

Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement



2021 ISSUE

Supreme view is **beyond all duality of subject and object**

Supreme meditation is **without distraction**

Supreme activity is **action without effort**

Supreme fruition is **without hope and fear**

~ Machik Labdron 1055 - 1153



*11th Century Tibetan Women
Meditation Master*

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WOMEN OF DOEGULING

letter from the editor

In the four years I've served as the editor of this magazine, I've seen RDTs and the Doeguling community accomplish great things. They've tackled and scaled infrastructure projects, launched healthcare initiatives to care for at-risk groups, made ongoing organizational improvements and, perhaps most importantly for this magazine, generously shared their wisdom and personal stories with readers like us.

When I heard this year's issue would be dedicated to the women of Doeguling, I knew it would bring out a rich, new set of voices. That proved true. In this issue you will meet women who serve as nuns, nurses, teachers, scholars and civil society leaders, and many others who have shaped Doeguling. Together, their stories illustrate the various ways in which women have protected and helped preserve Tibetan livelihood and the Nalanda tradition for generations.

Finally, I am grateful as always - but this year more than ever - to the many contributors and to RDTs's staff and leaders who collaborated on this issue. Thank you for helping steer this project to completion with the vision and compassion you bring to all facets of your work.

Jocelyn Huang
Editor (2018-2021)

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(Executive Committee on page 26)

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY TENZIN YEGA



Left to right: Inauguration of roadside drainage at Doeguling's camp 3 marketplace. RDTS leaders with Sh. Indresh Kumar, key leader, Rashtriya Swyam Sevak Sangh. RDTS Executive Director with Sh. Anant Kumar Hegde, Member of Parliament for Uttara Kannada constituency and Sh. R.K. Khrimy, former Member of Parliament

Tashi Delek!

It gives me immense pleasure to dedicate this year's edition to the great women of Doeguling who have contributed significantly towards making it a sustainable and resilient community, as well as to the women who have contributed towards making the Nalanda tradition available to future generations.

We at RDTS are fortunate to have witnessed some exemplary contributions made by these great women. We encourage you to take a look at the inspirational work they have done.

On behalf of RDTS, I would like to provide a brief account of our efforts during the past year.

Roadside Drainage at Camp 3 Marketplace

The community's only marketplace is situated in the heart of Doeguling (Camp 3). It is both a social and a business hub where one can find tourists and close to 16,000 community members from all walks of life. Despite this being a prime spot to meet, socialize, and conduct business, the current drainage is haphazardly planned, and poses a serious health and safety issue. All stakeholders, including the Doeguling Cooperative Society, Restaurant and Shop Association

and Dr. Dhundup Tashi la, have expressed the urgent need for a drainage project. In response, RDTS built an open channel drain system measuring 402 meters in length at the marketplace with generous contributions from The Tibet Fund and Jonathan and Diana Rose. Proper drainage is instrumental in preventing disease and improving public welfare. Upgrading the existing surface drainage assists will enhance the environment, beautify the marketplace, and help maintain the infrastructure.

80 G and 12 AA

An important milestone for RDTS was the approval of the 12 AA and 80 G application by the Income Tax Department in Bangalore last year. 80G and 12AA certifications make it easier for RDTS to accept monetary support in India without tax constraints. We view this as a significant milestone in our attempt to realize the RDTS vision, and it was the outcome of some exemplary teamwork. I'd also like to recognize RDTS Project Officer Karma Yangdup la for his sustained effort in obtaining these certifications.

Water Initiatives

Early this year, RDTS successfully installed a rainwater harvesting and bore-well recharge unit

under the leadership of Tenzin Thakpo la, at the Sambhota Tibetan School (Camp 3). We chose the school to prevent water waste and educate the students on the importance of water.

A larger water conservation project was undertaken by the Water Committee through the construction of a 'Retaining Wall' at Doeguling Camp 4. The goal was to replenish groundwater reserves and control floods in the area. We would like to sincerely thank The Tibet Fund for funding the two projects mentioned above.

Tibetan Harvest

RDTS successfully organised a private screening of award-winning filmmaker Jasraj Pandhye's documentary 'Tibetan Harvest' in December, 2020. The goal of hosting this virtual event was to promote the film prior to its submission to film festivals across the globe. The film is about a Tibetan refugee community's compassionate approach towards sharing a locally designed water conservation system with its host. This project was sponsored by the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and we have kept our fingers crossed for its success!

Awareness Initiative

Tourism has experienced a major setback due to the pandemic, and as such, we have been unable to focus on this initiative. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that each visitor enjoys his or her visit to Doeguling and takes back an increased awareness of the importance of the Nalanda tradition, and Doeguling's role in it. We hope to resume our work towards this objective as soon as the situation improves.



Tourism Development

RDTs has worked hard at building relationships with officials from the Indian government at both the district and state levels. This will help us tap support schemes from the Tourism Department. We are determined to make it stakeholder driven, environmentally friendly, sustainable, and conducive to learning. Meeting all government requirements will require much time and energy. Having said that, we are in the early part of this meaningful journey.



Clockwise from top left: RDTs leaders with Sh. R.K. Khrimy, former Member of Parliament. RDTs leaders with Lama Chosphele Zotpa, President of Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association. RDTs leaders engaging with former DC of Uttara Kannada District Sh. Dr. Harish Kumar K. RDTs leaders with Uttara Kannada District Tourism Head Sh. Prushotam S. RDTs leaders with former Zilla Panchayat CEO Sh. Md Roshan, Uttara Kannada District. RDTs Executive Director, Doeguling Cooperative Society Chairman and Secretary with Sh. A.S. Hebbur, member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our sincere appreciation goes to Tsewang Namgyal la for his passion, energy, leadership, and faith in galvanizing us. His contribution in serving Doeguling as the RDTs Advisory Board Chair has been a source of inspiration for all. The project would never have continued if it wasn't for Tsewang la. Thank you for being our strength and our most enthusiastic cheerleader.

I would like to acknowledge Tenzin Gyalwang la, Managing Committee President for all the support he has extended. As Chairman of the Doeguling Cooperative Society, he is entrusted with a lot of responsibility. Despite his schedule, he is an ardent RDTs supporter, providing us with encouragement, sharing local expertise, and allowing us to capitalize on his connections and resources. He leaves no stone unturned.

I would also like to welcome Tsering Yangki la as the most recent Advisory Board inductee. Tsering la visited Doeguling in December 2019 and was inspired by RDTs' work and commitment. As Tsewang la's sister and a former Doeguling resident, Tsering la looks forward to joining the esteemed group of Advisors supporting Doeguling's cause.

I am so delighted to announce the appointment of Namgyal Tsering la as advisory board member. Namgyal la brings a deep understanding of Doeguling and community development activities. He had served in various capacities in the Tibetan community for the last few decades including Doeguling Cooperative Society, Federation of Tibetan Co-operatives in India Ltd and RDTs. Since inception, he has demonstrated exceptional commitment to advancing RDTs's visions. We're looking forward to his leadership.

We are overwhelmed by the tremendous support and generosity shown by Joe Wood la and Kathy Wood la. The couple has turned 80 this year. RDTs celebrated their birthdays on 15th May with a Lojoing (mind training practice in the Tibetan) teaching by Gaden Shartse Khensur Rinpoche Jangchup

Choeden. It was moderated by the Woods' two daughters, Sarah Wood la and Christina W. Baker la. The Woods have dedicated many years to serving the Tibetan community, both within and outside Tibet. Thank you Joe la for coming up with great ideas whenever you visit Doeguling. We wish you good health, joy and equanimity.

RDTs is highly appreciative of our Editorial team – Jocelyn Haung la, Eric Traub la and Ngawang Tsetan la. The high-resolution pictures contributed by Eric la are simply brilliant. Ngawang la has displayed great patience in designing the wonderful collage and cover page. Jocelyn la has worked tirelessly time and again to put together the magazine, from reading the preliminary drafts to organising the content. We at RDTs are grateful for her endeavours. Without her commitment, our magazine would not have been as successful.

Many thanks to our esteemed patrons and friends from India and overseas including Gaden Shartse Khensur Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden, Dr. Anita Dudhane, Gen Guru Gyaltsen and Namgyal Tsering la for their consistent guidance, support and engagement.

The past two years have been an incredible journey for me on a personal level. I have had the opportunity to meet and listen to people from various walks of life. This has helped me tremendously in understanding the project, becoming more confident, dealing effectively with different situations, and enhancing my leadership style.

A lot of resources need to be pooled to take our project to the next level. The road ahead is challenging, and the task of revitalising Doeguling is monumental. However, I believe that Doeguling can move forward through continued engagement, collaboration and support.

Our heartfelt thanks to all those who have been involved in our endeavours. Here's looking forward to creating the kind of change in Doeguling that will benefit the generations to come!

A LIFE OF FARMING

BY TENZIN GYALWANG, MANAGING COMMITTEE PRESIDENT
AND DOEGULING COOPERATIVE SOCIETY CHAIRMAN

My name is Tenzin Gyalwang and I am a farmer by profession. I learned farming from my beloved parents, who fled from Tibet and settled in Doeguling in 1967. Since the inception of the settlement, my parents have been engaged in agriculture, thanks to a land allotment from the Doeguling Settlement Office, a unit of Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). It has remained as a primary source of livelihood for my family all these years.

During my childhood, my siblings and I used to help our parents farm our land, but the way to our field was very muddy. At that time, we looked forward to taking ox and calves to the field and would jump at it when given the opportunity.

I joined the Special Frontier Forces in 1985 and served for 12 years. During that time, my interest in farming did not wane. I would strive to get vacation from the military when it was time to commence farming and harvesting in Doeguling.

Following my discharge from the Special Frontier Forces in 1997, I engaged in farming full-time, and gradually took responsibility of managing agriculture for the family. My parents were very supportive and provided a lot of guidance. Over time, I learned a lot about farm management. My passion for agriculture only intensified.

When we settled in Doeguling, paddy was a popular crop and very few farmers grew maize. However, over the last ten years, more farmers have started to shift towards maize cultivation. Of late, many farmers have also shown an interest in growing fruit and trees. This trend is the result of decline in total rainfall during the monsoon season. Mango, cashew nut, banana, be-

tel nut (supari) are some of the major fruits grown in Doeguling these days. Every year, in the beginning of June, I grow 2-3 varieties of maize and 2-3 varieties of paddy. In the month of November, I grow 2-3 varieties of lentils.

Over the years, I formed the habit of going to the field early in the morning and evening. My evening visit takes me hours. By the time I get home, it is dark.

My wife and sons often accompany me and help me work in the field. Their support inspires me to work harder. They are always prepared to hand me refreshments when I come back home from the field. After I was elected Cooperative Chairman and RDTS Managing Committee President, I started to give more time to the cooperative society, Reimagining Doeguling and the Doeguling community, which limited my time with my family and the field.

Currently, I have oxen and cows. I milk my cows every morning around 7 am and evening around 6 pm. Very few people in Doeguling rear cattle these days, as the maintenance of cattle is associated with a lot of labour and cost, especially when cows get sick.

I am at my best when I spend time in my field. Seeing the crops grow brings me immense pleasure. Conversely, seeing crop damage due to heavy rainfall and strong winds brings me grief. The most recent crop losses occurred in 2019 and 2020. This loss has brought a lot of grief to the farmers. I can empathise with their pain, as I myself am a farmer.

Like other agriculture-based Tibetan settlements, Doeguling has availed of financial assistance from CTA through the settlement office for implementing soil and water conservation programs. This assistance has been



Tenzin Gyalwang in his field.

in place for the past two decades. Reimagining Doeguling has helped change Doeguling's landscape over the past four years. If both CTA and Reimagining Doeguling work collaboratively, it will benefit Doeguling and other settlements immensely.

Every village in Mundgod taluk has at least 2-3 check dams of different sizes, which are built through and maintained with funds received from the state government. This support scheme strives to recharge the check dam and use the dam water when there is scarcity of rainfall, especially during the summer.

Increased assistance by the CTA on soil and water conservation-related efforts is critical. This will help support the farmers, sustain youth engagement in agricultural activities, and contribute towards reversing the trend of our youth leaving the settlement.

The Doeguling Cooperative Society has also contributed tremendously with regard to sustaining agriculture in the community. It has facilitated the supply of agriculture inputs such as seeds, manure, fertilizer and tractor services to the farmers.

From 2006 through 2021, the

“Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man.”

George Washington, the first President of the United States



Tenzin Gyalwang with members of Board of Directors of Doeguling Cooperative Society.

“I am at my best when I spend time in my field. Seeing the crops grow brings me immense pleasure.”

Cooperative Society has also availed itself of interest-free crop loans of Rs 314.7 million from Karnataka state government and disbursed the same to the farmers. Farmers, in turn, have repaid crop loans on time. This on-time repayment has solidified the credibility of Tibetan refugee farmers in the eyes of the state government. Similarly, the Cooperative Society has availed itself of loan waivers (Salamana) of Rs 64.9 million and crop insurance of Rs 7.176 million from the state government for the last couple of years and has disbursed the same to the farmers. The Cooperative Society is committed to continuing its efforts to obtain interest-free crop loans, crop insurance and loan waivers in the future.

On the behalf of the Cooperative Society, I would like to sincerely thank all the stakeholders - Karnataka State Agriculture Department, Karwar District

Administration, KDCC Bank and Doeguling Settlement Office - for the support and assistance given in providing benefit schemes for our farmers.

I strongly believe more youth should be inspired to take up farming. Consistent efforts must be made by all of us to introduce innovative support schemes, organise training and education programmes in agriculture, enable new technology, and explore entrepreneurship in farming.

I feel fortunate to be a resident of Doeguling. The settlement hosts several monasteries, including Gaden and Drepung. These monasteries are custodians of the Ancient Indian Nalanda Tradition.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made thirty-seven visits to Doeguling for dharma teachings and events. I hope that he continues to make such visits, as these inspire the settlement, and motivate each resident to realize their potential.

RDTs OBTAINS TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

Project Officer Karma Yangdup

My primary responsibility from 2017 to March 2019 was to get the Society (Re-imagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement) registered under the Indian Society Act of 1960. In addition, I played a role in presenting project proposals to the Tibet Fund and other such organizations, executing projects, and coordinating with the CTA and the Settlement Office on project support for RDTs projects in Doeguling.

My current responsibilities largely relate to submitting project appraisals and proposals to CTA, and to maintain books of account. The latter is important, as this transparency is essential for RDTs to maintain its registration under section 12 AA of the Income Tax Act of 1960, as well as Exemptions approvals under 80 G (5)(vi) of the Income Tax Act of 1961. These provisions relate to the exemption of Taxes for Charitable Societies and are prerequisites for the application of FCRA registration. Recently, some of the terms and conditions for FCRA application were changed. RDTs has the necessary documentation – the only condition it currently does not meet is the need to have an annual turnover of at least Rs. 15 lakhs.

RDTs is a community-based association initiated by the people of Doeguling. It is managed by ex-officio members of the settlement, and that gives it strength and stability. Ex-officio members have an elected tenure of one year, which does not give them a lot of time. Besides, they serve in a volunteer capacity, and that

constrains the time they can dedicate to the initiative.

RDTs functions on donations – both monetary and volunteer hours. Multiple efforts have been made to raise funds within the Doeguling community over the years. In 2015-16, nine monasteries contributed Rs. 5000 each. Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choeden la donated 1 Lakh and Gen Guru la, Director of Pematsal raised around Rs. 75 thousand by organizing a culture show during the Losar as seed money for RDTs. Last year, we organized a concert in collaboration with RTYC with the hope of raising funds, as well as engaging with Doeguling's younger generation. The concert was well received by the younger generation. However, the endeavor was one that produced a deficit. In short, though efforts have been made to raise funds, they have generally not produced a desirable outcome.

RDTs has led rainwater harvesting initiatives and health initiatives. It collaborated with Gajang Medical Society to tackle hepatitis and anemia within the settlement. People acknowledge what RDTs has done for the Doeguling Community, directly or indirectly. Presently, we are working on roadside drainage to improve and widen the main road.

RDTs is a novel initiative within the Tibetan Community geared towards maintaining culture, preserving knowledge, and improving the quality of life. Sustaining this vibrant settlement aligns with fulfilling His Holiness' wishes for Tibetans.

WATER COMMITTEE UPDATE

BY TENZIN THAKPO, CHAIR OF RDTS WATER COMMITTEE

COVID-19 continues to be a major theme across nations, and public health is of paramount importance. At RDTS, water advocacy continues to be an area of focus - we are adapting our work to the extraordinary circumstances. Many of us will be spending more time at home due to the pandemic. It is vital that we follow hand washing guidelines, wear masks, and adhere to other measures recommended by Public Health Agencies. Various ways to save water in your daily life are as below:

- Take shorter showers, or use a bucket to take a bath
- Ensure the tap is off when brushing
- Turn off the shower when soaping
- Use half flush whenever possible
- Use the washing machine & dish washer when fully loaded
- Check for leaks and fix them as soon as possible
- Make sure that the tap is not dripping after you finish using it

WATER IS LIFE

According to H.H. Mitchell, water is a critical component of our body. The table below demonstrates how important water really is.

Body Part	% of water
Lungs	83
Muscles and Kidneys	79
Brain and Heart	73
Skin	64
Bones	31

Each day humans must consume a certain amount of water to survive. Of course, this varies according to age and gender. Generally, an adult male needs about 3 liters per day, while an adult female needs about 2.2 liters per day.

