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Tibetan Friendship Group Australia (Inc.)

Patrons: His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
Joan M Wilson OAM

## TFG NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2021

### HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA'S 86<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

On the occasion of his 86th birthday TFG's patron His Holiness the Dalai Lama sent a message to all his well-wishers world-wide, thanking everyone for the birthday greetings that poured in from all corners of the globe. All of us at TFG wish His Holiness a long and fruitful life. Here is his message:



*"I am just one human being. Many people really show they love me. And many people actually love my smile. In spite of my old age, my face is quite handsome. Many people really show me genuine friendship.*

*Now that it is nearly my birthday, I want to express my deep appreciation to all my friends who have really shown me love, respect and trust. For myself, I can assure you that for the rest of my life I am committed to serving humanity and working to protect the climate condition.*

*Since I became a refugee and now settled in India, I have taken full advantage of India's freedom and religious harmony. I want to assure you that for the rest of my life I am committed to reviving ancient Indian knowledge. I really appreciate the*

*Indian concept of secular values, not dependent on religion, such as honesty, karuna (compassion) and ahimsa (non-violence).*

*So, my dear friends, on my birthday, this is my gift. Please keep it in mind. I myself am committed to non-violence and compassion until my death. This is my offering to my friends. I hope my friends will also keep non-violence and compassion for the rest of your lives. All my human brothers and sisters should keep these two things-non-violence and compassion, until your death”*

## **TFG VOLUNTEER FEATURE: CHOEKYI TSEWANG**

In this newsletter we feature TFG’s wonderful Tibetan treasurer, Choekyi Tsewang. Choekyi was born in India and came to Australia with her family in 1997. As well as working a full-time job and managing family commitments Choekyi has been volunteering with TFG in this important position for about 8 years. She keeps a record of all sponsorship monies and donations to TFG and forwards funds to the Settlements in India which TFG supports. As well as always being such a friendly and helpful person Choekyi is giving back to the Tibetan community in a very practical and helpful way by volunteering with TFG. We are so fortunate to have her on board!

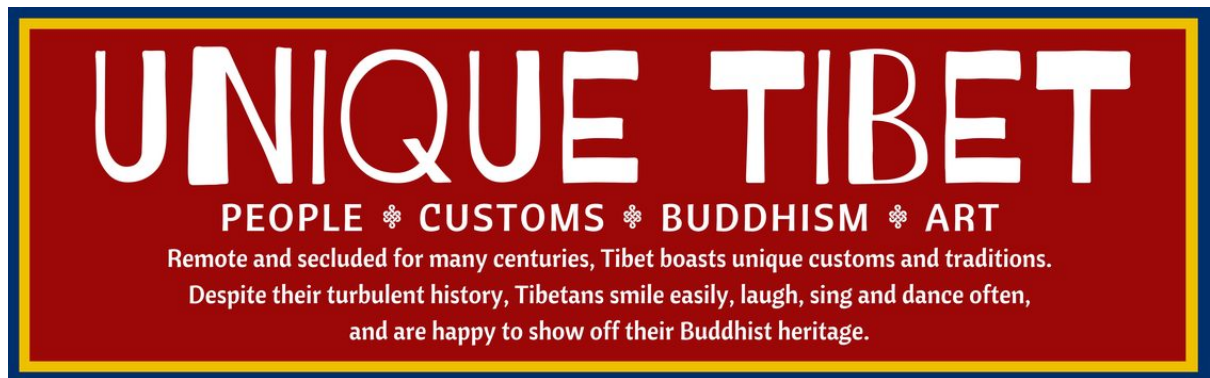
From Choekyi: *“When I finished year 12 in India and received the scholarship from the Dept of Education, I was over the moon. It was wonderful that I didn’t have to bother my parents for the Uni and hostel fees. I am so grateful, and I am sure that today the Tibetan students that are receiving the sponsorship from the generous sponsors feel the same. I am lucky that I can help TFG who supports the Tibetans through the sponsors and to work with the best team. Thank you TFG Sponsors and the Team”*



## NEW POSTAL ADDRESS FOR TFG

Please note that TFG has a new PO Box in Dee Why:

**PO BOX 1347  
DEE WHY  
NSW 2099**



In January this year a museum showcasing the culture of Tibet was opened at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, near Bendigo Victoria. TFG's very own patron, Joan Wilson was invited to the opening but was sadly unable to go due to Covid restrictions. Joan donated many items to the museum, gathered while travelling in Tibet, Nepal and India.

