

DOLPO DHO DARAP FESTIVAL 2011
(Iron Rabbit Year 2138)



Famous Phoksundo Lake and the waterfall of Upper Dolpo

Introduction of Buddha Ribo:



Buddha Ribo pilgrimage the area comprising Dho-Tarap to Shey-Phuksumdho national park is believed to have blessed and consecrated by Guru Rinpoche and is further blessed and consecrated by many great scholars and founding fathers of Dolpo viz; Kunkhen Dolpo-pa, Ngari Pema Wangyal, Kathok Tsewang Norbu, Shabkar Chogdruk Rangdol and Gagar Rinpoche. Embodiment of holy and symbols or relics of these great teachers and lamas can be seen and whosoever see, hear, touch can have immense of spiritual beneficial.

Out of many places Guru Rinpoche visited in Dolpo, Phoksumdho Lake is one of them and the lake was said to have blessed by him dispelling all the evil spirits surrounding the lake.

The Buddha Ribo Festival is celebrated every 12 years in Dho Tarap Valley of the remote Dolpo District of Nepal. Next year 2011 Buddha Ribo festival falls on August 6th 2011 and will last up for whole year 2011. Pilgrims and visitors from neighbouring communities and districts come to participate and share their customs. It is a wonderful opportunity for them to renew old friendships and bonds. Youths get a chance to experience the rich tapestry which is their inherited culture and show off their performing skills to their elders and peers.



(Dolpopa women performing songs and dances during the festival) Gekar Tsering Tashi Rinpoche



(H.E. Rabjam Rinpoche)

This 12th year's celebration of Buddha Ribo Festival assume special significance as His Eminence Rabjam Rinpoche, the head of Shechen Monastery of the Nyingmapa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism will visit Dho-Tarap, upper Dolpo in from 12th Sept 2011 to 21st Sept' 2011. At Ribo Bhumpa Gonpa, Rinpoche will give empowerment on Kunchok Chidu and the rest Jachon podruk (teachings of Terton Rigzin Jatsön Nyingpo) to all the monk and lay followers and devotees from 14th to 18th Sept. Beside Rinpoche will acknowledge and preside on enthronement ceremony of Dolpo Gagar Tulku at Gagar Gonpa on 19th of September and consecration of stupas (chortens) at Jampa Gonpa on 20th Sept'. Along with that Rinpoche will consecrate a huge statue of Guru Padmasambhava in Ribo Bhumpa Gonpa on September.

On 20th of September Rinpoche will consecrate Jampa Stupa.



(a ritual festival)



(pilgrimages circumambulating the holy Buddha Ribo)

Herbal plantation ceremony by Rabjam Rinpoche will be held at Dolpo Mentsekhong on its 10th anniversary of inception and Inauguration of the Buddha Ribo festival will be held at Dolpo Mentsi Khang on 13th of Sept' 2011. Kungawa towards the development of Sowa rigpa during Tibetan king Trisong Deutsen who established first Samye Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Tibet during 8th Century and held ever first Tibetan Medicine conference there at monastery inviting traditional medical practitioners from the greater Himalayas and central Asian regions of Tibet, China, Bhutan, Mongolia and Nepal including Dolpo's famous Amchi Khyudmo Rutsi had started Amchi (Traditional Tibetan herbal medicine practitioner) This festival is mainly to recollect the practice did by great Amchi Khyudmo Rutsi. Rabjam Rinpoche will visit Crystal Mountain School, the only school in Tarap, patronized by Action Dolpo, France



(Stupas in front of Jampa Gonpa, Dho-Tarap)

Tourists and local people alike are enthralled by the horsemanship shown during the horse races, and the pride and artistic skills shown during dances such as masked dances, the sky burial dance, lama dances and dances performed by members of different communities and schools. Tourists will also be able to meet members of different local communities, visit the local school and local Mentsi Khang (Medical school) or Amchi Medical Centre and School and met experienced and trainee Tibetan doctors (Amchi).