However, all of the water a person needs does not have to come from drinking liquids, as food contains some of this water.

The global population is growing and weather patterns are changing. Water scarcity is being felt globally. This can be attributed to natural and human-influenced triggers such as deforestation, soil erosion, and a host of other problems.

According to the UN, access to clean drinking water and sanitation is regarded as the core of sustainable development. More than half of the global population, mostly in economically stressed areas (i.e., South Asia, Africa and other developing parts of the world), still lack access to clean water for drinking and proper sanitation.

SOME STARTLING GLOBAL STATISTICS

- 2.2 billion people lack access to safe drinking water (WHO/UNICEF 2019)
- Over half of the global population (4.2 billion people) lack safe sanitation services (WHO/UNICEF 2019)
- 297,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases due to poor sanitation, poor hygiene, or unsafe

drinking water (WHO/UNICEF 2019)

- 2 billion people live in countries experiencing high water stress (UN 2019)
- 90 per cent of natural disasters are weather-related, including floods and droughts (UNISDR)
- 80 per cent of wastewater flows back into the ecosystem without being treated or reused (UNESCO, 2017)
- Around two-thirds of the world's trans-boundary rivers do not have a cooperative management framework (SIWI)
- Agriculture accounts for 70 per cent of global water withdrawal (FAO)

INDIA'S WATER CRISIS

According to the NITI Aayog report, India's water crisis is direr than imagined and facing its worst water crisis in history.

- 600 million people are dealing with high to extreme water shortage
- An average of 200,000 Indian lives are lost every year due to inadequate supply or contamination of water
- About 75% of households do not have drinking water at home; 84% rural households do not have piped water access
- 70% of India's water is contaminated, with the country currently ranked 120 among 122 in the water quality index
- By 2030, the country's water demand is projected to be twice the available supply
- Droughts and Floods becoming more frequent, creating severe problems; approximately 53% of agriculture in India is rainfed
- Inter-State disputes over water have been increasing, with 7 major disputes currently on the table

WATER CRISIS IN KARNATAKA (DROUGHTS & FLOODS)

- The condition of underground water in 76 taluks of the State is recognised as critical
- As many as 1,900 villages in about 30 districts in Karnataka are facing drought-like conditions
- According to data from the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, 138 of the 176 taluks in the state have very low groundwater levels
- Karnataka lags rural areas in terms of the percentage of population with safe and adequate drinking water; the number for the state is 48.72%, compared to the national percentage of 71.80%.
- Karnataka Vision 2025 has identified it as a top 10 priority area



WATER CONDITIONS IN DOEGULING

Doeguling doesn't have dams or reservoirs, and depends only on ground water for drinking, cleaning and domestic use.

Each camps and monasteries have an average of 5 to 10 borewells, in addition to tower tanks to supply pipe-water in each home.

Over the last decade, many borewells have dried up due to excessive digging of new borewells. If this continues, it will exacerbate the threat to the community, and jeopardize the welfare of future generations. Every year due to unpredictable weather, residents of Doeguling and neighbouring Indian villages face acute water shortage during the summer.

In the last 15 years, Maharashtra has been the only State in India that scrapped a farmer-friendly scheme (free borewell & electricity to farmers) within a year of introducing it. Karnataka, however, has been implementing it since 2008. The number of irrigation pumpsets, which was around 17 lakh 12 years ago, is now around 30 lakh. It is high time to discontinue the much abused scheme and install meters to check usage.

Clean water in India is mostly sourced from groundwater (100% in Doeguling), with more than 75% of the country's domestic water sector and 80% of irrigation being reliant on groundwater. It is well known by now that a large part of India is living beyond its available, usable water resources. "Half of India is water-stressed. The need is to start a jan andolan (mass movement) so that we can conserve water for future

generations. At present, we are only being able to save 8% of the rainwater; this percentage needs to go up," said Gajendra Shekhawat, Union minister for Jal Shakti.

"Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." This is a very popular phrase. Although there is water all around us, in oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, etc., most of it is not drinkable. The oceans cover up more than 70 percent of the Earth's entire surface, which is why it is very easy to raise the question – why do we say that there is a shortage of water? It is because ocean water is salty and is not safe for consumption and irrigation.

Desalination, removing salt from sea (saline) water is the most expensive, energy intensive and environments unfriendly compare to other process like recycling waste water, yet few specially rich countries like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, most of the middle east region and southern parts of India rely heavily on RO (Reverse Osmosis) technology to provide safe and potable water for its people.

For example:

- Cost to build The Ras Al Khair desalination plant in Saudi Arabia is more than \$7bn.
- Minjur Desalination Plant in Chennai, cost: 5.15 billion (€91 million).

HOW MUCH WATER IS ON EARTH?

- 71 percent of the Earth's surface is covered with water
- Oceans hold 97 percent of Earth's water
- Water also exists in the air as water vapour
- 1% of fresh water is available to us via soil moisture and through aquifers (this includes underground water)

HOW WILL IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF I SAVE WATER?

You may think that saving water will not make a difference, because you are just one person. However, when a lot of individuals come together to do something, in this case, save water, it makes a big difference. You become part of a bigger movement to save water, and that's why it makes a difference.

ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

Over the last five years we have constructed 12 rain water harvesting units in Doeguling including 2 in neighbouring Indian villages and provided consulting services to farmers and institutions like Emory Science, Jangchup Choeling Nunnery, Gaden Lhopa Khangtsen etc.



This initiative has benefited over 5500 residents directly and 2000 residents indirectly and save approx over 4 million litres of water annually.

Last year we initiate project of rebuilding a check dam at Camp 4 which was damaged heavily due to unprecedented rainfall previous year.

This dam was built during Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche's time (1999-2001) with the goal of recharging groundwater reserves and increasing the availability of water for agricultural purposes. It benefited people in the settlement, nearby farmers, animals, aquatic and plant species.

This was made possible by inspired RDTS leadership, as well as the participation of local residents.

It is designed to cope with the flow of stormwater and is constructed to a height of 11 ft and length of 60 ft, and has a storage capacity of approximately 0.10Mcf. Given its dimensions, it stores a high volume of rainwater.

Water that is stopped by this structure helps recharge groundwater and replenish the water table well downstream and nearby.

Fields near the dam have witnessed better moisture which also improved fertility of soil hence providing greater sustenance to vegetation.

More and more youth are interested in exploring farming and benefiting from agricultural loans from the Settlement and Co-operative Society. They now spend more time in fields.

Farmers nearby have intensified their cropping patterns from a single crop to double crop, adding an additional season of labour by drilling borewell and leveraging the scheme of free electricity in fields.



PROJECT IN HAND

We are happy to inform you that our Partner (The Tibet Fund) has offered grant of \$12,000 towards our proposal (innovative borewell recharge) to scale the project to Camps 1, 2 and 3.

We have also received a commitment from Mr. Mayur Saigal, friend of Tsewang la based in Singapore, to construct one unit in a neighbouring Indian village, to accomplish this we are in the process of performing a site survey and meeting with local officials. In our last meeting with local officials, we found that they were very interested in what we had to share.

In these testing times, let us stand together and do our best to spread the word. It is in times of stress that true resolve shines through. Let us be that bright light and emerge winners against both —the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the water crisis.

Let us do what is right and preserve water.

The global population is growing and weather patterns are changing. Water scarcity is being felt globally.

You may think that saving water will not make a difference, because you are just one person. However, when a lot of individuals come together to do something, you become part of a bigger movement, and that's why it makes a difference.

DOEGULING: AN UNEXPLORED LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES

By Amruth Joshi, National Co-Convenor, Core Group For Tibetan Cause India, Tourism & Media



Tourism Orientation Program organised for Doeguling people by Sh. Amruth Joshi at Ajjimane Home stay near Sirsi

It was late noon of the day of Deepavali (Indian festival of light) in 2003; I accompanied one of my mentors who was visiting Doeguling to launch Bharat Tibet Sahayog Manch (Indian support groups for Tibet) activities in Karnataka. My accompanying him during that visit was totally unscheduled and sudden. That was my first visit to Doeguling. I didn't anticipate that in the near future I would be an ardent activist of the Tibetan cause.

Since then, Doeguling has been my inspiration, motivation and healer. It has become a part of my life. Though I am based in Hubli, I seek opportunities to visit Doeguling as often as I can for the simple reason of meeting the compassionate community of people who have always been part and parcel of India's spiritual and cultural legacy.

Doeguling has been an unexplored land of opportunities. As an outsider, I see a different Doeguling and understand the community from different angles during every visit. My total visits to Doeguling now number over a hundred in the last decade and half. From my childhood understanding of Tibetans as 'Sweater Sellers' to a relatively matured understanding of Tibetan as 'Refugees' to my greater understanding of the community as my own spiritual and cultural brother,

Doeguling has widened my vision and thought process.

The spiritual legacy inhabited by the monastic community who have made Doeguling their seat of learning and teaching have put the community on the global map of Mahayana studies.

The great architecture of the monastic institutions in the Himalayas were re-established in South India. At the same time some well-known luminaries of the western world, like Ratoe Monastery abbot Ven. Nicholas Vreeland, have redesigned Doeguling through the perfect blend of Creativity and Spirituality.

In Doeguling we find the best example of National Integration for India. Students from the northernmost Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh state to the easternmost Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim state study here under one teacher, keeping the great Nalanda traditions alive in the 21st century. That boosts my Nation's Oneness.

The youthful veterans of the Special Frontier Force spending their retired yet not tired life here at Doeguling fill me with much needed enthusiasm. The stories of the valour and sacrifice for India and the war memorial at Doeguling make my visit to Doeguling a pilgrimage.

The Doeguling camp 3 marketplace has been my favourite

hangout. Sipping the large mug of lemon tea and chit chatting with my Tibetan friends, I never know how time flies. A visit to Karma's local handicraft shop for souvenirs to the old granny's shop for a few ceramic items and finally to Happiness Restaurant for some good Tibetan vegetarian foods -- this ends the visit to 'Little Tibet.'

The Doeguling Old People's Home is a place where we can see the 'Bodhi Dharma' being practised in the true sense. The social bonding of the community and service towards them by the community as whole is an eye-opener in the present materialistic and individualistic world.

A few words must be said about the NGOs of Doeguling. The members of every NGO are highly spirited and committed towards the goals of the organisation. The self discipline and coordination during big events is a case study for management students.

With such abundance of resources, Doeguling faces the issue of brain drain and demographic migration. This can be seen in many communities in many parts of the world. It is one of the dangers of globalisation. But, as a refugee community, Tibetans have to be connected to their roots to achieve the ultimate goal of a 'Free Tibet.' Doeg-

uling provides an opportunity for keeping oneself connected to one's roots. The only thing needed is to create opportunities for economic activity for the younger generation.

In this regard, Reimagining Doeguling is a good initiative. Other than agriculture, new concepts of floriculture and horticulture can be explored as economic activity. Animal husbandry with value added dairy products can also be considered. The tourism and hospitality sector has a huge opportunity to be explored, planned and executed. Arts and Crafts can also be a good economic activity with a huge market across India and overseas. The new age Digital technology gives us the much needed leverage to try for a huge leap.

COVID-19 has given us an opportunity in disguise. Now it's time to Reimagine, Revisit, Rejuvenate, Refresh and Restart. Reimagining Doeguling is a project nicely and perfectly designed for the cause.

THE POTENTIAL OF WOMEN

BY RINCHEN DOLMA, TEACHER AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF DOEGULING TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION



Madam Rinchen Dolma addressing during Tibetan Women's Uprising Day on 12th March 1987 at Ranichanama Circle, Hubli, Karnataka

Swami Viveknanda rightly said, "If you educate a man you educate an individual; if you educate a woman you educate a family."

Women, if given equal opportunity, can reach their potential to play important roles for the sustainable development of a family, society and country at large.

My name is Rinchen Dolma. I was born at Ngari Kurang in western Tibet, and raised in Doeguling, a beautiful and peaceful place in the Karnataka State of south India. I belong to Doeguling Camp 6 and enjoy living here.

I have contributed in various capacities to the Tibetan community. I served as a teacher for over 30 years, from 1977 to 2013. Being a teacher in Central Schools for Tibetans, I had an opportunity to teach many students in different schools. Since I was teaching for the primary section, I had to teach every subject - Tibetan language, English language, Social Science, Science, Mathematics, and Hindi. In addition to teaching, I would lead different programs and activities aimed at the overall development of the students.

Guide & Scout Captain is one of the programs we used to have in the school. The program started in the year 2000 and involves giving social services. This program consists of various initiatives such as cleaning the school campus, raising donations for needy people, and engaging with people at the Old People Home. Engagement with elderly people educates students and increases their understanding of the life

and condition of the elderly.

Pooling of used clothes, household wares and hand bags from the Doeguling community and distributing it to the needy schools in neighboring villages is one of the initiatives we used to undertake under the Guide & Scout Captain program.

I am so proud to say that I carried out my duties and responsibilities with utmost sincerity and abilities, much to the satisfaction of all concerned.

I was privileged to receive two distinguished service awards. I was honored with the Central Tibetan Schools Administration Incentive Award for teachers in May 2003 at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, Delhi, in the presence of Honorable Kalon, Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration.

Another honor I received was India's prestigious 2008 National Award to Teachers. It was conferred by Dr. M.H. Ansari, the then-Honorable Vice-President of India at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on Teacher's Day, the 5th of September, 2009 in presence of the Honorable Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

I was elected as the President of Doeguling Tibetan Women's Association from 1987 to 1989. After my retirement from school, I continued to serve in Doeguling. In 2014, I was elected as a member of board of directors of the Doeguling Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society Ltd and I served as a board member until

2019.

As an ex-officio member of Re-imagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement, I had the opportunity to attend several meetings of RDTs, where I actively participated and expressed my views and action plans for the development of our community.

When I look back, I really feel proud of myself for having contributed something to the community in whatever way I could, and still continue to do so.

I wish to appeal to all women to display determination, courage, passion and interest to serve the community. More programs should be initiated and support extended within the community so that women can take greater participation and leadership in community development. The education of women is no doubt a most effective way to empower women.

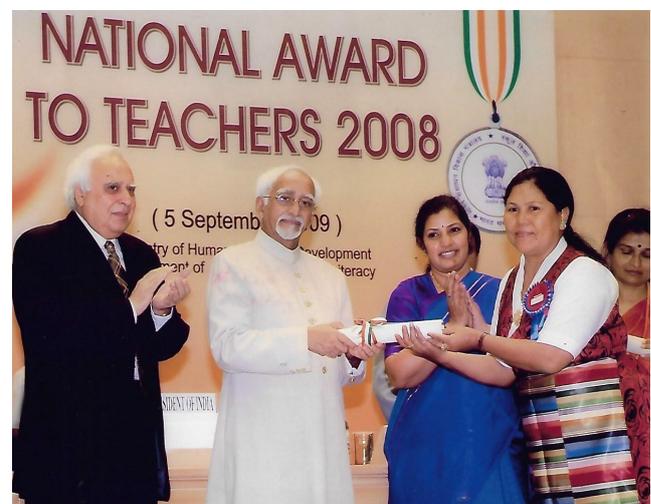
I will always remain indebted

in gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Central Tibetan Administration, Government of India, my beloved teachers and parents for their blessings, guidance and support.

I appreciate RDTs for the opportunity to share my story. I wish to express thanks to RDTs esteemed Advisory Board members, General Body members, and Managing Committee members for sparing their valuable time and contributing their resources towards revitalization of Doeguling Tibetan Settlement.

The annual magazines which RDTs publishes are very helpful in creating awareness about RDTs's activities, initiated in Doeguling and neighboring villages. The projects that RDTs has executed in Indian villages will go a long way toward strengthening love and friendship between the Tibetan and local communities.

The education of women is no doubt a most effective way to empower women.



Madam Rinchen Dolma receiving India's prestigious 2008 National Award to Teachers from the then Sh. Dr. M.H. Ansari, Honorable Vice-President of India at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 5th September 2009 in presence of Sh. Kabil Sibal, the Honourable Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

LEADING THE PANDEMIC RELIEF EFFORTS

BY TENZIN CHOEDON, HEAD NURSE OF DOEGULING TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT

My name is Tenzin Choedon. I was born in Tibet. When I was around 9, I left my home in Tibet for India. By the grace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the generosity of many individuals, I received the opportunity to study in India.

In India, I joined Tibetan Children's Village Upper Dharamsala, popularly known as Upper TCV, for my secondary education. Thereafter, I pursued a nursing course at AJ hospital in Mangalore, Karnataka.

As a young Tibetan girl growing up in exile, I had a strong desire to contribute and serve the Tibetan community to bring about a positive impact within the community. After the completion of my nursing studies in 2008, I joined The Doeguling Tibetan Resettlement Hospital (DTR) as a staff nurse. DTR is a unit of the Department of Health (DOH) within the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). I am now in my thirteenth year serving DTR, and I currently serve as the head nurse, working alongside a dedicated team of nurses and other staff members. During my tenure with DTR, I have not only continued to improve my nursing and managerial skills, but also consistently practiced empathy.

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges and continues to test the mettle of the DTR team in controlling the menace of this disease in the community.

