donations or through sponsorship, is to participate in upholding the lineage of Buddhist teachings. Thrangu Rinpoche

and Khenpo Lobsang (the Head Khenpo at VVI) have personally asked that we help VVI as much as possible now and in the future.

Beds Needed
VVI needs help to furnish the new Shedra building. Mattresses, bedding, cupboards, bookshelves, cushions, tables, chairs, and floor coverings are needed right away. The price of a bed set (mattress, pillow, covers) is 1500 Indian rupees, approximately \$32.00 USD.

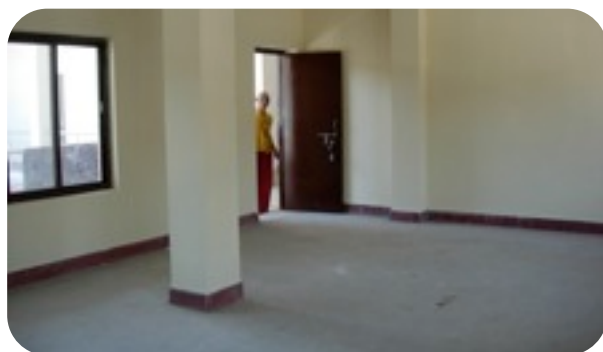


Khenpo Chogyal in his room at VVI.

Help VVI Free Clinic
The VVI Clinic is in great need of monthly support. We have some regular sponsorship of the clinic but it falls well below the monthly need. If we could increase the monthly donations to at least \$250.00 it would be a great help to the monastery and the local people.

Daily Schedule

- 5 am wake
- 6 am recite/memorize
- 7 am breakfast
- 8 am classes
- 12 pm lunch
- 1:30 pm self study
- 2:30 pm Puja
- 3:30 classes
- 5 pm memorizing
- 6 pm dinner
- 7 pm review class
- 8 -10 pm debate



What will soon be a classroom for shedra students.



Young, newly ordained monks study first at VVI for at least a year or two when entering Thrangu Tashi Choling Monastery.

It is important that the lineage of teaching and practice not wane: Without a lineage of teaching and practice, the Dharma would perish.

...Sometimes people might think that temples and monasteries are not all that important. However, there are both transient sentient beings and the lasting external environment. With sentient beings, there might be many for a while, including great scholars and meditators. Great lamas might appear. There may be many members of the Sangha, but just as water flows downstream, fifty, sixty, seventy, or eighty years later they will all pass away and a new generation will come. When this happens, even if there were a strong lineage of Dharma in the previous generation, we do not really know whether that lineage would continue in the next.

The way that the lineage can continue from generation to generation is to have a good, stable outer environment. When there is the external environment of a monastery with a shrine, retreat center, and monastic college, then due to that place, the Sangha, great lamas, and great meditators might pass away but the continuity of their activity will remain present there.

This is why restoring monasteries is crucial. If the monasteries fall into ruins, the environment declines as well and the inhabitants gradually disappear. Buddhism would not be able to remain long in this world. But if a monastery continues to exist, the great lamas and masters can perform vast activity for the Dharma during their entire lives. A group of students will gather; the lamas will teach the students; and they will practice. Thus gradually the students will spend the first part of their lives studying and practicing the Dharma and the latter part upholding, protecting, and spreading Buddhism. When that generation comes to its end, a new generation can continue that work, upholding, protecting, and spreading the teachings, which can thus remain. This is why temples and the Sangha are so very important.

- from Thrangu Rinpoche's April 18th speech regarding the earthquake in Tibet



Every part of the monastery is well planned and utilized. Here the rooftop of the new building is being prepared for the hanging of laundry!