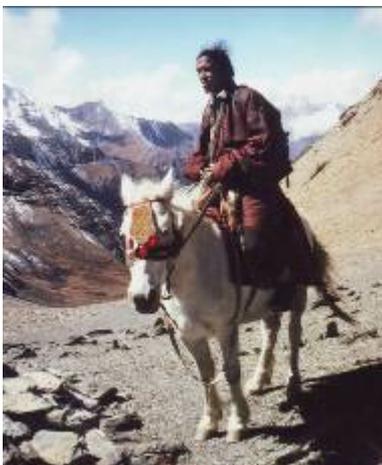


Mentsi Khang Building



Students of Dolpo

Pilgrims can be seen prostrating as they circumambulate round the sacred Buddha Ribo or mountain, a feat that takes seven days. Tourists will be able to witness pilgrims from many communities, who will not only be visiting Dho Tarap during this festival but will be arriving and departing throughout the year as the next Buddha Ribo Festival is more meaningful than usual.



A Dopopa on horse



(A spiritual festive dance)



(Organizers of the proposed Program in Dho-Tarap)

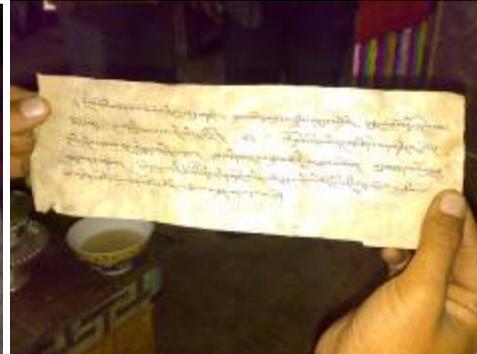
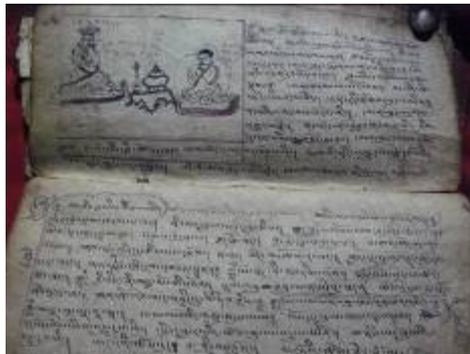
Articles to be exhibited during the ceremony



(Priest hat of previous Gakar rinpoche)



(Precious Ancient scriptures of Nyingma Gyudbub)



(Ancient Manuscripts found in Gakar monastery)



(Relics of 1st Gakar Rinpoche)



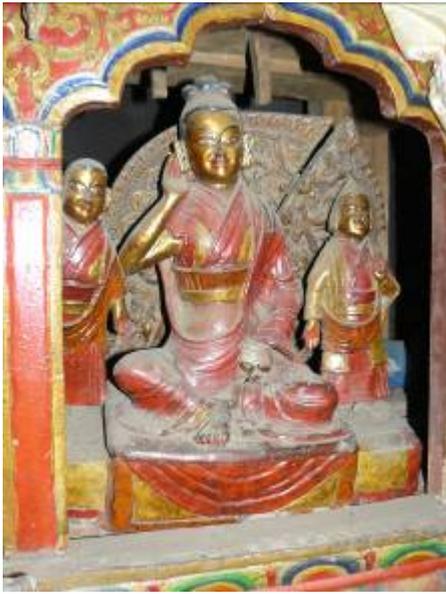


(Ribo Bhupa monastery on a lap of Ribo Buddha mountain, Dho-Tarap, Dolpo)

Enthronement

Scheduled for August 2011, the next festival will, as mentioned, be even more auspicious as the 7th reincarnation of Gakar Rinpoche will travel to Dolpo for the first time to be enthroned on 21st day of the 7th Tibetan month (18th Sept 2011). His Eminence Shechen Rabjam Rinpoche (from Shechen Monastery in Kathmandu) will be leading the enthronement ceremony as well as inaugurating the festival. Tourists and invitees can see the relics and other precious things of previous incarnations.

Gakar Rinpoche of Dho Tarap



(Zhabkar Choktul Rangdol, teacher of 3rd Gakar rinpoche)(6th Gakar Rinpoche)

Among all previous incarnations of Gakar Rinpoche, 3rd Gakar rinpoche Dongag Norbu hold special significance in the history of reincarnation of Gakar rinpoche. He was a great scholar of his time. He was a student of Shabkar Chodruk Rangdrol, who was a renowned scholar in all four traditions in Tibet. Ancient manuscript of biography and teachings of Shabkar rinpoche was collected by 3rd Gakar rinpoche is found in Gakar monastery, which was offered to HH Dilgo Khyentse rinpoche and published latterly. In brief 3rd Gakar rinpoche is as renowned as Kunkhyen Dolpo Sangye.