In the middle of March 2020, COVID-19 cases initially spiked at an alarming rate in India, forcing the authorities to lockdown the nation. We at Doeguling under the direction of the Department of Health, CTA, hurriedly started our active screening process within the community. Medical

staff of DTR, monastery health centres and other volunteers carried out door-to-door visits within all the 10 camps and the monasteries to check for any cases of fever. This active screening process was carried on for three months until mid-June, when the first COVID-19 positive case surfaced in Doeguling. At that point we switched to passive screening in which we specifically focused on the vulnerable groups within the community such as elderly people above 60 years of age and those with comorbidities. For those coming from outside Doeguling, we had established quarantine centres, where each of them was kept in isolation for 14 days after undergoing RT-PCR test at Mundgod Taluk hospital. During this period, the quarantined people were regularly checked upon for any symptoms of the disease.

Initially, the first few COVID positive patients from Doeguling were treated at the Karwar District hospital and Mundgod Taluk hospital. Thereafter, starting from mid-June, all the COVID positive patients were looked after in various health centres in Doeguling itself.

The entire DTR medical team have not only carried out their respective duties with the utmost sincerity, but also have cooperated with each other and coordinated well with other non-clinical members of the COVID prevention task force. At DTR, we have been fortunate enough to have supportive individuals in the form of camp leaders, monastery administrators and health personnel, and individual volunteers who extended much-needed help without hesitation.

However, when the COVID-positive cases reached their

As a young Tibetan girl growing up in exile, I had a strong desire to contribute and serve the Tibetan community to bring about a positive impact within the community.



peak in Doeguling, some of our medical staff and volunteers also became infected with the virus. During that time, we faced an acute shortage of manpower; therefore, those of us who didn't get the infection had to work day in and day out. Even in that condition, being physically and mentally exhausted, these healthcare workers never failed to show up and perform their duty to the best of their abilities and worked collaboratively with various administrative teams and other health centres within the community. We have been, so far, successful in mitigating the effects of this viral disease.

On behalf of all the residents of Doeguling Settlement and DTR, I would like to thank DOH CTA, Dis-



Tenzin Choedon conducting rapid antigen test with her colleagues in Doeguling.

trict and Taluk administrations, and all our other supporters and well-wishers from across the world who come together to help and protect our community from the dire effects of the pandemic.

As the head nurse, my responsibilities during this pandemic includes accompanying the doctor to monitor COVID-19 positive patients in quarantine centres, conducting rapid antigen tests in monasteries and in the hospital, maintaining the COVID database (DHIS2), and preparing weekly quarantine reports to DOH, CTA. As of 4th March 2021, I have conducted 9,016 individual 'Rapid Antigen Tests' at the hospital and monasteries. And this work continues.

There is still a lack of awareness among the general public on COVID, its testing, and vaccination processes despite our awareness campaign. We still need to work more on educating community members so they will make more informed decisions

and take precautionary measures.

As the wife of a wonderful husband and mother of a beautiful son and a daughter, my personal life is blessed with my own good share of happiness and health. Apart from my job as a nurse, I also engage in agriculture by planting commercial crops on a small plot of land near Camp 8. Taking care of the plants on the field and seeing them grow and yield fruit is a very rewarding experience. We grow mangoes, coconuts, bananas, cashews, areca nuts, lemons and other produce. Doeguling and its surrounding villages receive plenty of rainfall during monsoon months, but remain predominantly dry during the rest of the year. With no perennial river or large lake nearby, we have to depend solely on underground water to sustain our agriculture. The ground water rejuvenation through rainwater harvesting system is the only viable solution for the sustainable



Above: DTR staff members

development of our agricultural community in Doeguling. As such, I highly appreciate Reimagining Doeguling for their initiatives in installing rainwater harvesting systems in the settlement and in neighbouring Indian villages.

Reimagining Doeguling's health and water initiatives are really commendable. Water initiatives need to be scaled up. The replication of water effort is possible with more financial assistance. I wish to convey best wishes for Reimagining Doeguling's team.

MY PATH TO BECOMING A GESHEMA

BY ANI LOBSANG PELMO, NUN AND REPRESENTATIVE OF JANGCHUB CHOELING NUNNERY

Today, I strongly believe that the key to empowering nuns like myself starts with education.

Like many children growing up in rural Tibet, I did not have the opportunity to go to school. For much of my childhood, I had to work in a factory or in large-scale weaving to help support my family and me.

However, my life changed forever when I happened upon a monk in Lhasa. I had never met someone who was so kind, so disciplined, someone who so perfectly modeled the teachings of the Buddha. He challenged me to think about the bigger questions in life: questions about suffering and its origins and about the expansive potential of a human being. Questions I had never

thought of before.

As I contemplated these questions, I began to wonder: What is the purpose of this human life and how I could make or live the most of it?" I thought of Michael Jackson's song, "Man in the Mirror," and that if I wanted to make this world a better place, I would have to start with myself. It wasn't long before I felt the strong call to be ordained and to become a nun.

Though outnumbered by monks, Tibetan nuns have always been significant in the religious fabric of Tibetan society. Situated throughout Tibet, their nunneries were the centers of spiritual advancement for Buddhist women for many centuries. Unfortunately, they were almost

all destroyed during the Chinese invasion.

Accepting the fact that I wouldn't be able to pursue the path of nunhood in Tibet, in October 2001, I braved the journey with twelve fellow Tibetans to India. It was an arduous journey that took months, traversing mountains on foot, enduring freezing temperatures, while avoiding capture by Chinese soldiers. There were times when we almost lost hope. Whenever those moments arose, I reminded myself why I had embarked on this journey - to alleviate the suffering of the world. By the time we arrived in Dharamshala, we were relieved to receive blessings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other high lamas.

Within months of my arrival, I finally realised my dream of becoming a nun when I enrolled in the Dolmaling Nunnery in Dharamshala and studied there for four years. Then in 2007, I had the opportunity to pursue studies in Buddhist philosophy at Jangchub Choeling Nunnery.

Located in Doeguling, Jangchub Choeling Nunnery was founded in 1987 under the auspices of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a place for nuns to pursue the study of Buddhist scriptures of the Nalanda tradition. At that time, His Holiness' Representative, Mr. Gyaltzen Choden and the Regional Tibetan Womens' Association, led by Tsundue Sangmo, helped implement His Holiness' vision. Gyaltzen Cho-

den la's teacher and friend, Denma Loche Rimpoche, introduced Venerable Thupten Lhatso la to help serve as the senior most teacher.

The path to become a Geshe-ma, the PhD equivalent in Buddhist studies, would take seventeen more years.

My work with Reimagining Doeguling (RDTS) started because I was nominated by the nuns and then elected as the representative of the nunnery on the RDTS Managing Committee. At first, I didn't feel far enough along in my monastic studies to serve outside the nunnery, but I learned so much from the members of RDTS and began to understand the vision and see the dedication of RDTS members. It really strengthened my commit-

ment and interest to realize the vision. An opportunity to study in the United States naturally ended my formal service with RDTS, but I continue to provide support wherever possible.

I had the good fortune to go to Emory University because his Holiness had collaborated with them to create what is called a Tenzin Gyatso Science Scholarship, to advance the wellbeing of our world through dialogue between Buddhism and modern science.

I began to understand the importance His Holiness placed on monastics learning science in the modern world. There are many reasons why. In order to fulfill a monastic's duty as a teacher, one must understand a student's way of thinking in order to clearly

communicate. So, if sixty percent of the world population's way is designed by modern science, then science is deeply important. In most of the western world, education and understanding the world from kindergarten on, is structured by science: from understanding math and the solar system to how a pulley works. HHDL also highlights another reason for monastics to study science: the deep resonance in both Buddhism and science to investigate the mind and the fabric of reality.

During my studies in the US, I had the opportunity to explore what it really meant for a monastic to study science. With gratitude, I took what I learned and witnessed at Emory and folded it into my studies, my transla-

tion work and my work as a nun teaching English and science.

Spending years in the US learning science and English helped me to better understand the larger world and thus gave me the courage to see how important it is to study Buddhism, live its teachings and share it with the world. Because of that, I was so happy to return to the nunnery to pursue my study of Nalanda traditions, of Buddhist philosophy and to finish learning all the major texts.

ABOUT JANGCHUB CHOELING NUNNERY

Jangchub Choeling Nunnery is one of the few places in the world where women can pursue the highly prestigious Geshema degree.

The Geshema degree is comparable to a doctorate in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. Geshe (monks who hold the degree) and Geshemas (nuns who hold the degree) are the most educated monastics, carrying much

of the responsibility for preserving the Nalanda Tradition - the ancient philosophies and methods developed by Indian scholars that aim to cultivate wisdom and compassion.

The Geshema exam process is very rigorous and is the culmination of a 17-year course of study. Each year, for four years, the candidates must take both written and

oral (debate) exams for an 11-day period. Until recently, the degree was only open to men. The opening up of this opportunity for nuns would not have been possible without the support of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Today, we have 18 nuns who have successfully passed the Geshema examination. The kindness of His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the

sponsors help this nunnery's education and organization flourish day by day.

Starting with 18 nuns in 1987, Jangchub Choeling Nunnery has grown to over 250 nuns hailing from Tibet, Ladakh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Spiti. The Jangchub Choeling Nunnery aims to be an educational hub for Buddhist nuns all over the world.

REMINISCENCE

BY THARLAM DOLMA
CHANGRA PRINCIPAL
(RTD.)



We, as teachers, should focus on the strengths of students, not on their weaknesses. Recognizing strengths and honing them will help students expand and evolve their talents.

I would like to convey my deep appreciation to members of Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement (RDTS) for their far-sighted development vision for Mundgod. Focusing on key issues such as health, water, tourism, and marketplace redesign will go a long way in sustaining the settlement. It will also help realize the vision of the Resettlement Project of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, which is to keep all Tibetans in exile in settlement by facilitating a "Home Away from Home," not only to enable Tibetan settlers to earn their livelihood, but also to preserve their rich culture and tradition.

After serving in Bylakuppe for almost nine years from 1994 to 2003, Late Dr. Verma, Director, CTSA, felt that my service was more required at CST Mundgod. Prior to my posting, I had had the privilege to visit Mundgod thrice - to investigate a case, to act as Centre Superintendent of Common Exam and to hold additional Administrative Charge of CST Mundgod. I formally took charge of the school on 16th August, 2003. It happens to be the biggest Senior Secondary school with over a thousand students and eighty staff members. There were five streams; Science, Commerce, Financial Marketing and Management, Humanity and Vocational. Despite its size and scale, I found that the school in-

frastructure - school building, hostel, playground and campus - were neither sufficient nor good enough for a Senior Secondary school.

During my tenure at CST Mundgod for five years (from 16th August 2003 to 14th August 2005 and from 16th August 2010 to 31st August 2013) until my retirement from CTSA on 31st August 2013, I managed to build school buildings, a hostel for boys and girls, a compound wall with grill, a playground and a footpath, and developed the campus and renovated the Open Assembly Hall. This was accomplished by funding through CTSA, New Delhi, Govt. of India, and help from other sources. I'd like to extend gratitude to Kasur Jetsun Pema la for providing necessary financial support to renovate the Open Assembly Hall. This Hall hosted the morning assembly, extracurricular activities, school functions, prayers, midday meals, as well self-study sessions after school.

I offer my deepest appreciation to His Eminence Kelsang Thupten Rinpoche, Gaden Shartse Monastery, for sponsoring the construction of a three story building for the Girls Hostel with all the required facilities, including a prayer hall on the top floor.

Due to concerted efforts made by Mr. Palden, Headmaster, Sakya Khen Rinpoche bestowed help in collaboration with German aid to construct a school building for the Primary Branch. I wish to record my special thanks for their kind help. I would also like to acknowledge the kind help of Gaden Jangtse Monastery for providing a certain portion of land for the construction of a Primary school building. The remarkable guidance and strong support of Local Advisory Committee Chairman, Shri Noor Mansur, Asst. Commissioner deserves deep gratitude.

We were very fortunate to receive the blessing of His Em-

inence Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, His Eminence Kundeling Tsetsal Choktul Rinpoche and abbots of the monasteries in Doeguling Settlement for school.

It was great to find students ever-ready to follow the school's direction, office staff and teachers willing to do their best with little push, and implicit faith bestowed on me by parents. What more was needed for any school head to translate the 'Vision into Concrete Form.' I firmly believed that, if we really wanted to have productive and creative learners, it was our duty to foster an environment 'where learners love learning and teachers enjoy teaching.' Unless both teachers and students are in a 'Happy Healthy Environment', 'Teaching-Learning' cannot take place. Hence, creating a 'teaching-learning culture' is a must. As the Principal, I tried my utmost to provide the environment, as best as it could be done.

School functions were celebrated in a befitting way. Celebration of Teachers Day and Children's Day were two other important occasions at school, to which staff and students looked forward. Students were given a free hand in conducting Teachers' Day, from the decoration, speeches, cultural programs, hosting lunch, etc. All these activities provided students a great platform to implement their ideas and hone their organizational skills.

Likewise, teachers spent more than a week practicing to entertain students, apart from hosting refreshments and serving lunch to students. The time devoted to practicing provided ample opportunity to staff, Rector and Principal to mingle freely. Students were enthralled on seeing their teachers singing and dancing on the stage to entertain them. I still visualize the loud laugh and applause of students, when

we entered the stage to perform. Outwardly, it may look like any other school function, but does wonders in forging a memorable bond between students and teachers.

The Executive Members of Parents Association of Doeguling Settlement, Mundgod deserves special appreciation for their dedicated services which they rendered wholeheartedly for the welfare of the children and their engagement in every aspect of school activity. Interaction with parents during parent-teacher meetings provided a great platform for teachers and parents to air their thoughts for laying strategies for the development of school. I can vividly recall the first request of parents, which was to bring back the CBSE Examination Centre from Hubli. Thanks to the faith of the CBSE Regional officer in me, the Centre was re-fixed to Mundgod in the same year.

I wish to cherish the memory of Doeguling settlement residents who provided full cooperation to every school activity including the South Zone & Central Meet of Literary and Cultural Meet of schools of Central Tibetan Schools Administration, New Delhi organized by school on many occasions. The performance of the school in academia, extra-curricular activities and overall discipline was appreciable. Our school Football team was the CBSE Sports Meet champion for several years, wherein more than 50 Affiliated Indian schools participated. This achievement reveals that Tibetan students can excel in any field if they wish to. Master Lobsang Jimpa was the winner of CBSE ChaCha Nehru Award in Football tournament in 2011 and Master Karma Lhekden was highest scorer in CBSE Cluster VII Football Tournament in 2011.

One unpleasant memory at Doeguling was an undesirable incident between settlement youth and hostel boys, which saddened me very deeply. I was told that such incidences had occurred in

the past. I could recall appealing to parents that it was a moral obligation of settlers to take care of students residing in the hostel. It was a bad memory. However, this incident did not erase the very close and emotional attachment I had with Doeguling residents.

We, as teachers, should focus on the strengths of students, not on their weaknesses. Recognizing strengths and honing them will help students expand and evolve their talents. Every child has potential for greatness; it varies only in degree. Teachers need to be generous in expressing genuine appreciation to children to make a real impact. A great teacher identifies talent and nurtures it. Teachers also need to identify the aptitude and interest of those students who are not academically strong, and accordingly guide them to various vocational courses. School counselors can play an important role in this area. C Raju Gopalchari, a prominent educationist said, "Our future lies in making our youngsters good citizens, by giving them from early days an education which is likely to create good conduct, righteousness and mutual love."

Parenting is not an easy task. Parents ought to provide opportunities to their children to develop and connect with family. I have come across a good number of parents taking their role very lightly. Those parents shell out money to their children in an effort to compensate for their guilt of being absent from their children. Unfortunately, children of such parents in certain cases fall victim to undesirable habits.

I do not agree with the notion that uneducated parents are incapable of guiding and bringing up their children properly. I have come across many children of illiterate parents who not only shone in academia, but also grew up to be admirable and responsible people.

I, therefore, wish to emphasize that our primary duty as parents is to become builders of human trust. Trust forms the corner-

stone of every great family culture. The greatest gift to a child is the gift of a good example, a good education and human values. The healthy home environment and values the parents instill in children make a world of difference in shaping their character and thoughts.

We need to guide and motivate youth to follow the footsteps of great personalities, who achieved greatness through sacrifice, hard work and with honesty. Youth must be discouraged from being carried away by self-glorification and an inflated ego.

I would like to suggest RDTS initiate programs to ensure the youth don't indulge in harmful and anti-social activities by falling victim to drugs and alcohol. Such initiatives help change the direction of youth's mental and physical energy towards more positive and productive activities. This initiative will be of immense help.

We have indeed made tremendous progress in the field of education. We have produced engineers, scientists, technicians, doctors, teachers, nurses, lawyers, administrators, and many other professionals. They have not just worked within Tibetan communities, but also in many reputable organizations all over the world. This is in large part to the grace and far sighted vision of His Holiness the Dalai lama and Govt. of India, as well as generous donors from the rest of the world.

Tibetan women have come a long way. However, there is still work to do. Even now we come across women who feel they cannot do what men can do. Women should be given and encouraged to take competitive opportunities. Investing in women builds the foundation for a strong society.

My most memorable moment was the visit of His Holiness The Dalai Lama to CST Mundgod on 12 December 2012. The school also had the golden opportunity to welcome His Eminence Karma Orgyen Thinley Dorjee,

His Eminence Trisur Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche and many other dignitaries.

I wish RDTS good luck in moulding Doeguling into a role model for other Tibetan settlements.