Curator Barb Rozmus said the museum's aim was to give a picture of life and culture in Tibet. Objects on display include everything from daily life, to ritual and Buddhism. A wonderful place to visit if you are in the area!

The museum's collection is grouped around seven key themes:

- Way of life
- Work and play
- Devotion
- Spreading the Dharma (Buddhist teaching)
- Traditional science, such as astrology and medicine
- Festivals
- His Holiness the Dalai Lama



**THE GREAT STUPA OF UNIVERSAL COMPASSION**



### **FLASH FLOODING IN DHARAMSALA**

In mid-July torrential monsoon rains hit Dharamsala, located in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh causing flash floods and devastation. Dharamsala is the home of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration, the Tibetan government-in-exile. Many Tibetan refugees live there and it is the site of many Tibetan Buddhist nunneries and monasteries. Tilokpur Nunneries, which TFG supports were fortunately not affected.



## SETTLEMENT NEWS

In this newsletter we are focusing on TIPA and are extremely proud of the success of one of TFG's sponsored students (see interview below)

### TIPA (TIBETAN INSTITUTE OF PERFORMING ARTS)

#### INTERVIEW WITH KALSANG DOLMA – SENIOR ARTISTE AT TIPA

Kalsang Dolma from Gullathala, Bylakuppe has been sponsored through TFG Australia for many years by Kate Baker. Kalsang joined TIPA in 2008 becoming a Junior Artiste in 2011, Intermediate Artiste in 2016 and Senior Artiste in 2018.

Below is a recent interview with her:

**Q: What inspired you to have an audition at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts?**

**Kalsang Dolma:** *I have always been an admirer of TIPA ever since I could even remember. I loved to participate and perform in every cultural event in School days. My main reason to get an audition in TIPA is none other than my own Momo la (Granny) because she inspired me into dance and music. I still remember admiring the performances she gave during wedding ceremonies and other parties as an Ache Changma when I was a kid. Especially, my maternal side of the family has a huge interest in the art of dancing and singing but my father, he is nothing less because whenever TIPA releases a new Yarkyi CD, he is the first one to buy and watch it all together with the family. I also remember the following artists' steps with my brothers and entertaining my family.*



Kalsang performing

**Q: How best do you think you could make a difference for preserving Tibetan tradition and culture?**

***Kalsang:** I believe in living wisely and giving hundred per cent from one's side when composing, choreographing and performing for the Yarkyi (annual festival) and other occasions. We all have been doing well in preserving our culture and we always will. We all work together really hard to make new Yarkyi better than the last one. In my opinion, like every time when we do better, we are preserving our culture better. Now our audience is growing swiftly and even small kids are interested in Yarkyi Songs. This is the change I've noticed and this one is the best so far.*

**Q: Which performing art form, you love the most. Why?**

***Kalsang:** I like all performing arts, but performing Opera is so unique and beautiful. So, I like performing Opera the most. I feel so connected to the spirit when I do Opera and it makes me complete, wise and elevated.*

**Q: Who is your role model and why?**

***Kalsang:** My role model is Madam Nyima Dolma la. She is music and dance teacher of Gullathalla, Sambhota school. I still remember the way she teaches us. She is so cool and down to earth in nature. Her dedication and determination have always inspired me. She has been one of my favourite teachers, and all the students love her. Madam Nyima Dolma la and Gen Sonam Dorjee la helped me to get an audition from TIPA in 2008. Gen Sonam Dorjee la taught me first ever Namthar in my life and Today, I am here only because of them.*

**What is your future Goal?**

***Kalsang:** I am here to learn and educate myself through every possibility of our rich tradition and culture. In the near future, when I get an opportunity to showcase our culture, I will do my best and show the world that our culture and tradition is unique and beautiful. His holiness always reminds us that our ancient culture is significant and it has to be concerned*

*and preserved. So, it is my goal to achieve his holiness wishes that he has from us and follow his advises.*

*I feel myself a very lucky person to be a part of this beautiful institute and I am very grateful to this institute, my teachers, staffs and students as everyone is working so hard for the one goal to preserve our traditional culture that is facing the threat of extinction. This institute has played a main role to make me a person that I am now. Thank you.*

### **VIRTUAL CONCERTS**

Covid -19 with its lockdowns and restrictions in India has meant the wonderful artistes at TIPA have been unable to travel and perform in major cities around the world. Despite this they were still able to record two stellar performances for the Seattle Tibet Fest in the US, to be held in late August to the great delight of those attending or watching virtually. The Fest is held every year to explore the culture, history and traditions of Tibet. Some of the artistes performing are seen below.