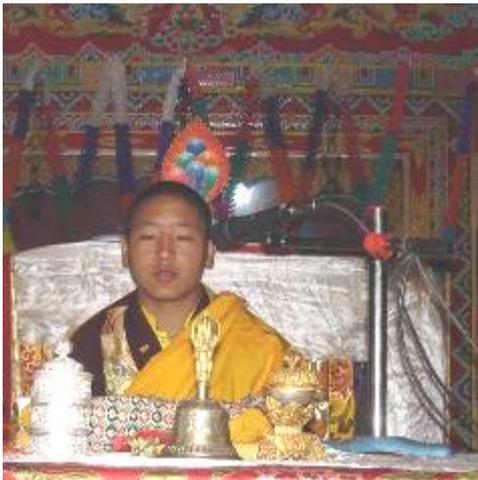


Spiritual dance performed by high lamas of Dolpo(Ngagpas, Yogis of Dolpo, who maintained their culture)

The year that the 6th Gakar Rinpoche died saw a rare very heavy snowfall in Dolpo. Just a few days before passing away he conducted a puja in the house of what was to be his 7th reincarnation's parents. Signs that Gakar Rinpoche was a truly remarkable man. On his passing, his body stayed in *thukdam* (meditative position) for 13 days – sign of accomplishing enlightenment.

When the 6th Gakar Rinpoche first met H. H Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and firm bond was established that lasted throughout their lives and continues still. Indeed, it was His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche who recognised the 7th reincarnation shortly before his own death. Today the bond continues as the 7th Gakar Rinpoche and H. H Dilgo Khyentse's reincarnation, are being trained together in Bhutan.

The 7th Gakar Chodrub Rinpoche of Dolpo



(pic of Reincarnation of 6th Gakar rinpoche)



(Pic of Gakar Monastery)

During the forthcoming Buddha Ribo Festival the 7th reincarnation of Gakar Rinpoche will be enthroned amidst splendour, humility and joy. Once again people will be able to pay respect to one of the most respected masters from Dolpo.

Born in 1991 in Mukot Village, Dolpo the 7th Gakar Rinpoche was taken to Kathmandu on a pilgrimage by his parents when he was six months old. There HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche stated he was a very special boy and gave him the name Rigzin Wangdu. Educated at home by his grandfather, himself a great master, Rigzin Wangdu came to Shechen Monastery in Kathmandu when he was eight to start his studies as a monk.

Around the same time, 1999, Amchi Lama Namgyal Rinpoche and nephew of Gagar Rinpoche Lama Chudub were asked to lead the search for the reincarnation of Gakar Rinpoche. Himself a relative of the former Gakar Rinpoche, Amchi Lama Namgyal Rinpoche was finally, in 2004, given a recognition letter specifying details of the reincarnation by HH Trulshik Rinpoche, the Supreme Head of Nyingma School. Delighted to find the boy was already a monk at Shechen Monastery, the group meet Rigzin Wangdu who treated them with great kindness and respect, just like his former incarnations.

Today the 7th Gakar Rinpoche is being trained in Bhutan and after his enthronement in Dolpo, will return to Bhutan to finish his training before finally taking up his seat in Dolpo in the future. The enthronement of Gakar Rinpoche is a great occasion for the people of Dolpo, who will benefit from an increase in Dharma, as will all sentient beings.



(Central Dolpo Buddhist monastery)

Dolpo



(two or three pics of dolpo)



(yogis practicing their spiritual tradition)

Dolpo region borders Tibet and its people, history and stories are intertwined with those of the Tibetan people. The very name Dolpo comes from the Tibetan word “dol” meaning overflowing, referring to the areas abundance of natural and mineral resources and manifestations of religious significance. With no motorable roads, life continues very much as it has done for centuries in this rugged and dramatic land. Holy men continue to be drawn here, one reason being that Guru Rimpoche or “the Precious One” destroyed three evil spirits, releasing the people of Dolpo from their tyranny. Legend has it that the Dho Tarap Valley was once filled with water and was the confluence for all the rivers of Dolpo. Controlled by the spirit of the lake a horse or “ta” of exceptional quality “ra”, came out from the lake, giving the valley its name.