We have made tremendous progress in education. We have produced engineers, scientists, technicians, doctors, teachers, nurses, lawyers, administrators, and many other professionals.

MEMORIES OF A PHILANTHROPIST

BY KATHY WOOD

My commitment and involvement with Doeguling and the Tibetan community started long before I had heard the name Doeguling. Many years earlier, I had accompanied my husband on a business trip to India. While he was busy with meetings in Delhi, I travelled on my own to Dharamsala. While there, I was blessed to have an audience with His Holiness. During our conversation, he asked what my impressions had been from my visit in Dharamsala. I told him I had been quite impressed with what the nuns were doing. He immediately became very animated and proudly said to me "I have decided that the time has come to begin educating nuns to the same high level as the monks. I will be making the announcement soon."

Upon my return from Dharamsala, I kept my eyes and ears open for the announcement when one day, a mutual friend introduced us to Tsewang Namgyal, a chance meeting that further deepened my connection with the Tibetan community. Tsewang la stayed with us while doing an internship in Washington DC. During that time, I met Tsewang la's father. His father, whom we came to know as Pala, is arguably the oldest living associate of His Holiness. When the Dalai Lama fled Tibet for India, Pala stayed behind in order to avoid alerting the Chinese to the escape plans.

I was so inspired by Pala's story, including the key role he played in establishing Tibetan settlements in southern India, that I was keen to find a way to visit the settlements. An opportunity arose when Tsewang la invited my husband and me to join him on a trip to Doeguling to introduce us to the community where he had spent several years growing up. He explained that during this visit we would be able to attend a number of special events that the Dalai Lama



Kathy Wood & Gyaltzen Choden, New Jersey 2021

would also be attending, including a ceremony called Geshema.

At this ceremony, the Dalai Lama was going to be awarding the very first advanced degrees to nuns. Given my conversation with His Holiness so many years before, this naturally had a special meaning for me. When Tsewang la offered us the chance to see the first nuns receive the Geshema degree, I was very excited to see the culmination of the initiative His Holiness had started so many years before.

During the same visit to Doeguling, there was a major conference going on celebrating something called the Emory-Tibet Science Initiative. This was part of an effort launched by His Holiness to connect Western scientists, especially brain scientists, to Tibetan monks who were deeply versed in the study of the mind through contemplative practices. To help improve the ability of both sides to better understand the other, some Tibetans had been going to Emory University in Atlanta to study Western science. At the same time, some Western scientists had been coming to Doeguling to teach science and interact with Buddhist scholars.

In the past, all the Tibetans going to Emory had been monks. But it had been decided that the next year's group would, for the first time, include two nuns from

Doeguling. As it happened, one of these nuns was a representative of the Jangchub Choeling nunnery to advance the work of RDTS. Her name was Ani Choyang. When I met Ani Choyang during our visit, she was shy at first, but was proud to show me around the nunnery. While there, the nuns surrounded me with curiosity and loving kindness. I was intrigued and delighted. At one point in my youth, I had thought of becoming a nun myself. While that never happened, I still retain a special affection for those who have chosen that path.

When Ani Choyang arrived in Atlanta to begin her studies at Emory, my husband and I visited her there to see how she and the other nuns were settling in and to offer them moral support. Despite being in an environment that was completely new to them, the nuns quickly adapted and were endlessly curious to learn both science and other aspects of their new environment.

Ani Choyang wanted to travel, so we invited her to come and stay with us for a few days on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, where we live. While there, she relaxed and shared with us her passion to make the nunnery in Doeguling a center for education. On our subsequent visits to Doeguling, it has been wonderful to return to the nunnery and see the progress that is being made there. From a new debate center, new accommodations and many new programs, including an inspiring effort to deal with widespread anemia amongst the nuns, there is a bright future ahead!

Another moment that will stay with me as a reminder of the hopeful future, deep personal commitment, and loving kindness was shared over a simple lunch with a mother in Doeguling. This mother happened to be the mother of a young man

named Tenzin Thakpo, whom I first met at the monastery where we stayed during one of our visits. We have stayed in close touch since, and his enthusiasm for the project and willingness to use his free time to help his community inspired me to support him with these efforts. His remarkable accomplishments to build and expand the water harvesting project to Doeguling and the neighboring Indian villages have now been documented and justly acknowledged in the wonderful film, "Tibetan Harvest." It is through him that I met his mother, who kindly invited Joe and me to lunch at her home during our next visit to Doeguling. While shy to join the intense conversations that were going on over lunch, she reached out to me in a way I will never forget. Without words, her smiles and loving gaze communicated her gratitude and her pride in what her son had accomplished. As a mother myself, I am so proud of him, too.

These are moments that I treasure and will always be grateful for!

The nuns surrounded me with curiosity and loving kindness. At one point in my youth, I had thought of becoming a nun myself. While that never happened, I still retain a special affection for those who have chosen that path.

DOEGULING: A WISH-FULFILLING LAND

DR. KAVERI GILL, PRINCIPAL, THE DALAI LAMA INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, BANGALORE (ON DEPUTATION LEAVE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GOVERNANCE STUDIES, SHIV NADAR UNIVERSITY)



I did not want to leave this wish-fulfilling land, with its warren-like streets flanked by blooms of flowers, adorned by great monasteries, living masters, and dharma teachings in every direction. There is a sense of being surrounded by real practitioners of the wisdom of emptiness and bodhicitta that is hard to convey in words. Truly, there is nothing like it in the world today.

Recently whilst teaching us Arya Maitreya's *Ornament of Clear Realisation (Ngon Tog Gyen)* as a part of our fifth-year curriculum of the Nalanda Masters Course at Tibet House Delhi, Ven. Geshe Dorji Damdul described how the three jewels, kunchok, are akin to the wish-fulfilling gem in various ways. You venerate them and your aspirations are fulfilled. What, then, are the ways in which Doeguling Tibetan Settlement in Mundgod, Karnataka, lives up to its meaning of being a wish-fulfilling land—you visit it and thereafter you are changed?

Certainly, when a freshly exiled Tibetan community was first bequeathed this barren and parched land by the State of Karnataka in the 1960s, so different in climatic conditions to the high altitude of Tibet, it appeared to hold little possibility. Word has it that the monastics, while feeling grateful to their new home India, balked at the vista of dryland stretching endlessly into the distance, with nary an agricultural possibility and even snakes to be found. It is a testimony to their resilience, spirit and hard work that it is a totally transformed land that I got to visit in December of 2019 for the 600th anniversary celebrations of Je Rinpoche (Lama Tsongkhapa).

Although I knew the largest Tibetan monasteries were in Mundgod and Bylakuppe, nothing had prepared me for the magnificent first sighting of a lit-up Drepung Loseling, majestically rising high above the flat landscape and twinkling against the night sky, as we completed the

short drive from Hubli. In another time and place—more than 600 years ago, in 1416, in central Tibet—the disciple of Je Rinpoche, Jamyang Choje Tashi Palden, had founded the original Drepung “at the foot of Mount Gephel, around five miles west of Lhasa” (Jinpa 2019, p. 314), that would go on to become the largest monastery in the world with more than 10,000 monks.

Drepung Loseling's famous alumni include the late Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, Ven. Khunnu Lama Rinpoche, Ven. Rinzing Tenpa, Ven. Lobsang Gyatso, Ven. Namgyal Wangchen, Ven. Lharimpa, Ven. Bakula Rinpoche, and with us today, Ganden Thrissur Rizong Rinpoche, Ven. Samdhong Rinpoche, Ven. Palden Drakpa Rinpoche, and Ven. Geshe Yeshe Thabke. They witnessed crushing tragedy and destruction in the wake of 1959, with these great sites of learning literally razed to the ground. Yet, embodying the Nalanda Tradition and guided in this quest by the vision and the will of His Holiness, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama (henceforth, His Holiness), they manifested a new external location for its resurrection. China never could conquer Tibet, because they could never lay siege to its heart—the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. If one wants to understand and experience how places are sometimes people, meet His Holiness and the great teachers living in beguiling Doeguling!

Coming back to my visit, our taxi had entered a warren of streets, flanked by simple monastic housing (*khamtsens*) or

monasteries. A Tuscany landscape with the layout of a university town like Cambridge, United Kingdom—this is how I would describe Lama Camp 2, my home for nearly two weeks. And a palpable sense in the atmosphere of there being something very different about a space inhabited entirely by monastics observing ethical discipline.

A Tibetan dharma friend had offered to arrange a room for me in Gowu Khamtsen. This is how I found myself living with monastics (indeed, occupying the room vacated by one of them for me) and a few Tibetan guests. If karma is simply action, its ripening fruits in another life manifest in various ways, one of which is affinity and a feeling of closeness that cannot be explained. How else to accept the kindness of my monastic hosts, who literally looked after me like a mother, ensuring I eat properly, making endless tea, and asking me not to waste my money on even buying vegetables! Or to understand my comfort and feeling that I had arrived back home, when I cannot imagine living with unknown fellow Indians for such a length of time? Although my hosts spoke no English, and I speak no Tibetan, we communicated just fine—save for the long chats around the laden dining table, where I'd have to rely on the imperfect *lotsawa* services of one of the Tibetan guests to understand my hosts' responses to my endless dharma queries.

Awake at the crack of dawn on the first day of my visit, I went straight to circumambulate



Meeting with Ven Palden Drakpa Rinpoche.

Drepung Larchi, before walking down to Drepung Loseling and Drepung Gomang monasteries. The sheer scale and beauty of these replicas of the original monasteries is breathtaking. All the more so when one learns they were built from scratch by monastics, who were frugal to the extent of saving a single nail! The gentle winding roads were festooned with banners and greetings welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Mundgod, who was already in residence to give his annual teachings. His Holiness says he sees himself as a simple Buddhist monk, and he lives as one too, for in the following days, he would move every few days from monastery to monastery in Drepung and Ganden, so as to equally divide his stay amongst all.

On one of the first nights I was there, after dinner, I went to see the grand debate at Drepung Loseling. I was greeted by an unforgettable sight, a sea of monastics seated row after row, and on the steps leading to the monastery decorated with multi-coloured lights, sat on thrones, were the great teachers carefully watching on. The monks actually debating were shouting heatedly into microphones, for the benefit of an audience running into thousands, pacing up and down, and turning roundly upon the opponent with a triumphant "Tsa" or a "Khor Sum"! Any ignorant person who speaks in abstract, dispar-

aging terms of the emphasis on ritual in Tibetan Buddhism must really visit these great monasteries and spend time there to dispel these wrong-headed notions! Despite some of them being in their eighties, the masters stayed late into the night listening to the debates, while His Holiness was in residence in Drepung Gomang right across the road. The world seemed right.

Soon the teachings began and what an absolute embarrassment of riches they were! His Holiness transmitted Changkya Rolpai Dorje's *Recognising the Mother: A Song on the Experience of the Middle Way View* by way of inaugurating Drepung Gomang's new debate courtyard, with a magnificent Arya Manjushri looking on. In Drepung Loseling's debate courtyard, he gave the Je Rinpoche the long life blessing of Tshé Dzin Ma, even while saying the real longevity practices are that of bodhicitta and emptiness. After His Holiness finished, as was the tradition in Tibet, monastics filling the entire airplane hangar-sized space spontaneously threw *khatas* as offerings towards the stage, and these were passed on, forming an ever-increasing mound of white silk scarves at its base. At the amazing sight, I could not contain my tears! In the days that followed, His Holiness presided over an Aryadeva conference and debates in Drepung Loseling.

It was time to meet my own

teacher's teacher for the first time, the famed logician and philosopher Ven. Palden Drakpa Rinpoche. With not a little trepidation and sweating palms, accompanying the kind Gen la who was to translate for me, we were duly let into Rinpoche's rooms after lunchtime. A still, consuming presence of intelligence and kindness, who completely occupied the sparse room, greeted me. Both Gen la and I dived into a spontaneous prostration and settled down respectfully at his feet. "Questions please" - he seemed to transmit the thought into the silence. I falteringly put forth some queries Ven. Geshe Dorji Damdul had warned me to have ready, on emptiness. Immediately, the wizened old eyes lit up with immense joy and Rinpoche la launched into a detailed answer. The Gen la who was to be *lotsawa* humbly said he'd try his best to convey in English all that was said so rapidly. This went on for a full hour, and then it was time to reluctantly leave as a gaggle of young monastics flowed into the room for discussion with Rinpoche.

Before I left, feeling myself mentally lagging in comparison to Rinpoche's agile mind, Rinpoche leaned into an alcove behind his bed, pulled out a sheaf of papers in Tibetan, saying he'd just finished working on this and to give this to my teacher Ven. Geshe Damdul back in Delhi for him to translate and tell you what is in it. When I did that some weeks later, Ven. Geshe la respectfully laughed and said the thing with Ven. Drakpa Rinpoche's writing is each sentence requires one to have a knowledge of a few texts on one's fingertips, such is the depth and density of his understanding and exposition! I sighed and made the aspiration to have the merit to both access such teachings directly in Tibetan, as well as gain real understanding of them, in some future lifetime!

Meanwhile, His Holiness had moved on to Ganden Larchi, a few kilometres away. It was time for the inauguration of the con-

ference celebrating Je Rinpoche, with luminaries from across the world, the "who's who" of scholars of the tradition, set to participate. Humble as ever, His Holiness kicked off the proceedings by saying, as a fellow native of Amdo, whose house lay a day's ride away from that of Je Rinpoche, he has tried to uphold Je Rinpoche's aspiration - to assist in their flourishing where teachings exist, and to spread them where they have declined - and not let him down! He recounted that Je Rinpoche was never satisfied with so-called pith instructions, and despite having visions of deities from a young age, he emphasised the study of classic texts.

What followed in the next days of the brilliant conference was a bringing to life of the innumerable contributions and facets of the renowned scholar-yogi Je Rinpoche by the greatest experts on his life's works. Being a study centre following the wishes of His Holiness, the Director of Tibet House, Delhi, Ven. Geshe Damdul, expressly focuses on teaching the great treatises, and exactingly stays away from bias towards any single tradition. So as a student there for many years, I'd never really gotten the measure of this astounding figure of relatively recent history until this conference held in the holy precincts of the replica of the original Ganden monastery, founded by Je Rinpoche himself in 1409. It was a revelation!

Space does not permit me to recall in depth what was discussed in each panel, but to give some flavour, sessions covered Je Rinpoche's seminal contributions to Madhyamaka philosophy; to hermeneutics and the perfection of wisdom; to the theory and practice of meditation; to *lamrim*, *lojong*, and compassion training; and to tantra. In the middle fell the celebrations of Ganden Ngachoe, the actual day of the parinirvana anniversary of Je Rinpoche, wherein His Holiness recited the two prayers traditionally read on the day in front of

the Avalokitesvara statue in Jorkhang in Lhasa, *Shal Gangrima*, composed by the 2nd Dalai Lama and *Song of the Direct View*, composed by the 7th Dalai Lama. The audience was presented with a beautiful *pechha* of *Lekshay Nyingpo* and a *gau* amulet of Je Rinpoche. That evening, millions of candles were lit, as is the tradition, with a throng of people collectively chanting the Migtsema mantra, which went in cadence, and slowly circumambulating Kundun Zimchung, the current residence of His Holiness. By moonlight, I saw Ganden Trithok Khang and the Geluk International Foundation office.

Back in Gowu Khamtsen, I had settled into a routine of busy days. The lama camps and other camps in Doeguling are all easily traversed on foot or by scooter rickshaw, the drivers of the latter trying to charge extra from monastics or tourists in a rush to get to His Holiness's teachings. Beautiful monasteries of all traditions—Sakya, Nyingma, Kagyu, apart from Gelug—are to be found, as are Ladakhi and other monasteries of different regions. I visited the tiny Mangan monastery, which housed a very sacred personal Kadampa stupa of the great Jowo Je Palden Atisha. Another Tibetan guest achala from Switzerland and I braved a virtual stampede in Ganden Larchi to get *chagne* and blessings from Nechung oracle—successful in the former, not the latter! To see His Holiness with Nechung oracle in Ganden Jangtse a few days later, though, was unforgettable.

In the evenings, one could just meander for a *kora* in any of the numerous monasteries, casually bumping into great teachers such as the 90 years-plus Ven. Geshe Yeshe Thabke on his own rounds! Along with Tibetan monastics, one sees many non-Tibetan monastics from the Himalayan region and Mongolia, too, with their visiting relatives. I went to the humongous monastery kitchens, with cooking utensils large enough to accommodate a human being, and

was amused to learn that those monastics who do not study too well get assigned extra kitchen duty! And every night I fell asleep to the sounds of the very young monastic next door, who would position himself on a chair under the streetlight and loudly memorise texts late into the night, even as I was woken at the crack of dawn by his vigorous recitations. Guiltily, I tried to apply myself to my own pending revision of *Uma Jukpa* and *Gongpa Rabsell*!

As my time in Doeguling drew to a close, I felt great sadness. My monastic hosts gifted me an Arya Manjushri thangka, embarrassing me with the depth of their kindness. When I spontaneously went to get it blessed by Ven. Palden Drakpa Rinpoche, around 9am in the morning, he was sitting in contemplation. Delighted to see a thangka of Arya Manjushri, in characteristic humbleness Rinpoche la urged me to get it blessed by Ganden Thrissur Rizong Rinpoche rather. In the end, both of them consecrated it for me. Like Tibetans traditionally do, I went to pay my respects to all the great teachers, including Ven. Ling Rinpoche, Sharpa Choeje Rinpoche and Jangtse Choeje Rinpoche. I also visited His Holiness's recently-vacated rooms in each monastery, fragrant not just with incense but with the special smell of a being of great realisations.

