

NEW DIRECTOR

Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology welcomes its new Director, Dr. Lama Thinley Dorji Bhutia, M.A., B.Ed., M.Phil., Ph.D. He hails from Yolmo community who had originally migrated from mainland Tibet to its southern part called Yolmo, which now comes under the kingdom of Nepal.

Himself being a Lama for the past 51 years and having forty years of teaching and 32 long years of administrative experience, he had started his career as a Tibetan Teacher at Darjeeling Government High School where he was also appointed as the Boarding Superintendent. He had successfully completed the Officers' training at Kampti and had also been a senior NCC Officer there.

In 1966 he was appointed Tibetan Professor at the Nation's prestigious Institution at N.D.A., Khadakvasla, Poona where he was also holding the ex-officio portfolios of Secretary, N.D.A. English School, Academic Councillor and Officer-in Charge, Indian Music Club. Besides being musician, he is also a good vocalist.

On completion of seventeen years of service at the N.D.A., he was appointed Director by the UPSC to head the Defence Institute of Foreign Languages, New Delhi under the Government of India. The students of the Institute where training in thirteen foreign languages of the globe is imparted, ranged from the rank of a Sepoy to General and equivalent. He has brought unprecedented changes in the

Institution by revolutionising and modernising the entire system. Under his direction he had successfully arranged several extra-curricular activities like National Seminar, Workshop, Literary Meet, Convocation and Cultural Programmes which were chaired by high dignitaries and attended by eminent indigenous and foreign scholars and educationists.

During his thirteen years tenure at Delhi, he was associated with several important organisations. He had been Chairman, Board of Examiners; Member, Faculty of Arts, Delhi University; Member, CEAL, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Member, CDCFL, University Grants Commission; Department Representative, UPSC; and Member, Selection Committee, All India Radio, New Delhi.

Besides acquiring the highest university degree in Buddhist Studies, in the field of Buddhism too he has equally a great achievement to his credit. He was born in a family in which the entire generations had been devout Lamas. His late father, grandfather, great grand-father and other earlier were all Lamas. In fact, it is said that deeper analysis will reveal that the Lamaic lineage of his family leads upto the summit where it reaches Guru Padmasambhava.

While he was an able administrator and astute educationist through his training in intellectual, moral and physical discipline, he also, throughout maintained a meditative and religious balance in his life.

Under the disciple-ship of the most prominent Gurus of our time, namely His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama, His Eminence Zamyang Khentse Chokyi Lodro, His Eminence Dilgo Khentshe Rimpoche and His Eminence Lama Damay Tshering, Dr Bhutia has successfully completed long retreats in all the four stages of accomplishments like Shiwa (peaceful), Rgyad-pa (expansion), Dwang (empowerment) and Drag-po (Wrathfulness), the accomplishment of which is imperative for a versatile Ngingma Lama.

At nine he was initiated as a novice Lama at Mag-dhog Monastery, Allobari, Darjeeling. Between 1943-50 he successfully

completed three of his retreats comprising three months duration each under the able guidance of his first Guru Lama Damay Tsering, who bestowed upon him three different kinds of initiation (Wang, Lung and Thri) concerning Peaceful (Shi-wa); Expansion (rGyad-pa) Empowerment (dWang) and Wrathfulness (drag-po) which are imperative to accomplish for a Lama belonging to Nyingma sect. In 1955 he received yet another two important initiation from no less than the living god His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama and His Eminence Jamyang Khentse Chokyi Lodro, popularly known as Jamyang Khentse Rinpoche. He received the empowerment (Wang and Lung) concerning Mani-Mantra of Avalokitesvara (Chenrezig) and Vajrapani (Chana Dorji) from these two eminent Gurus respectively. These were followed by yet another two months retreat (Tsham) in seclusion. Finally, he received the empowerment of the highest meditational practice, namely "Dzogchen" from Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche, who was the foremost non-sectarian Rinpoche and very highly enlightened master of meditation. Dr Bhutia again underwent one month's meditation to accomplish this empowerment. Also he had undergone several meditation courses at Igatpuri under the able guidance of Ven. S.N. Goenkaji. It may sound like a fantasy, but his own book reveals that the duration of meditation he has completed during his last 51 years in the capacity of Lama, if it is compared in terms of years, he has completed 13 1\2 years full time medication course. Besides being a Lama and expert in meditation, he is also highly proficient in Yoga. He has been practising Yoga for the last thirty two years along with meditation. He has accomplished a good deal of research in Buddhism and has written books entitled "Mahayana Buddhism" and "Contribution of Padmasambhava to Tibetan Buddhism". His latest publication "Beyond Eternity Through Mysticism" has gained momentum in popularity and is being widely read in India and abroad.

He assumed Director's charge at SRIT from July, 1994. He seems to be a strict disciplinarian and a hard task master. Right from the day he took over, he has started revamping, overhauling and tightening the entire administrative and educational system in this Institution.

We hope and anticipate that, with active cooperation and wise guidance of the President and the Honourable Members of this august Institution, he will be able to unite this confluence of Mahayana-Vajrayana with the mainstream of the country.

Being second to none in its field, Tibetology occupies a unique position in our planet. In keeping with its aims and objectives, within a couple of months of his taking over, on 5th September, 1994 Dr. Bhutia convened a crucial meeting of the General Council and the Executive Board, both of which are headed by His Excellency the Governor of Sikkim in his capacity as the President. In the meeting Dr. Bhutia projected an unprecedented master-plan to transform Tibetology to a Deemed University within a span of three year's time. Since the Executive Board found the proposal to be fool-proof and fruitful, the members unanimously accepted the plan. With this, a new chapter in the annals of SRIT history has begun. The proposed Deemed University will also be the 'torch bearer' for the holy land of Sikkim and its generations to come.

B. Ghosh
Assistant Director
SRIT