(Snow leopard, Endangered species)



(Yak Caravan, only transportation in Upper Dolpo)

Life is hard in Dolpo with most households carrying out animal husbandry and trading with other Nepali mountain areas and Tibet through the use of yak caravans. A tradition such as the practice of Tibetan medicine continues. Amchis (Tibetan medicine doctors) use this ancient art of healing by utilising indigenous plants and medicinal herbs, assessment of the functioning of the bodies ‘humours’ and reaching a balance between the mind, body, spirit and physical environment. This holistic approach is based on the teaching of Buddha and thus qualified Amchis must have knowledge of religious philosophy, astrology and traditional painting.



(Students of Crystal Mountain School, Dho-Tarap) (Cultural dance performed by Dolpo Youths)

Religion is part of everyday life, with Buddhism being practised alongside the more ancient religion of Bon and the more recent Hinduism, prevalent in the more southern areas of the district. Sacred places abound in Dolpo, of interest to pilgrims, philosophers, anthropologists, architects and the lay person alike. Gompas (monasteries), caves, hermitages and other sites of importance to the Buddhist religion attract pilgrims as well as trekkers, who travel for many days to reach Dolpo. One pilgrim site is the Buddha Ribo or Mountain near Dho Tarap which was blessed by Guru Rimpoche when he meditated there. This is celebrated every year but the Year of the Rabbit is particularly auspicious and attracts pilgrims and villagers from far and wide to participate in this 12 year Buddha Ribo Festival.

Today tourism is only just beginning to reach Dolpo through long treks into its environment of high cliffs, wild beauty, and unique flora and fauna. Rare animals such as the beautiful snow leopard and blue sheep are to be found living in this rugged landscape. Various initiatives by community members and the World Wild Life Fund (WWF) are in place to ensure these species continue and their habitat does not degrade through conflict with resident humans or non-eco friendly tourism.

With 2011 seeing the return and enthronement of Gakar Rimpoche in his 7th reincarnation to his main seat at Gakar Monastery, it is anticipated that this will be an event to attract those tourists who value the rich cultural heritage of others and who have a wish to witness something unique and unequalled.



(Phoksundo Lake, the deepest lake of Nepal)