I did not want to leave this wish-fulfilling land, with its warren-like streets flanked by blooms of flowers, adorned by great monasteries, living masters, and dharma teachings in every direction. There is a sense of being surrounded by real practitioners of the wisdom of emptiness and bodhicitta that is hard to convey in words. Truly, there is nothing like it in the world today. It must be preserved, respecting its sanctity as a breathing place of immense learning and palpable practice, even as outsiders get a chance to peek into this paradise and glimpse the most sophisticated and civilized frontiers of conventional reality.



Gaden Jangtse Monastery.

Although I knew the largest Tibetan monasteries were in Mundgod and Bylakuppe, nothing had prepared me for the magnificent first sighting of a lit-up Drepung Loseling, majestically rising high above the flat landscape and twinkling against the night sky.



Grand debate at Drepung Loseling Monastery.

THE EARLY DAYS OF DOEGULING, MUNDGOD: RECOLLECTIONS OF JUDY TETHONG

By Losel (born in Doeguling in 1970), Deyden (born in Bangalore in 1974) & Lhadon (born in Canada in 1976) Tethong
March 3, 2021



*Optatiam quiaspiet, tota volorum
daniet ape officimus. Itate doloruptiis
dolorerit ptios rest, aborum incipit,
cones et raerias seditas eiurem fuga.*

For many reading these words, Doeguling is a place where our parents, grandparents and families devoted themselves to creating a home on the Deccan plateau—far, far from our homes in our beloved Land of Snows. Depending on when our families first arrived in the settlement, it was either a massive tract of South Indian jungle—full of wild boar, leopards and snakes—or a Tibetan farming community and monastic centre that over the years came to be home to thousands of our people. Doeguling is the Tibetan name given to the settlement by His Holiness. The settlement is more commonly known by the neighboring Indian town called Mundgod.

For our parents—our Pala, Tsewang Choegyal (T.C.) and our Amala, Judith (Judy) Tethong—the Doeguling Tibetan refugee settlement in South India was their first family home. It was where one of their three children were born, where they raised seven adopted children, and the place they devoted the first eight years of their married life. Under the steadfast and courageous leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and together with the many early Doeguling settlers, they envisioned, built and nurtured a community for themselves and their families. While it was never explicitly said, we three children have always known that for Pala and Amala, their life and work in Doeguling, their friends, their colleagues and their work in those earliest and most difficult days of Tibetan refugee life in India remain the most meaningful and fulfilling endeavor of their lives. It was where our family began and where our hearts remain.

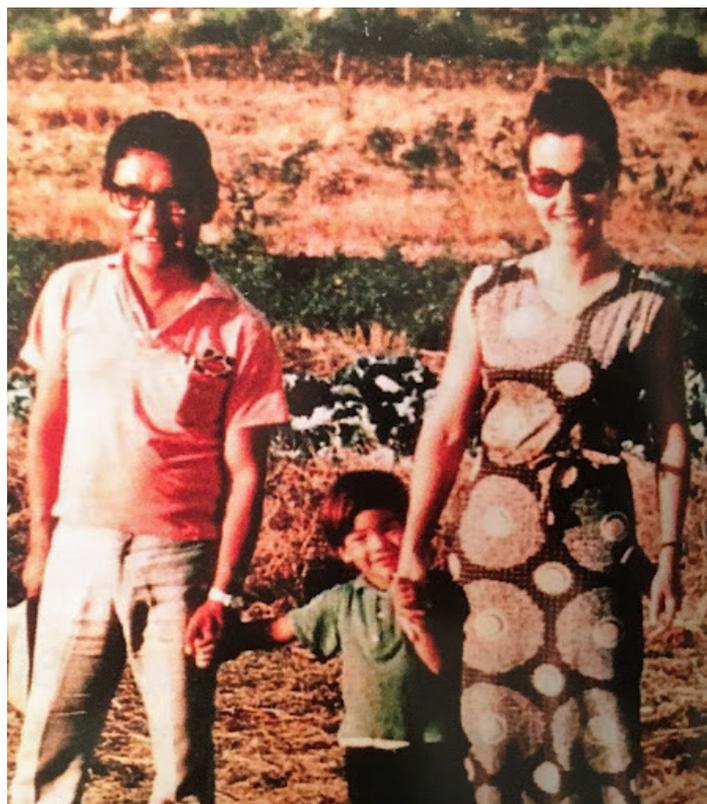
Growing up in Canada, our parents' stories of Doeguling were the backdrop to our childhood. The details were so lifelike we felt we were seeing the spectacular sunsets, feeling the welcoming evening breeze moving across the fields, bringing relief from the oppressive day time heat, and grieving the loss of so

many precious lives, young and old. Doeguling, as our mother recalls, was pivotal to what became our parents' lifelong partnership in service to the Tibetan people and the fight for a Free Tibet.

By way of background, in 1963, our mother, age 22, graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in Health and a postgraduate degree in Education. Almost immediately after graduation, she set out for India to work as a volunteer with the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO). She and a Canadian nurse, Lois, were assigned to the north, to the town of Kangra located just below Dharamsala, to work with the Tibetan refugees in The Kangra Transit School for Children. In preparation for her posting she found and read the only books on Tibet in her hometown library of Oakville: *My Land and My People* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Seven Years in Tibet* by Heinrich Harrer, *Captured in Tibet* by Robert Ford, and *Tibet is My Country* by Thupten Norbu.

Amala's first assignment upon reaching India was teaching and caring for children at the Tibetan Children's Transit School in Kangra. Later, she was asked by the Education Department of the Tibetan Government in Exile (TGIE), to help train and prepare the first batch of Tibetan teachers—all monks—at the Tibetan Teacher's Training College. This group of incredible educators would fan out across India and Nepal to lay the groundwork for the Tibetan Education system in exile.

While working at the Teacher's Training College, Amala met our father who had been living in Germany working on his university degree when he was called back to serve as the Assistant Representative at the Bureau of His Holiness in New Delhi, and later on as the Assistant Director of the Information Office of the Tibetan Government in Exile in Dharamsala. According to our mother, it was "T.C.'s passion for his upcoming assignment of



Tsewang Choegyal (T.C.) and Judith (Judy) Tethong

heading a refugee resettlement project in south India, and his vision for how it could contribute to Tibetan life and culture in exile," that captured her interest and set them both on a mission that consumed the next decade of their life.

We interviewed our Amala at the request of Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement about her memories of that time and were once again inspired by the courage, commitment, and singular focus that she, Pala, and the many Tibetans they worked and lived with, showed in those difficult early years.

Words fail to adequately convey the trauma, uncertainty, and upheaval that followed His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the tens of thousands of Tibetans into Nepal and India after the 1959 Tibetan Uprising. In an effort to paint as vivid and accurate a picture as possible of those first months and years after Doeguling was founded, we have included with our Amala's answers, excerpts from the many letters she sent to her parents in Canada between 1968-1975. These letters were first written by candle and lamp-light in canvas tents, then grass

Our parents' stories of Doeguling were the backdrop to our childhood. We felt we were seeing the spectacular sunsets, feeling the welcoming evening breeze moving across the fields, and grieving the loss of so many precious lives, young and old. Doeguling was pivotal to what became our parents' lifelong partnership in service to the Tibetan people and the fight for a Free Tibet.

huts, and eventually in a small brick and mortar home located on the hill above the settlement office.

How did Pala end up leading the Doeguling Settlement?

Judy: His Holiness was concerned that many of the Tibetans resettled in Bylakuppe were leaving the settlement and coming back up north because the climate and the conditions in South India were so unfamiliar and difficult. He and the Tibetan Government wanted to get a better understanding of the situation on the ground, and what might be needed to make it work, or if it could work at all. To help with this evaluation, in 1966, His Holiness sent your father with Mr. Luthi, a Swiss technical expert with the donor aid organization Swiss Technical Cooperation, down to Bylakuppe to look into the situation and report back on their findings.

Together with Luthi, T.C. went to Bylakuppe. On that trip they also had a meeting in Bangalore with the Chief Minister of Mysore State (now Karnataka) where he offered the TGIE another 4,000 acres for the Tibetan resettlement at Doeguling, Mundgod. Both T.C. and Luthi were excited about what could be done to save Bylakuppe and make the resettlement plan work. When T.C. returned to Dharamsala he reported back on their findings and personally requested to lead the Doeguling project. I can clearly remember a gathering of friends in McLeod Ganj, shortly after your father's return from this trip, where he was so excited about the possibilities for the settlements and we talked about it for hours.

When did you first see Doeguling?

Judy: I first saw Doeguling in the summer of 1967 after I had finished up at the Teacher's Training College in Dharamsala. I left after the second batch graduated. It was the monsoon which, back in those days, started in the

beginning of June. I traveled by 3rd class Indian train with 11 Tibetans who had been in my care for some years in Dharamsala, including a family who had been living at the Teacher's Training College. They first came to me with a dying child, Konchok Dorji, who we refused to give up on and who survived. So I was with Konchok Dorji, his Amala (mother), Pala (father) and baby sister. Also with us was her uncle and a 3-year old girl, Phurbu Lhamo, who we called "Hoka Pokey" because those were the first words I ever heard her speak a full year after she came to me sick and dying from malnutrition and parasites. I was also with three young women - Tsering Youdon, Choedon and Sonam Bhuti - who were like my daughters and had helped me with the hundreds of sick children we cared for in Dharamsala.

Who was there when you got there?

Judy: Your father was there with a group of approximately 400 Tibetans, mostly from Porang and Thoeling in Tibet who eventually settled in Village One. He left Dharamsala in the previous fall of 1966. Together with three others - Phurbu Palden (who was like family to T.C.), "Driver" Sonam and "Majan" Choenzo (cook from the Delhi Bureau of His Holiness) - they picked up a jeep in Delhi that was, I believe, a gift to the Tibetans from the organization Catholic Relief Services. It took them three days to get to Doeguling. They camped at the Tourist Bungalow in Doeguling for a few days before they went into Hubli and hired trucks to meet the first batches of refugees who were coming by train out of the road camps in Kullu Valley escorted by Thupten la, your father's secretary and dear friend. All of them pitched their tents in the jungle and started clearing the land and building the bamboo huts which would serve as their kitchens. And so that's all that was there in the way of infrastructure when I came that sum-



mer. That very first camp was set up by the main paved road that today comes in from Mundgod Indian Village.

What were your first living conditions and what was life like in those early days?

Judy: We all lived in tents and the food was cooked in bamboo huts. Phurbu had a bamboo hut for the kitchen in those days. And a bamboo hut was built for the jeep. And by the time I came back the next year, I think T.C. had already made the garage into our house—he filled in the front side, moved the jeep out, and that's where we lived when we came back from Canada after we were married.

We are in TC's bamboo hut (former garage) with its grass roof. Luckily it has a tarpaulin on the roof now so it doesn't leak...The sacking under the grass roof on the inside harbors dozens of rats who are a nuisance - eat our soap and chew the oranges and make a horrible racket all night. Ugh! The sacking is stained and mildewed now from the rains - the same for the bamboo matting on the inside walls. The floor is

mud. The 3 windows are just holes cut in the bamboo and covered with material. But the place is really quite cozy - and a minimum of house work involved. No windows to wash or floors to polish!

...Now the rain has stopped although we can see thunderstorms in the distance almost every evening. From about 11 am until 4 pm it is really hot outside and the tents are unbearable but we get a bit of breeze in our bamboo house. The evenings are glorious - cool and lovely. from 5 until 6:45 when it gets dark it is absolutely perfect for walking. The sunsets last about a half hour with the sky changing every minute. Even Dharamsala didn't have sunsets to compare with these-and every evening it is different here. The settlement hums with activity. Goats and cows and calves have been bought by the dozens by our camp people. The little grass stables are adorable. What a pastoral and peaceful place this is.

“We had to have the water trucked in originally. And it wasn’t until one of the Catholic aid agencies sent a Halco Tiger drill rig that we began to get proper wells. Water was a huge problem.”



What were some of the biggest challenges when you first started?

Judy: Water. We had to have the water trucked in originally. And it wasn’t until one of the Catholic aid agencies sent a Halco Tiger drill rig that we began to get proper wells. Water was a huge problem. And health, especially food-borne illness, children’s health and malnutrition.

The dysentery is not from the water—it is from the meat and other local food the people buy. The worst cases are amongst all the new arrivals who haven’t adjusted to the drastic change in climate or diet—particularly the nomads.

And it was difficult for people learning to farm. They weren’t all farmers from Tibet, but they had to feed themselves. And so they started planting crops and then guarding the crops at night from the wild boar that would come sweeping through at night—that was very difficult. Bylakuppe had elephants, but we had wild boar. People had to defend their crops against herds of wild boar that would come sweeping through and destroy their crops.

The crops are excellent—the battle with the pigs is waging full force. All night long 450 men guard the fields. Their bonfires twinkle like beacon lights as far as the eye can see. The women guard the fields by day. Every now and then during the night a terrific commotion breaks out in one quarter or another when they discover wild boars in the fields. Then dozens of men chase them out. In the last 10 days a wave of caterpillars has been destroying the crops.

People in the camp have bought now over 300 head of cattle and hundreds of goats - each family who can afford it has bought some. Konchok Dorji hijacks any stray goat or calf that wanders near their tent and ties a cord around its neck insisting it is his! He’s dying to have an animal!!

What did Pala do in Doeguling?

Judy: T.C. was the Representative of His Holiness and in charge of the settlement, and eventually he was made the Representative for all of the Tibetan settlements in South India, which in addition to Doeguling, included Bylakuppe, Cauvery Valley, Hunsur and Kol-

legal. His main job was to oversee the running of everything from the agricultural aspects of the settlements to the relationships with all the various departments of the Indian government from the national, state and local level, as well as all the international aid agencies. He also did fundraising to build things like the hospital and the original primary school, etc. On top of just the challenges of building something so big from the ground up, and managing so many people who were not used to the climate, the land and general conditions, it was a very challenging job because of all the problems people were facing. He took it very much to heart that everyone was looking to him to help them and he had to walk a fine line often, politically speaking.

These days TC spends a lot of time out on the fields—the final land distribution is being made to the individual families—after all these years. So far they have been allotted land each year just on a temporary basis until the Indian govt could decide just who is eligible for how much land. Terribly complicated process—every 5 adults get

4 acres of land—children born before their families came to Doeguling get 2/5th acre each.

TC is away in Belgium waiting for His Holiness—he left here early a.m. on the 23rd—and hasn’t been home since. His Holiness was due here at the settlement about 1 pm on the 23rd—our people lined the roads from mid-morning til dark—no His Holiness. Same story yesterday and again today and no word until late last night as to what had happened.

His Holiness got as far as Poona by train and then the Central Govt in Delhi heard about the riots in Belgaum and Hubli over the Mysore—Maharashtra border dispute. His Holiness is still sitting in Poona waiting for a government or Air Force plane to fly him to Belgaum or Bangalore (the people are burning trains). But Mrs. Gandhi has to sign the order authorizing such a plane flight and she is away in Ladakh. ...you can’t imagine the bitter disappointment and uncertainty at this end - thinking each day that His Holiness will come.

I wish you could see Doeguling these days—everything

fresh and green—fields ploughed and people busy planting. TC has almost finished the land distribution—was out from 8 a.m. till 6 pm yesterday tramping out the Village 6 fields with the surveyor and villagers allotting the various plots....

What did you do when you lived in Doeguling?

Judy: Initially, I was writing a book about my first four years in India. I had a contract with a publisher and had to send them my finished first draft shortly after I moved to Doeguling. So I would write in my "office", which was really a brick wash house with a table and chair, and while I would work people would come throughout the day for all sorts of different kinds of help and things. And I would give out clothing from the shipments (sent by our grandmother and Save the Children in Canada).

...and we shall always welcome clothes - what a different story it is here with over 2000 people all needing things. Had another 2 hour session this afternoon and got only a few of the younger school children done.

We gave lovely new clothes to all the children in the isolation tent down the lane from us. (in the centre of a corn field) - 16 chicken pox children are isolated there. I am also gradually getting clothes given to all the school children and the babies under age one. But there are just so many people that things finish in no time! Unfortunately I haven't found any baby's rubber pants in the 2 baby boxes I have opened so far - and. I desperately needed some this past week. Wonder if none were donated this year?

I also spent ages writing letters and contacting aid agencies and individuals for help.

...I have plenty of work with letters to aid agencies etc. with

regards to our needs here. The medical situation is grim. The doctor has almost no drugs and no money to buy them with. Since AECTR withdrew the Central Relief Committee has no one to take over their medical program in all the Tibetan centers. At this time last year our doctor in the camp here had Rs.500 per month for buying medicines for some 400 Tibetans. Now the doctor has Rs.200 per month only for 2,200 Tibetans. It is insane! The poor man hasn't even got medicine for diarrhea and dysentery and 90% of the people have one or the other. He's been sending SOSs to Delhi. The Central Relief Committee sends down what drugs they have and those are finished in a couple of days.

And I did outreach work in the villages around the Tuberculosis program and home sciences. I helped get the home science people training the villagers how to make healthier food. My whole job was around health and malnutrition and fighting TB and running the hospital.