### **DALAI LAMA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

TIPA is the first cultural Institute established by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and is extremely grateful to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama for the countless teachings he has given to the Institute over the years. To celebrate his life and achievements on his 86th birthday, the Institute released two new songs named “Kye Nga Yi Nyinda Karsum” and “Lhaja Karmoe Ding Yang” (A traditional mani chanting)

## PURUWALA

Tenzin Kunga, General Secretary Puruwala has recently written with some good news that the lockdown is over in India and the COVID situation is getting better with no new cases at Puruwala. School students are still undertaking online learning and the vaccination program is continuing for everyone over 18 years of age.

On July 8 at Puruwala second doses of the COVID vaccine were completed for everyone 45 to 59 years with a total of 70 people seen on that day. Tenzin Kunga has played a key role in the very successful program.



## TIBETAN HOMES FOUNDATION

### EXCERPTS FROM GENERAL SECRETARY KARMA CHUNGDAK'S ANNUAL MESSAGE

Please read this lovely message in which Karma Chungdak talks about the pandemic, gives a message of hope and encouragement and praises the sponsors.

*"First of all, I would like to congratulate each and every one of you for the amazing history made by this institution in All India CBSE class XII examination result this year. It is all because of the collective efforts made by all the stakeholders throughout the year, especially, the concerned students and teachers.*

*The year was certainly one of the most challenging years we had come across but I am proud to say that we took this as a challenge and brought out the best in us, and discovered many new avenues which certainly could not have unfolded in a normal year.*

*Our vision and goal for the coming year are crystal clear and I am confident that we can achieve them regardless of the pandemic because I believe in each and every one of you, and the selfless dedication you have towards this institution.*



*Regardless of everything that's going on, I would like to remind you all to believe in yourself because the world starts from you and you are enough to bring change in this world. The pandemic will soon come to an end but you will still be here. Therefore, make sure that you water the seed within you so that it sprouts and blooms into the most beautiful flower not just for you but for the entire humanity.*

***We are very grateful to all the generous sponsors and donors for their continued commitments towards supporting our institution during these hard times without which we would not have achieved anything. I thank each and every one of them from the bottom of my heart."***



Student receiving her certificate  
**JAMYANG CHOLING NUNNERY**

**Excerpts from the 2020 Annual Report of Jamyang Choling Institute**

*"It was confusing and lot of fear and feeling uncertainty occur among us, especially among the young nuns. March to June, we mostly stay in individual room doing retreat and meditation. Fortunately, teaching of Buddha benefit enormously how to deal with the time of uncertainty and use our time in practicing, meditation and recitation different mantra and prayers so that we can keep both physical and mental health fit."*

**Future plans:**

*"We have plan to construct a roofed debate yard and student accommodation about 12 rooms on top of the debate yard but due to the Corona virus pandemic, all the construction plans and outdoors works plans are cancelled or postponed. Hopefully, once the pandemic goes away and everyone is fully vaccinated of Covid, we will be able to start our plan to build a few retreat huts so those who wish to do short and long-term retreat, either nuns or women friends in Buddha Dharma can do their practices in the favourable environment. Another dream is to build few extra classrooms-cum Library and accommodations to provide free education facilities during winter summer vacation on Tibetan language, Basic Buddhist*

*principle and introduction to Buddhism to school children and college students throughout the year.*

***We thank all our friends and supporters for your generous and caring support for our educational program, which we value so much. We are also grateful to those who have donated their time and energy to our nunnery, and to those who have encouraged and appreciated our work. Your support is indispensable for our ongoing success, and we give thanks and prayers for the well-being of all our supporters and friends each day. We wholeheartedly thank you for your continuing support of Jamyang Choling Institute.”***

## **TILOKPUR NUNNERY**

Tilokpur is a small nunnery and in the past, the nuns had been hampered in their abilities to develop and sustain themselves by the general lack of education.