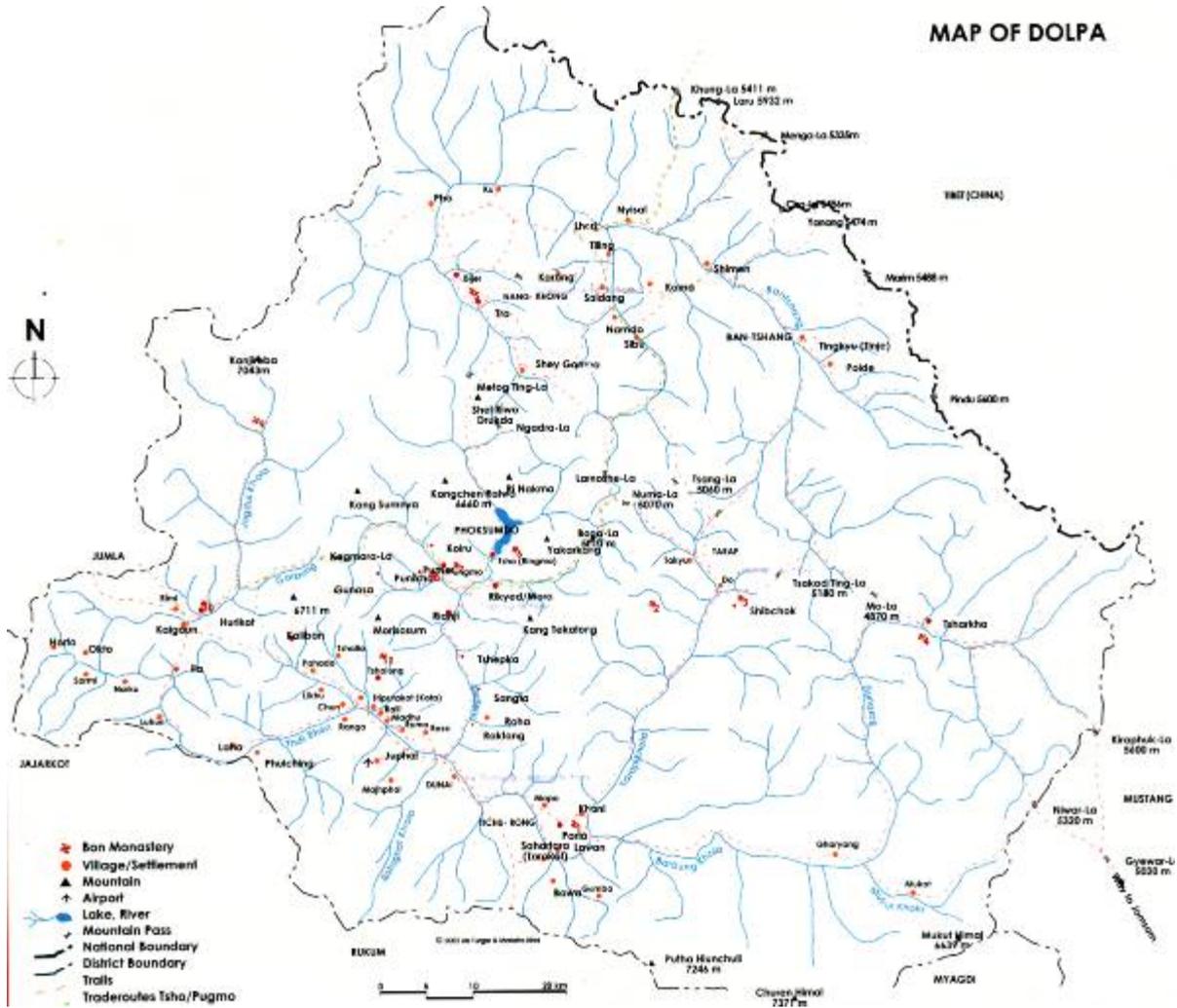


(tib. Adong Phuril, a rare high altitude medicinal plant)

Tourism Year 2011

With Nepal as a whole celebrating “Tourism Year 2011”, a trip to Dolpo would be an interesting and enlightening addition to any tourist’s itinerary. Even if it is not possible to visit during the most auspicious time of the enthroning ceremony, visitors to Dolpo will be able to see pilgrims coming and going to Dho Tarap Valley during the whole of the Tibetan year (March 2011 – Feb 2012) as well as being able to enjoy the majestic beauty of Dolpo including the clear blue waters of Phuksundo Lake.

Dolpo can be reached by plane from Nepalgunj to Juphal then by foot for four days to Dho Tarap combining a trip to Phuksundo Lake and passing beautiful scenery and chortens, Gompas and mani walls on route.



This great festival is going to organized cooperatively by Dolpo welfare community, Vision Dolpo and Dolpo Mentsi Khang along with Village Development Committee.

please visit us detail in [URL:www.dolpo.info](http://www.dolpo.info) and contact us at amchidolpo@yahoo.co.in

10th of September

Welcome to His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche

Rinpoche will fly from Nepalgunj to Dolpodistrict, Dunai. Rinpoche will visit the Central Dolpo Buddhist monastery, blessings and public talk for the locals.

11th of September

His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche will be welcomed to Dho Tarap valley, and the inauguration of Dolpo Buddhist Festival.

12th of September

His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche will preside the enthronement ceremony of HE Dolpo Gagar Tulku Rinpoche at Gagar Gonpa

13 to 18th of September

His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche will bestow the empowerment, transmission and related instructions of Jatson Nyingpo's 6 volume of cycle of terma teachings.

19th of September

Consecration of statue of Padmasambhava at Ribo Bhumpa Gonpa

20th of September

His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche will consecrate the newly renovated 8 Stupas by Dolpo Tulku Rinpoche at Jampa Gonpa

21st of September

Tenshug offering to His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche for his Long Life by Dolpo people.

22nd of September

His Holiness Rabjam Rinpoche will visit Phoksundo National Park for sightseeing and fly back to Kathmandu.