TB was one of my main focuses. It got so bad that eventually we got a Christian group from Andra Pradesh who came with a mobile x-ray unit and we x-ray'd everyone in the entire settlement. The x-rays were sent off and then I would get pages of computerized results back with the names and then all these numbers. I think there were four numbers for each patient and other numbers indicating their diagnosis and so I got to where I could read all these numbers and I'd think as I read: "Oh dear, this person is a case of open TB and we've got to go find them and get them isolated because they are living with an extended family and they have open TB and they're spreading it!" So that TB detective work became a huge focus of mine. And then when your father was in overall charge of all the settlements in the South we went into the other settlements and we'd go and track down the open cases and get people isolat-

ed and on treatment. Many Tibetans in the north of India had had TB been given a few months of treatment and they thought they were fine and they'd stop, or they moved or the road camp moved or whatever and eventually it became resistant to the first line drugs for TB which were reasonably expensive, but by the time you got these resistant cases, the money we had to spend to buy drugs to treat the people who by now after fits and starts of TB off and on over the years but who had never gotten rid of it, it was so expensive.

...I am off again into the camps and villages issuing new hospital outpatient cards and scouting out new TB cases or chasing old ones who aren't taking their treatment regularly. Did I tell you that we now have more than 370 TB cases in the camp? And so far we have screened only 1600 of our 3,600 people. The expense of treatment for that one disease alone is staggering.

At one point, early on, people were sent to us straight out of Tibet and we lost them in the hundreds. I recently found a list I had written at the time of the numbers of deaths each day. They died because they came straight out of Tibet to the jungles of South India.



When and how did you establish the hospital?

Judy: At first, your father and the team built a little clinic for the Indian doctor and the nurses. And then Pelmo (a Tibetan nurse who became like a sister to our mother) came from Bylakuppe and they would see hundreds of patients there. They built a bamboo hut behind the clinic for inpatient care for the sickest patients and I think it had 12-14 beds there.

...There are dozens of critically ill people in the camp and we have only four beds for inpatients in the small clinic building. I have just given the hospital piles of pyjamas and night clothes and baby clothes from the stuff I brought down from Dharamsala last year. I think I'll use the \$82 from Bubba's group towards building a temporary bamboo ward beside the clinic. Then we can keep another eight beds there.

Even with this new inpatient hut, the situation was very difficult. My aunt came to visit from England at the time we had only that clinic and even though she was a nurse in the Second World War and had been evacuated from Dunkirk and really been through horrendous stuff, she just about died when she went into that little bamboo hut and saw all the patients in the terrible conditions in those early days.

I helped the medical team because I spoke Tibetan and most of them didn't. And when people wouldn't understand, or wouldn't take their medications, because I was the boss's wife I could go and convince people to do whatever they had to do.

At some point your father was sent to Europe by His Holiness and there he raised funds to build the 50-bed hospital. And once it was built, that's when I started working there full time. But right from the beginning, I worked with the Indian medical team and if we did a vaccination program I would go with the team



to convince people to vaccinate their kids. Like for measles - because we lost hundreds of kids because of measles and whooping cough. Even your brother got measles.

[Tenzin Losel] has been a pretty sick little boy for about a week but I can now happily report that he is rapidly getting back to normal. He started spiking a high temperature, then got infected eyes, a bad cough - and finally, the measles rash appeared. This is something I have always dreaded... the toll now stands at about 10 deaths - the measles epidemic now seems to be on the wane but it has taken a grim toll. You should see the wasted skeletons we are getting at the hospital. So discouraging because many of them are children we have on our protein biscuit and mild feeding programmes—months of progress wiped out in a flash.

What was one of the scariest things you experienced?

Judy: Fighting the rats. I mean literally - we used to have battles

with them in our bamboo hut. They were field rats and so when the crops came out of the field, when they were harvested, the rats would then invade our living quarters. We always had rats, but they were really bad after the harvest came in. Your father had put a cloth ceiling up to keep the dust from the grass roof of our hut from falling on us—well that was the rat's trampoline! They would run up the bamboo walls and then they would race across that cloth and your dad would get a broom stick and try and hit the cloth where the rats was to get it to run down and go outside, but often they would run down the cloth and go under the bed and then jump out and bite us. Chasing rats at night was one of the most—I wouldn't call it scary—unpleasant experiences. They were huge.

What was one of the hardest times you went through?

Judy: The hardest thing was when people died. In the earliest days we had waves upon waves of people dying due to sickness and malnutrition. It was heart-breaking, and though it happened

so often, it was something I never got used to.

In June, eight people died; in July, 13 people; in August, 14 people and so far this month eight people have died. A total of 43. More than the total of the previous one and a half years. Most of the deaths occurred in groups who had just come down here. One group came from Bijnor near the Tibetan border in UP. They escaped into India only last fall. They were the first wave of refugees from that particular Tibetan village. The second group were captured and shot by the Chinese and the third group of 400 people died in a snowstorm on a high mountain pass. The tragedy was that families were split up amongst the three groups. When this Bijnor group came down here this summer, about nine people died in the train on the way south. Since getting here, many more have died.

At one point, early on, people were sent to us straight out of Tibet and we lost them in the hundreds. I recently found a list I had written at the time of the numbers of deaths each day. They died because they came straight out of Tibet to the jungles of South India. They escaped through Ladakh. Maybe one thousand people came and hundreds died. Many of the survivors ended up in Village Four.

Another 600 to 1000 Tibetans are being sent down from Ladakh any day now. Since they've never been exposed to the Indian heat or even buses or trains I shudder to think what condition they will arrive in. It is a three day bus ride over precarious and scary mountain roads from Ladakh to Potankhot and then four days and four nights at least in the train. The people seem to suffer from climate shock. Some of the ones in this Bijnor group are stunned. They grow

weaker and weaker and die in spite of good medical help. TC says they had much the same thing happen in 1959 in the Missamari camp in Assam where he worked.

You and Pala have returned several times since you moved to Canada in 1975. What is it like to return?

Judy: It feels like I'm home. Our years in Doeguling; while the most challenging, they were some of the happiest and most fulfilling times of our lives. And to go back and see the people and the settlement—with the monasteries thriving and the tall trees and the lush fields—is always very moving for me.

What do you see as one of your greatest accomplishments?

Judy: Actually, it's your father's accomplishment that I am thinking about. To see all the monasteries re-established there in Doeguling and Bylakuppe and remember the role T.C. played in that. He was on various government committees for education and so on and he was constantly going to Delhi for Education Department meetings with the Indian and Tibetan government officials. And at some point, the situation of the monks being held in the camps at Buxa on the border with Bhutan, well it got so bad and your father volunteered to bring all the monks to the southern settlements.

They had to start everything from scratch. I remember all those monks coming and living in tents and huts and building their bamboo hut prayer halls. They even had to work in the fields. There is a picture somewhere of Losel and me sitting on a chair in the midst of all the monks for a ceremony for the opening of one of the first bamboo prayer halls. And just look at what all of those monasteries have grown to be now.

Despite the systematic destruction of Tibetan culture, they fought to save and preserve what they could and make a life for their children and grandchildren.

What would you like current and future generations of Doeguling to remember about this collective past / history?

Judy: I think it's important for young people to remember the incredibly tough times their parents and grandparents had in the early days. And that despite the systematic destruction of Tibetan culture by China in Tibet, the earliest generations in exile fought so very hard to save and preserve what they could and make a life for their children and grandchildren. It took much sacrifice and blood, sweat and tears to establish Doeguling, and the other settlements, and it will need future generations' dedication and work to ensure it can survive—one of the few places that Tibetans can live a Tibetan culture centered life in community with other Tibetans. This is the beauty of a place like Doeguling.

I want to conclude by thanking all of the young people who continue to work hard and sacrifice so much to care for the Tibetan community in Doeguling settlement. I am truly inspired by your commitment to the health and all around well-being of the Tibetan refugee community in India, and to the preservation of Tibetan culture. Your work is having, and will have, a great benefit for both the individual lives you touch, and also the collective future of the Tibetan people and nation.

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SANGMO: A STORY OF COMPASSION AND THE REGIONAL TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

BY TENZIN YUDON YAZERTSANG

Women are architects of history, society, and culture—and Tibetan women are no different. From powerful Buddhist spiritual women like Khando Yeshe Tsogyal and Maching Labdron to Jetsun Pema, my maternal grandmother Tsundu Sangmo, and my mother Tsering Yangki, Tibetan women have equally and significantly continued to contribute to the fabric, construct, and evolution of our Tibetan history, society, and culture.

As a 15-year-old Canadian-Tibetan woman, born and brought up in Canada, I stand on the shoulders of strong willed, fiercely independent, intelligent, entrepreneurial, philosophical, courageous, and compassionate women. I have this privilege and opportunity to document and share the contribution and accomplishments of one of my role models and influencers, my grandmother. She is one of the many unsung heroes, who with unwavering tenacity, courage, and compassion contributed quietly with selflessness and dedication during one of the darkest yet most transformative periods of Tibetan history.

Born in 1941, in Gyantse, Tibet, as one of 11 children to Gelek Dakpa, a tantric practitioner, and Lobsang Dolma, from Bhonshoe, Tsundu Sangmo was the youngest of 4 girls in the family. My grandmother fondly remembers her mother and father, whom she left behind at the young age of 13 (the same age as my younger brother Gyaltzen). At 17 years old, she was in Sakya with her cousins from the Sakya Dolma Phodrang when they learned of the siege of Lhasa and that His Holiness the Dalai Lama had escaped to India. Along with His Holiness the Sakya Trichen and family, she left for India with the thought, like most Tibetans, that they would be returning back to



Grandchildren Gyaltzen Yazertsang, Yudon Yazertsang, Labdron Namgyal, and Tenzin Lhamo at Gyaltzen Choden la's 100 birthday on April 21, 2019

Tibet and their families in a few years.

When I was 6 months old, my grandmother and my aunt, Somo Chime Lhamu took care of me for 6 months and every year from then on, my brother and I would spend our summer vacation with them and my uncle, Tsewang Namgyal. My grandmother instilled in us, through her gentle and compassionate approach, mindset and actions, the importance of education, the practice of loving kindness and community service. I was always aware of my grandmother's positive influence on our extended family, and, it was only recently, I had the opportunity to learn more about my grandmother's contribution to society. It made me realize that despite the harsh and difficult environment, each one of us is empowered with the ability to control how we act, react, and transform situations as we are in control of our emotions, mindset, and actions.

In this article, I would like to write about 3 distinct contributions of my grandmother: (1) Furthering the Nalanda Tradition as well as the realization of His Holiness Dalai Lama's aspiration of establishing more nunneries

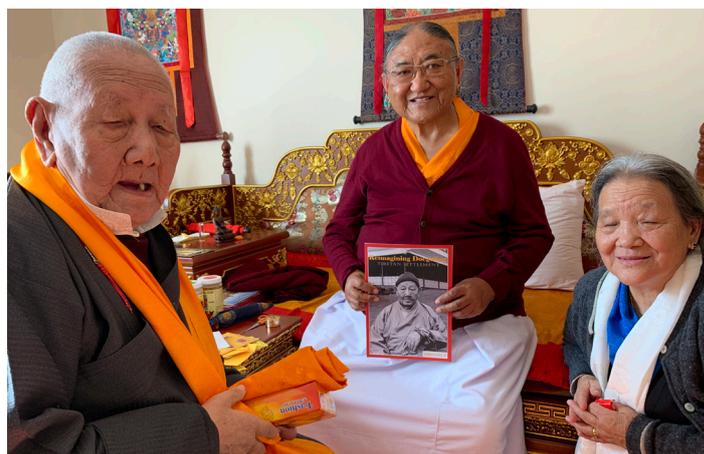
while creating an environment to bring forth more female Buddhist teachers and fostering equitable education for nuns (2) Founding and acting as the first President of Doeguling's Regional Tibetan Women's Association, leading to empowerment and political and civic engagement of women (3) Empowering youth through education.

The Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) was established on March 12, 1959 when Tibetan women gathered in Lhasa to protest China's illegal occupation of Tibet. With Tibetans fleeing into exile, the TWA became inactive. In the early 1980s, His Holiness the Dalai Lama inquired about the status of the TWA. This inquiry led to the reinstatement of the Tibetan Women's Association on September 10, 1984. My grandmother, Tsundu Sangmo, became the first elected President of Doeguling's Regional Tibetan Women's Association (RTWA), one of the 12 original branches that were established.

My grandparents both deeply revere and would do anything to realize His Holiness the Dalai Lama's aspiration. I recall my grandmother, telling me of her deep reverence and faith in His Holiness even at a very young age. When she was 11 years

old, His Holiness was passing through their town; she remembers getting his blessing and mentioned her great sense of joy and enhanced faith. My grandfather, Gyaltzen Choden served His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Tibet and was part of the establishment of the Tibetan government in exile. He helped settle Tibetans in South India and abroad. Today his greatest joy is the establishment of the main monasteries in South India that are home to the Nalanda tradition. During a private audience with the committee members of the newly reinstated Tibetan Women's Association across India and abroad, His Holiness had mentioned it pained him to see monks who fled into exile have numerous monasteries to choose from, but the nuns did not have the same equal opportunity. In addition, His Holiness during his visits to the settlements saw nuns but with no nunnery or educational infrastructure to support them. During that time, there was only one nunnery in India.

My grandmother and her Executive Committee members, upon their return to Doeguling knew their priority and consulted with the Settlement Officer, who at that time was my grandfather, and other village leaders.



His Holiness Sakya Trichen, Gyaltzen Choden, and Tsundu Sangmo, 2019

Through aligned objectives, the Settlement Officer's staff and the RTWA Executive Members collaboratively formed a task force to realize His Holiness's aspiration. In 1986, a prayer hall was built, and vacant homes of the Old Aged Homes were renovated by the support of German Aids to Tibetans and the Tibetan Centre Hamburg in Germany. Jangchub Choeling Nunnery, a name bestowed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, was established in 1987 with 18 nuns with the first senior nun Thupten Lhatso. His Holiness during the inauguration told the nuns to read the scriptures and study dialectics, which is only done with the intent of obtaining Geshema. Today, there are around 270 nuns, who study Buddhist scriptures in the Nalanda tradition, culminating in the Geshema Degree (Doctoral Degree).

In 2016, it was a historical event when 20 nuns from different nunneries which included 5 nuns from Jangchub Choeling who were conferred with the Geshema degree. For my 15th birthday, my grandmother's gift was the first year of sponsorship of a nun in Jangchub Choeling. She said it is always the right time to help and she would like me to take on that role from her. In her way, I felt she was blessing and empowering me with a legacy of both spirituality and service.

Service comes naturally to my grandmother. My grandmother and her Executive Com-

mittee members of the Regional Tibetan Women's Association undertook social efforts in addition to political activities. They instituted a voluntary service of Tibetan women going to the Old Aged Homes to bathe, wash their clothes, and provide company to the seniors who resided there, many of whom had no family. The RTWA volunteers continued with this social effort until the pandemic. This culture of intertwining politics, social activism, and volunteerism to help those in need was initiated by the founding members of Doeguling's RTWA. It brings my grandmother a deep sense of joy knowing that this practice continues to this day.

My grandmother truly embodies the Nalanda tradition of open mind and open heart. Many have witnessed this through her focus on the empowerment of youth through education. Tsundu Sangmo, a woman who did not have the opportunity to attend formal education, impresses upon all children who cross her path the importance of education and continuous learning. While my grandfather worked, she, like most Tibetans, sold sweaters to supplement the family income. She strived to ensure that in addition to her children, my grandfather's grand nieces and nephews, many who fled Tibet to study in India, had a good education and a loving home to come back to during the holidays. My moth-



Tsundu Sangmo speaking in Doeguling.



Tsundu Sangmola and Yudon Yazertsang, New York, August 2021

er told me that during holidays, sometimes there would be more than 12 children at their home. My grandmother was driven by a deep sense of compassion and unconditional love to provide the children with a loving home as they had left their parents at such a young age and wanted them to succeed. She continues to financially or through other means support children-in-need in their education.

As I reflect on my grandmother, Tsundu Sangmo who despite not having the opportunity of obtaining a formal education, was a formidable force for transformative change driven by compassion. Through her collaborative approach, she has truly operationalized the Nalanda tradition as she worked with others to identify, empower, and transform a society towards "generation equality" endeavoring towards leaving no one behind. As I begin my life, my grandmother's stories and values will weave through mine, as our lives are interwoven and interdependent.

My grandmother instilled in us, through her gentle and compassionate approach, mindset and actions, the importance of education, the practice of loving kindness and community service.



Craig Barrett, former US Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett, Patty Minter, Tsundu Sangmo at Gyaltsen Choden la's 100 birthday celebration New York, April 21, 2019



RTWA Executive Members



RTWA members washing clothes at Doeguling Old People's Home



RTWA members cleaning Doeguling campus

THE NEXT GENERATION by MIHIR and VIR SHRESTHA

Mihir and Vir Shrestha are twin siblings from Nepal who attend high school at the Phillips Exeter Academy in the United States. They are committed to social justice issues globally and, as finalists in the VexIQ World Robotics Championships, are passionate about using technology to bridge the digital divide. They have volunteered together in numerous global initiatives relating to Tibet, including assisting the Office of the Sikyong (President) of the Tibetan-government-in-exile on special projects and tutoring young monks in Taksham Monastery in Karnataka. Under guidance of Ngawang Tsetan (RDTs Communications Manager), they are launching the Instagram account (@doeguling) and further developing the RDTs Social Media platform, which they hope will better connect the global Tibetan community, including their generation, with the organization. They share their thoughts below on their volunteer experience.