The Tibetan Nuns Project, which supports several nunneries has helped them start regular classes in Tibetan, Buddhist philosophy, and English. and helped them purchase new books, including Buddhist philosophy and math textbooks. The nuns have also formed a management committee that is administering the internal activities of the nunnery. The office is also better equipped technically with a new computer, fax, and printer, and two nuns have completed a month-long computer training course.

Early in the coronavirus pandemic, **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** advised people to chant the **Green Tara mantra** because it would be *“beneficial for effectively containing the spread of the virus”*. He has asked people suffering from the disease to chant the Tara mantra to maintain peace of mind and remain free from worries. The nuns have a weekly Tara practice.

**Below is a beautiful depiction of Green Tara. The Tara mantra is**

***Om tare tuttare ture svaha.***



## **DELEK HOSPITAL**

### **TFG DONATION**

Throughout the pandemic the dedicated staff of Delek Hospital have helped local Tibetans and any others in need. We at TFG think Delek Hospital is a very worthy cause and we are so grateful to those generous supporters who donated funds to the hospital. We are proud to say that in July we have been able to send the amount of **\$3250.00** to Delek Hospital.

### **VOLUNTEER TIBETAN NURSES**

Recently in Dharamsala a welcome ceremony took place to welcome fourteen Tibetan volunteer nurses who have offered their assistance and services to the Tibetan community for over a month during its fight against the second wave of the Coronavirus in India. These nurses, seven from the US and seven from different parts of India were deployed to various schools and settlements scattered across India. Many dignitaries attended the ceremony including the Chief Administrator of Tibetan Delek Hospital, Dr Tenzin Tsundue.



## **STSS (SAMBHOTA TIBETAN SCHOOLS SOCIETY)**

### **THANKS TO SPONSORS AND A PLEA FOR MORE HELP**

Below are excerpts from a letter sent to Noelene Snyder, TFG Settlement Secretary for STSS from Tenzin Norphel, Sponsorship Coordinator.

*“Good Morning and Tashi Delek*

*We hope and pray for the welfare and success of our ever-generous sponsors, who work hard every day and contribute part of their hard-earned money to provide free basic education to exile Tibetan refugee children here in India. This gift from our generous sponsor is indeed the best gift one can ever receive. For this, we are forever grateful and never take your generous support for granted as our sponsors have continued their unwavering support even during the global pandemic. Additionally, our generous sponsors don't let this pandemic cause any impediment to the education of destitute children. STSS truly appreciate this remarkable feat made possible by our generous sponsors.*

*We are initiating this letter to request your esteemed association to accept few new case histories as our new academic session commence recently. Since the beginning of this new academic session, STS schools have registered many new admissions. Besides, most of our destitute children don't have a sponsor. Hence, we would like to humbly request your eminent association to take few new cases, so that more children get a free basic education. As we believe basic education is a birthright of every child. Education is indeed a potent tool to broaden one's horizon and to lift one family from deep poverty.*

*Finally, as always we are truly indebted to our noble sponsors who are always there to step forward when it comes to helping and supporting the less privileged and making a concrete*

*change in the world and amplifying positive vibes. STSS truly appreciate your indelible contribution and applaud your altruistic nature.”*

Mr Tenzin Norphel finished with a quote from His Holiness the Dalai Lama:

**“BE KIND WHENEVER POSSIBLE, IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE”**



### **OUR THANKS AND HOW TO HELP**

We at TFG can only echo the words of thanks from the various settlements we support for your generous sponsorship and support. Without you we would not exist!

If you wish to make a one-off donation to TFG for Tibetans in India you can do so via the website or as per the details below. You can make a general donation or specify which Settlement you would like to help e.g. School, Nunnery, Elderly person etc. Any amount is appreciated and the full amount will be sent.

#### **CONTACT DETAILS**

MAIL: TIBETAN FRIENDSHIP GROUP AUSTRALIA (INC)  
PO BOX 1347, DEE WHY, NSW 2072  
EMAIL: [tfgpresident@gmail.com](mailto:tfgpresident@gmail.com)  
WEBSITE: [www.tfg.org.au](http://www.tfg.org.au)

#### **PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR DONATIONS**

CHEQUE: PAYABLE TO TIBETAN FRIENDSHIP GROUP AUSTRALIA (INC)  
DIRECT DEPOSIT: CBA BSB: 062 173 ACCOUNT NO: 2802 0635  
PAYPAL: VIA WEBSITE