Compassion (*Karuna*) is integral to who we are. From a young age, our parents instilled in us the importance of helping others as a fundamental part of our own humanity. Our global volunteering experiences substantiated this virtue—whether teaching orphans and impoverished Dalit (“untouchables”) children in Kathmandu, raising funds for victims of a massive earthquake in the Himalayas, or participating in diverse engagements with the Exeter Student Service Organization, the voluntary public service organization of our high school.

Our family's roots in Nepal inspired us originally to volunteer with RDTs. The friendship between Tibet and Nepal has flourished for generations through shared religion, culture, cuisine (momos!) and language. This close relationship is exemplified by Bhrikuti (Green Tara in Tibetan iconography), a Nepali princess who was the wife and queen of the earliest emperor of Tibet, Songtsen Gampo. Bhrikuti and her husband are credited with introducing Buddhism to Tibet in the seventh century. Even today, the Newari language that my parents and grandparents speak at home bears resemblance to the Tibetan language. Preserving and extending these shared values to members of our generation motivates us to engage with the RDTs family halfway around the globe, and we are so grateful for it!

Volunteering with RDTs is the perfect platform to combine and further our many interests: our love of Tibetan culture, religion, and history; our commitment to volunteer in impactful projects globally; and our interest in connecting with youth of our generation around the world through social media.

As Global Youth Ambassadors for RDTs, we are exploring ways to leverage technology and social media to connect the global Tibetan diaspora (and friends of Tibet) with the Doeguling Tibetan refugee settlement in South India. As part of this initiative, with invaluable guidance from Ngawang, we helped create and maintain an Instagram account with the goal of disseminating ongoing information about RDTs, covering both the challenges and achievements of this extraordinary refugee community. Powered by social media, we believe that the RDTs story can be shared not just locally, but on a global scale, while also helping inspire youth of our generation to connect with one another on issues of common interest.

THE REGIONAL TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION TODAY

TSERING PALMO, FORMER PRESIDENT



My name is Tsering Palmo. I grew up in camp 4, Doeguling with my family of six members; my father passed away a few years ago.

I have very vivid and beautiful memories of my younger days. My parents worked very hard to raise the kids. Like most residents of Doeguling settlement, we were farmers. Most of the farming processes were manual, and they demanded strenuous labor and physical work. I remember how during the rainy seasons, we'd leave our boots and walk through the muddy field barefoot to our farmland. As a young child, I used to help my parents with agricultural cultivation, grazing of cattle, gathering of firewood and other domestic work; it taught me a great deal about farming. For family reasons, I had to drop out of school to support my parents. We gradually started a seasonal sweater business during winters in Maharashtra.

In 1985, the Regional Tibetan Women's Association was formed, under the advice and guidance of HH the Dalai Lama. The association was formed in Dharamsala with branches throughout different Tibetan settlements, and its primary objective is to provide social services to the community. I was enrolled as a general member of RTWA during its inception. I received the opportunity to serve as an

Executive Committee member in the RTWA, Doeguling, for three terms for a total of 9 years. I was elected President of the association's 13th Executive Committee in 2018.

The Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC), Doeguling, played a pivotal role in the formation of our association. The Settlement office allotted a space for the office of RTWA. Tsundu Sangmo la, wife of former Doeguling settlement officer Kungo Gyaltzen Choden la, was the first elected president of the association. Currently there are 400 general members. These general members elect 27 group leaders (rupongs) and 10 executive members. Executive members are entrusted with management of affairs of RTWA Doeguling. We've always sought active participation from our younger generation. In 2009, Tsering Dolma la, former RTWA president, and I went round the camps to create awareness on RTWA among the youth and encourage their participation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight some of our initiatives towards serving the community:

- In an effort to support the growth of both monastic and secular education, RTWA provided support and assistance in raising funds for the formation and development of Jangchup Choeling Nunnery, a premier centre for learning Nalanda tradition. The nunnery founded in 1987, located near camp 9, currently houses over two hundred and fifty nuns. Nuns from different parts of India and abroad like Bhutan, China, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States and so forth come here to study Buddhist texts. To encourage and inspire the younger generation

to focus on health and education, every year on HH the Dalai Lama's birthday, we distribute prizes to the toppers in academics and hygiene in the Doeguling primary and nursery schools.

- Preservation of our distinct Tibetan culture is at the heart of what we do. Every year during Losar (Tibetan New Year), we collaborate with the RTYC to organize stage shows. Lay members of Doeguling actively participate in the performances. We also organize religious activities like liberation of fish and other aquatic animals during Saka Dawa (15th day of the holy month of Tibetan calendar to celebrate the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and parinirvana) every year and Dolma Bumther (recitation of 1,00,000 Tara prayers) in collaboration with RTYC. Dolma Tsen-dun, another Tara puja, is organized for the long life of HH the Dalai Lama every year.

- For the last twenty-four years, RWTA members have been visiting the Doeguling Old People's Home twice a month to provide support to the elderly people in the settlement and look after their health and hygiene. The members wash their clothes and bodies, and clean the facility.

- RTWA administers a tailoring section to train the resident women in this skill to become self-reliant and support their family. Currently there are ten trainees and one employed trainer. This was founded two years ago with funds from Laura Dahimer of Germany channeled through Sakya Tsechen Donang Choeling Monastery.

- We initiated a program to incentivize childbirth to address the grave concern about the falling birth rate in the community. Parents of every newborn child are rewarded with a Rs. 500 cash

prize and a gift of Amul butter and oats. The association also thanks the parents and offers khatak (Tibetan scarf) to them. So far, we have felicitated ninety parents.

- Another activity initiated by RTWA in collaboration with RTYC and Doeguling Youth Sports Association during Losar is the different games and activities like tug of war, a traditional costume competition, march pass, and so forth. Members of Doeguling, especially the lay and youth, take active part in these. Apart from being entertaining and engaging, these activities nurture a sense of community and camaraderie among the members.

- RTWA remains at the forefront of engagement in any activity serving the community. Most recently, it took an active part in the Doeguling COVID task force. Throughout the pandemic, we undertook various programs to help the infected and create awareness among the residents and neighboring villagers.

I feel very fortunate and thankful to have had the opportunity to make a positive impact in the Doeguling community through RTWA; it gave me a lot of experience and exposure. It also built my confidence and leadership skills. I am deeply grateful to HH the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration for all their inspiration, love and guidance. I would like to acknowledge the initiatives of Reimagining Doeguling's water, drainage and dharma talk series, too. My best wishes to the Reimagining Doeguling team for the success of its tourism project. Special thanks to everyone involved in this project, especially Tsundue Sangmo la's son Tsewang Namgyal la.

NYNJ Mundgod Doeguling Kyiduk was founded in the year 2016 by former Doeguling residents settled in New York and New Jersey, United States.



Executive Members of NYNJ Mundgod Doeguling Kyiduk



Executive Members of NYNJ Mundgod Doeguling Kyiduk for the second and third term



Though I lived in the U.S. all these years I never felt I have left home, ever.

LEADING THE DIASPORA

BY KUNLAY DOLMA, PRESIDENT OF THE NYNJ MUNDGOD DOEGULING KYIDUG

I was born in Bhutan, educated in India at Tibetans Homes Foundation school, Mussoorie. I am the President of the New York New Jersey (NYNJ) Mundgod Doeguling Kyiduk. I now live in New York with my daughter and nephew but my family still lives in the settlement. Though I lived in the U.S. all these years I never felt I have left home, ever.

In 1980, a group of Tibetans who had fled to Bhutan after the Chinese occupation and settled there had to leave the Kingdom for India. We moved to Doeguling Tibetan settlement in Mundgod. We temporarily stayed at vacant homes of the Old People Home as they had space.

An important leader in our community from Bhutan was the late Pa Tenzin la. He was a man with natural exploratory and leadership skills. He, together with my brother (Tenzin Wangyal) and other leaders, worked directly with the then-Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Gyaltzen Choeden la, to resettle our community. Pa Tenzin la and Gyaltzen Choden la later grew strong mutual respect for each other as they worked hard to serve the community.

Our community from Bhutan began the construction work to develop a new village for Tibetan refugees from Bhutan. The camp is one of the most successful and dynamic communities in Doeguling. The biggest challenge we faced was money. There were around 100 families, one block of 10 people's house to be divided between two families. To help stay within their tight budget, everybody sent their family members as laborers to the construction of their homes. These Tibetans had just become refugees, for the second time.

Today, the camp is now called Camp 9 or Dickyi Sumdrupling. RDTs has built a water project there to help alleviate the low ground water.

I have not had the opportunity to spend enough time in the settlement with my family. However, it is dear to my heart for the fact that I treasure the few months each year I got to spend with my family during school vacations. A major chunk of my school vacations were spent helping my family with their winter business in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, right in the centre of India.

The 50th Founding Anniversary (Golden Jubilee) of Central School for Tibetans Mundgod was a grand success. Significant funds were raised and there was a huge turnout of the alumni at the event. The success of the event greatly inspired the founding member of NYNJ Kyidug.

The founders came up with a common objective to form an association (Kyidug in Tibetan) to help support Doeguling and its people, with the primary focus of health, education and infrastructure.

At the time of inception, 40 members took the initiative and elected the first 18 executive members among them; two members from each of the 9 camps. These 18 executive members elected a President, Vice President and General Secretary. Subsequently, a unanimous resolution was passed to enact the Memorandum of Articles of Kyidug and its norm. Initially \$ 25 was an individual membership fee and \$ 50 was a couple membership fees.

Currently the NYNJ Kyidug's main source of funds is the membership fee, revenue generated through an annual get-together and summer picnic which they organised every year. The aim of this event is to encourage interaction among the members, to keep in touch with former Doeguling residents and to initiate fund raising activities.

The funds raised have been applied toward monthly meeting recurring expenses, viz., month-

ly salary of Shiwatso's Librarian, providing fruit and milk to the Old People's Home, offering a stipend for 32 destitute Doeguling people and addressing the immediate health problems of Doeguling people.

The pandemic struck right when I lined up fundraising projects. However, I did my best to raise money for those in need back in Doeguling during the lockdown. We hope our humble efforts have been of some help to the overall efforts of the Central Tibetan Administration and others.

Doeguling is home to two major monastic universities, Ganden and Drepung. It is well connected to major cities by rail, road and air. The nearest airport is Hubli at 48 kilometers (29 miles). So it is a home to some of the brightest minds in Buddhist philosophy.

The Drepung Loseling Meditation and Science Center is located there. The current Principal translator to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Thupten Jinpa, was educated there.

I wonder why a summer camp like the one TCV conducts is not possible in the Tibetan settlements. It will be great if RDTs can initiate a summer camp program in Doeguling Mundgod. It will give a new perspective. The kids will experience the real life of a Tibetan refugee in the settlement and also will learn about Buddhism, Tibetan culture and other important fields of learning.

The world has been at halt for over a year now due to the pandemic. Millions of people around the world have been affected. The Tibetan community had its own share of problems and challenges. In conclusion, I pray to Tibet's protective deities for the elimination of COVID-19 from the face of the earth, and may all sentient beings be able to live in peace, harmony and sanity.



Executive Director, Geluk International Foundation
Geshe Jangchup Choeden (Former Gaden Shartse Abbot)

DHARMA

TALK SERIES



Gaden Jangtse Abbot
Geshe Palden Wangchuk



Drepung Loseling Abbot
Geshe Lobsang Samten

As per the guidance of our kind and wise Abbots during our Annual General Meeting in 2019, RDTS started hosting dharma teachings in an effort to bring opportunities for the Doeguling lay community and the world to learn more about the Nalanda tradition.

These teachings were telecasted on Doeguling Cooperative Society's cable channel and subsequently posted on Reimagining Doeguling's Facebook page and YouTube for the benefit of a larger audience of devotees.



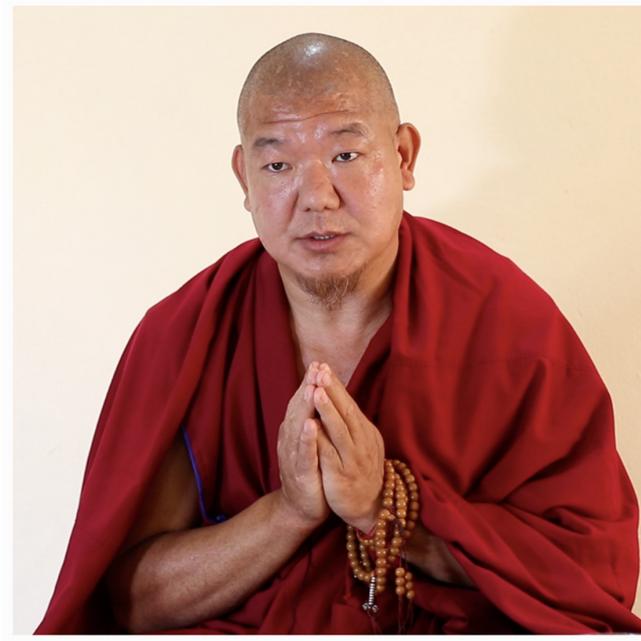
Drepung Gomang Abbot
Geshe Lobsang Gyaltsen



Gaden Shartse Abbot
Geshe Jangchup Sangye



Sakya Tsechen Donang Choeling Abbot
Tenzin Wangchuk



Jangchup Choeling Nunnery Abbot
Geshe Tashi Tsering

Reimagining Doeguling conveys our profound gratitude and appreciation to Abbots of major monasteries in Doeguling for providing the precious teachings during the dharma talk series in 2020 and 2021.

The primary emphasis of the teachings was on training the mind and practicing the dharma (teachings) in our everyday activities. The teachings have benefited many lay people of Doeguling and the outside world—this was especially beneficial in coping with crises through the pandemic.

COMPASSION AND GRATITUDE DURING THE PANDEMIC

BY KHENSUR JANGCHUP CHOEDEN

Good morning, all the brothers and sisters, I'm happy to say a few words today on request of Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement, the staff of Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement, came to me with a request to record a message to all the brothers and sisters at this time when we are going through hardship, entire humanity is facing tough hardship of the pandemic that originated from China and had now spread all over the world.

The pandemic brought a lot of hardship to human beings, physical hardship, sickness and mental hardship, confusion, fear and hopelessness, and to many it also became a source of depression. And presently, people all over the world are fighting against this kind of unprecedented situation in their life. It's quite natural if we are not mentally prepared well to get overwhelmed by this pandemic. So here I would like to share a few important points from Buddhist teachings.

One very important point from Buddhist teaching is impermanence. We always need to understand what is impermanence and we need to contemplate on it as many times as possible in our life, if possible, every day. If we come to realize and understand impermanence, then we won't be clinging to the present situation. Will it be pleasurable and joyful or will it be sadness or worrisome or painful and disturbing?

First thing is to understand the impermanence, the nature of phenomenon, things that exist around us. Then, we will come to realize that these conditions are not going to persist forever. Somehow, it is certain to cease, and we will definitely see a bright day after the darkness of the pandemic.

Another important thing Buddha taught is about the painful and suffering nature of our existence. It's really important to realize that, understand that and contemplate that. There are all different varieties of suffering that we go through in our life. Birth, aging, sickness, and death, separation from our near and dear ones, and encountering the enemies that we hate to be with, that we hate to face. And then going through the ups and downs of the roller coaster of life. On certain occasions, we may be at the peak of happiness and joy. On other occasions, we may fall in the pit of the pain and agony. Those kinds of varieties of suffering that we face, we need to understand and contemplate. Then we will come to know the pandemic. Pandemic: it's one word; it is not going to sustain for long, it will pass away after some time.

We also need to understand our own condition. We have to be grateful that we are living in an era when we have advanced medical knowledge that enables us to find solutions to a lot of physical and health problems, unlike our ancestors, who faced different varieties of pandemics, like the famous Spanish Flu that happened in this world, and the famous pandemic of smallpox. All the varieties of pandemics that have taken place in the past human beings, despite our backwardness in medical, knowledge, science, and technology, have successfully come out of those dark periods.

We will definitely also get through this, but we need to be positive on that. What we need to know is how to deal, how to change the behavior and how to make sure that we don't catch the virus. And without being worried, we need to implement

those guidelines. Those were the result of thorough study and medical expertise and research, so we need to implement those instructions and guidelines in our life properly, without being panicked. Without being worried, we need to be alert, vigilant and need to take precautions. We need to learn to be less arrogant and never have this mistaken notion of this virus will never get to me. The viruses never discriminate, rich or poor, color of skin, or any other kind of discrimination. Why does this never do that? In understanding that, we have to really be serious about implementing the precautions properly. If we do, we will definitely be free from the virus and we will definitely sail through this dark time. And we'll have a good enjoyable time after this.

Now, on a community level, on a society level, as a collective form, we have many efforts going on all over the world. There are many efforts to create vaccines and to find a cure. Some medicines have also come out. And these are wonderful things, these are good things that we need to know to give a sense of confidence and optimism to oneself.

We also need to not be fully self-centered. We need to be caring to other beings, concerned about those surrounding us. We may not be affected that badly by the virus, but there are plenty who are. And they need help, prayer, our goodwill, our good wishes. There are thousands and thousands of people whose lives were badly affected by the virus. Even if they didn't catch the virus, they lost their jobs and their source of income. They lost the source that provided them bread and butter or their daily supply of food. We need to think about

these people. If possible, we should do something. We should financially help them, support them, or we should physically go out and do something for them. If we are not capable of doing so, at least at the mental level we should be caring to them. We should be kind and have sympathy for them. This is really important. We should have the empathy and based on empathy we should have sympathy and compassion for them. We should be grateful; there are plenty of people all over the world who are dedicating their lives to help those people who are very badly disturbed and dislocated, and then affected due to the spread of the virus and pandemic: they are doctors, they are nurses, they are cleaning staff. They are all those people. There are police, there are administrative staff. All of them have some role to play, to help people encounter and face the pandemic. And they are putting a lot of effort with risking their own health. We need to be grateful for them. We should not be always just thinking about how to complain about what we have going through. We should also think about how can we be grateful.

How can we be thankful and praise the works done by those people? If we do that, then our sense of difficulty may gradually get reduced. If we don't have a little sense of gratitude to others, and we are completely self-centered and always thinking about one's own comfort and ease, that is quite destructive to oneself and damaging to society. So it's really important that we should be grateful. In the words of the great masters of Kadam tradition, "Be grateful to all." Thank you.

TIBETAN HARVEST: FILM SCREENING AND FIRESIDE CHAT

JASRAJ PADHYE, TENZIN THAKPO, NAVNEET GARODIA, TSERING YANGKI

Navneet Garodia: Hi everyone, my name is Navneet Garodia and I'm a member of the RDTs Advisory Board. It gives me great pleasure to welcome the director of the movie Jasraj Padhye, as well as the protagonist Tenzin Thakpo. Gentlemen, welcome.

Jasraj Padhye: Hi Nav, thank you so much for having us. Thank you so much everyone for being a part of this event - thank you for your support.

Navneet Garodia: Wonderful. The first question is directed to you, Jasraj. By the way, anyone listening in, please feel free to put in your questions on YouTube, we'd love to answer any questions that you may have. Having said that, Jasraj, first question to you. As we have seen, this film has several underlying themes, the bigger ones being the refugee experience as well as climate change. Being the director, what's your bigger takeaway for audiences worldwide that are tuning in.

Jasraj Padhye: The biggest takeaway for me personally and what I'd like for the audience to have is the last statement of the film - the Sufi saying, which ends with, "the wise man tries to change himself".

I think Thakpo La, himself is one of the greatest examples of taking on a Herculean task, and not being afraid of taking the first step. That is what defines a change maker.

In order to make actual change in society, it is critical that you take the first step and not give up. Eventually you will get support, just like today—all of us are getting the support because we took the first step.

That is the inspiration and message that I would want everyone to take from the film. As with anything in your life, take the first step, and you will succeed and move forward.

Navneet Garodia: That's wonderful. Thank you for sharing Jasraj, Thakpo la, Welcome.

Tenzin Thakpo: Hello, Nav, thank you.

Navneet Garodia: I was really inspired by your role, as well as your general outlook on water conservation. What has inspired your stewardship of this initiative, and when you think about it more macro level, how has your refugee experience shaped this?

Tenzin Thakpo: It was in 2017 when I first got an opportunity to meet Tsewang Namgyal la, Bob Ankersen la and other RDTs leaders. When I heard about their mission and the vision to make Doeguling a sustainable place, I felt it was an amazing opportunity and platform for me to give back to the community.

As far as refugees are concerned, India has been a very kind to us by providing us land to live, schools to get education, ration cards, and other essentials. That has really helped us. Finding a sustainable water conservation model necessitates the sharing of good practices, especially with neighboring Indian villages, who also experience the same water crisis every year.

In Karnataka, we have faced a decade of droughts and flooding. That means water is talking to us through floods and drought.

Navneet Garodia: You mentioned neighboring villages—I know

"In order to make actual change in society, it is critical that you take the first step and not give up. Eventually you will get support, just like today—all of us are getting the support because we took the first step."

you've tried to do some work with neighboring villages in the past. How receptive have they been to your outreach, and have local government officials helped in any way?

Tenzin Thakpo: After finding success, we approached the local village administrators, the panchayat members. They were appreciative when we talked about water conservation. Each village president requested us to share a model and implement it in their village. Because of their cooperation, we were able to construct two rainwater harvesting models—one in Koppa (roof top with borewell recharge), and the other one at Nandikatta (storm water collection pit).

We also received support from the Taluk magistrate level. They visited our project site, vouched for our efforts, and request us to conduct more water awareness campaigns. At the district level, the Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Harish, as well as the Zilla Panchayat CEO have also been very supportive. I am looking forward to collaboration from the state level to scale our water conservation model.

Navneet Garodia: That's really interesting. As you've tried to scale this, have you uncovered any kind of process efficiencies



Jasraj Padhye, Director of Tibetan Harvest



Tenzin Thakpo, Chair of RDTs Water Committee



that make you want to improve on the existing process?

Tenzin Thakpo: After finding success, we requested all our Tibetan Village leaders and monastery administrators to be a part of change and conserve water. Of course, there are many different types of water conservation models, and the one which we have constructed is a very small one—but, it truly has an application to conserve groundwater. We are also focusing on raising more awareness and providing training to the youth. We are convinced that the movement will gain traction. Partnerships have also enabled us to construct more units, so we know our best practices, and have been able to share and test methods. We have done a rooftop borewell recharge and innovative borewell recharge. But now, we are scaling towards rebuilding a Check Dam. So, that is another avenue. We are also exploring drip irrigation to help with water conservation. It is also about using water judiciously and being more aware about the consequences of water for future generations.

Navneet Garodia: You mentioned some support from the local government—have you received any

kind of support from institutions worldwide, or internationally, and if so, who would you like to call out?

Tenzin Thakpo: We have a list. The Reimagining Doeguling water conservation model is successful, only because so many people favor it. I'm just a mere face, but I have fantastic volunteers who appreciate and are aware of the water crisis. We have the Tibet Fund, which has been supporting us since 2017.

We would also like to give a big shoutout to Dr. Anita Dhudane and her friends for supporting us in sharing the model with neighboring Indian villages. This has fostered good relations with neighboring Indian villages. Furthermore, I'd like to acknowledge my water committee members, our managing committee members, EC members, including our advisor Rato Dratsang Khen Rinpoche, (Abbot) Nicholas Vreeland, Shartse Khensur Rinpoche la, Gen Guru la, former MC president Namgyal Tsering la, my colleague, Yega la, Karma la, Volunteer Choney la, Ven Zomyig la and others who have helped me to go ahead and execute this project.

Navneet Garodia: Well, I'll make

sure I get your autograph first up because, as you become an international star, and my daughter talks about you down the road, I'll let her know that I was one of the first few people to get your autograph!

Tenzin Thakpo: That's nice of you, but I truly feel that I'm just a simple guy who doesn't know much. But I have the compassion and the passion, which enables me to learn more. I was not aware of the importance of water until recently. When I started hearing about it, researching it really opened my eyes to the crisis we are facing. I'm sure that by watching this movie and hearing this story, the youth will be more inspired to take small steps. The first step has to come from the grassroots.

Navneet Garodia: Yeah, you mentioned small steps and I can share with you that I've done something similar with my daughter. We give her a bucket bath, so she sees a finite amount of water. We in the U.S. are used to showering, and don't realize how much water we waste by showering, primarily because it seems like an unlimited supply. But as we know, water is limited. And the more we treat it as a lim-

ited resource, the better off we are going to be.

Jasraj, moving over to you—when we talk about marketing, obviously this is a first step in terms of us screening this movie to audiences worldwide. What is your marketing plan going forward, because as you know this is a pertinent issue, not just for people in India but for people globally? How are you thinking of approaching this from a global perspective?

Jasraj Padhye: Marketing a film is absolutely a Herculean task, but I'm glad that so many people could join us today to help raise funds for it.

So, first of all, the film needs to establish credibility. For credibility, it needs to be seen by audiences worldwide.

I'm going to submit the film to about 75 film festivals—from Turkey to New Zealand to the United States to Europe to India. We're going to be targeting festivals which have some sort of environmental relevance to them—niche festivals, where we stand the chance to reach the right audiences who are environmentally aware. I think what's most important for any film is to find an audience for itself. It's not about just putting it on a platform like YouTube and then discovering it somewhere, but to find the right audience, to reach the right audience, and to create an impact and actual change—like what happened with Thakpo La when he showed it to the Karnataka government officials.

The officials were so impressed that they are going to support making new projects!

That's the audience that I want to address with this film. Like today, we're getting so much love on YouTube live and that's because we have reached the right audience. Getting to the right audience is the most important thing for the film.

Navneet Garodia: Talking about reaching audiences on YouTube, there is a question from our au-

dience. How can we be a part of the water conservation effort? Let me make this question a little broad. I guess we can tackle water conservation on two fronts, the individual front and the collective front. You are front running the campaign to show a collective stance, but for people like me, Jasraj, and everybody else watching on YouTube, how can we best conserve water on a day-to-day basis? We kind of touched upon that a little through my bucket bath example, but I'd love to hear more from you.

Tenzin Thakpo: Individual contribution plays a very important role. People need to be more aware of the importance of fresh water, which is a very limited resource. This doesn't mean that we have to conserve rainwater every time. What we need to do to start on is to use water judiciously by doing small things like changing food habits from a non-veg to vegetarian diet, which takes less water. Installing aerators on faucets, checking leaks, and watering your garden in the morning and evenings goes a long way in conserving water. There is also value in smartly using energy efficient appliances such as a washing machine - instead of top load, you can go for a front load, as it consumes less water. You mentioned showering—installing low flow showerheads contributes to the conservation effort.

However, solving the crisis cannot just be limited to individual efforts. We need to be a part of this movement collectively. Karnataka is one of the worst in terms of its water crisis, second only to Rajasthan. As mentioned by our Taluka magistrates (Tehsildhar), water conservation is not just a job that is reserved for the government. It is up to each individual and institution, to collaborate and make contributions to make the community resilient and sustainable. Partnership is key—knowledge sharing through tried and tested methods, raising more awareness, and making

youth more aware of this crisis are all important. Like me, the more a user becomes aware, the more society benefits. I'm sure that there will be a movement. When there is a movement, there is change.

Navneet Garodia: We have another audience question—what are some of the other challenges that you are facing as a community, that you can think about? And the second part of the question is, what can we do to help?

Tenzin Thakpo: The water crisis is not the only crisis we are facing in Doeguling. Doeguling is also facing health and infrastructure related challenges. These are all basic issues which need to be addressed.

Navneet Garodia: For sure. I'd like to invite Tsering Yangki, who is a member of the RDTS Advisory Board, for her closing remarks. Jasraj and Thakpo - thank you so much for your valuable time. We really appreciate it, and look forward to continued collaboration.

Tsering Yangki: Every time I hear Thakpo la speak I am inspired to act. Tashi Delek all. As per the United Nations "Volunteerism is one of the most important vital delivery mechanisms for social, environmental, and economic transformation, ensuring a lasting impact with its ability to change people's mindsets, attitudes and behaviors". During these unprecedented times, we have seen the power and impact of volunteerism even more so. Many of us have or known someone that has been touched by COVID or other tragedies and we hope that we all continue to find strength and compassion.

On this International Volunteer Day on behalf of all of us I would like to express my gratitude to all our volunteers and essential workers across the globe. I hope this documentary feature showed the power of volunteerism and compassion.

My name is Tsering Yangki, former resident of Doeguling and currently, I have the privilege to serve on the Advisory Board of Reimagining Doeguling.

On behalf of Reimagining Doeguling's Advisory Board, I would like to congratulate Jasraj Padhye on his first official screening of Tibetan Harvest.

This powerful story captures the essence of humanity when driven by compassion and wisdom—where you find solutions through innovation and collaboration.

Our admiration and gratitude to the true changemakers Yegala, Gyalwang la, Thakpola, Karmala, Dr. Tashi la, and the RDTS team who tirelessly champion the environmental, health, education, and economic development efforts of RDTS locally in South India.

Their collaborators and supporters, the Abbots, Chagtzoelas in the monasteries, the residents of Doeguling, the local Panchayats, District Commissioners, and residents of neighbouring India villages.

What RDTS Team achieves locally is realized and amplified through the support and confidence from Tibet Fund & its Advisory Board. Thank you.

This virtual event would not have been possible without Eric Traub and Ngawang Tseten, RDTS's Chief Technology & Social Media Volunteers.

Our gratitude to YOU for joining us today and spending this Saturday evening or Sunday morning with us. We hope this story creates a spark of joy in your lives & inspires us all to be stewards and changemakers driven by compassion and wisdom. No action to small. No act to small.

We wish you and your loved ones continued good health, equanimity, and joy. Good night and good morning, all.

"We need to be a part of this movement collectively. Water conservation is not just a job that is reserved for the government. It is up to each individual and institution."



RELEVANCE OF DOEGULING TO OUR WORLD

Tsewang Namgyal, RDTS Advisory Board Chair

We dedicate our fourth issue to all our female leaders, who through the centuries continue to contribute equally and significantly to the Nalanda tradition and Doeguling's culture, development, and resilience.

Personally, my life has been greatly influenced by the compassion and clarity of teaching of the great 11th Century Tibetan woman Buddhist teacher, Machig Labdron and the kindness of my mother, Tsundue Sangmo.

My humble gratitude and respect to all women.

Doeguling, where the great Tibetan monasteries and nunnery of all traditions reside is arguably one of the key anchor to the Nalanda tradition.

Reimagining Doeguling Tibetan Settlement ("RDTS") efforts to preserve and foster Nalanda tradition of mindfulness, compassion, and analytical thinking while ensuring the sustainability and resilience of local community has inspired a generation of people. This is acknowledged by Mind and Life Institute Board member and RDTS Advisor Lisette Cooper (Vice Chair of Fiduciary Trust International) on why she supports Doeguling. Her response was simple - it is important to take care of our roots.

The pandemic amplified the importance of compassion and collaboration, as the world grapples with social justice, inequities, climate change, and the value of emotional and mental well-being. As the world recovers, we all have the opportunity how and what we recenter, reprioritize, and reshape, so that we have a world that is more equitable, sustainable, and compassionate

built on commonality. Doeguling is uniquely positioned in terms of the opportunity to be part of this transformation in our society, economy, and world.

The key teachings of the Nalanda Tradition involve the training of our mind to awaken our compassionate spirit and develop a systematic approach that takes into consideration all sentient beings. This approach is more important than ever before because it is each of our actions, behaviors, and mindset that have shaped the world we live. The essence of the teachings have relevance to companies, as the impact they have on our world due to their scale and power are immense.

I work at one of the largest financial institutions in the world. My work primarily is in the project finance sector. With the support of bank's leadership, I am privileged to also have the opportunity to be involved in bringing awareness on mindfulness and compassion training in our industry. Mind training is included in our incoming analyst training program, who are viewed as future leaders in our industry.

The positive feedback we have been getting from our industry and other industries has bolstered my belief in the value of these teachings to help unleash the potential of our industry to achieve global inclusivity and sustainability objectives.

The financial service sector is the heart of the economy. It enables people to realize their financial goals, creates jobs through the facilitation of business, and is an instrument of government monetary strategies.

Bringing a cultural shift in our industry will have a transformative impact on our

economy, which in turn will help develop a more equitable, sustainable, and peaceful world.

In December 2012, I was inspired by Doeguling leaders and the value of Doeguling to the world. My enthusiasm has continued to grow, inspired by the leadership demonstrated by the community, the fragility of Doeguling and my appreciation of the value of the precious teachings preserved there.

We will need your continued financial support, ideas, and enthusiasm, and cannot take for granted the efforts being made. I write this with a deep sense of gratitude to both whose stories we have highlighted and to so many unsung heroes whom we have not been able highlight.

I take this opportunity also to thank our Staff, our Advisors, Managing Committee members, Executive Committee members, blessing from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, support of the Central Tibetan Administration, RDTS partners including The Tibet Fund, and all our volunteers who have enhanced their engagement with us during the pandemic, while continuing to persevere towards our aspirations.

I am grateful to everyone involved in this journey to reimagine Doeguling, reimagine ourselves and reimagine our world driven by compassion and wisdom.

The Nalanda approach is more important than ever because it is each of our actions, behaviors, and mindset that have shaped the world we live in. The essence of the teachings have relevance to companies, as the impact they have on our world due to their scale and power are immense.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

DONATE.

You can donate via the Tibet Fund (www.tibetfund.org), a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Donations should be reference "Reimagining Doeguling."

RDTS is registered under section 12 AA(1) (b) (i) of the Income Tax Act 1961. Donations to RDTS are exempt u/s 80G of the Income Tax Act 1961 Vide CIT Letter No. CIT (EXEMPTIONS) BANGALORE/80G/2020-21/A/10150

MEDIA.

Visit us at www.facebook.com/doeguling and www.doeguling.com

VOLUNTEER.

Our focus areas are in health, water, economic development and branding. if you are interested in volunteering, email doegulinged@gmail.com, cc: doeguling@gmail.com.



བོད་ཀྱི་བྲེབས་མུག
THE TIBET FUND

A special thank you to The Tibet Fund for being an amazing partner for many years.
<https://tibetfund.org/>



An appreciation ceremony organized by RDTS to thank all Doeguling health workers and volunteers.