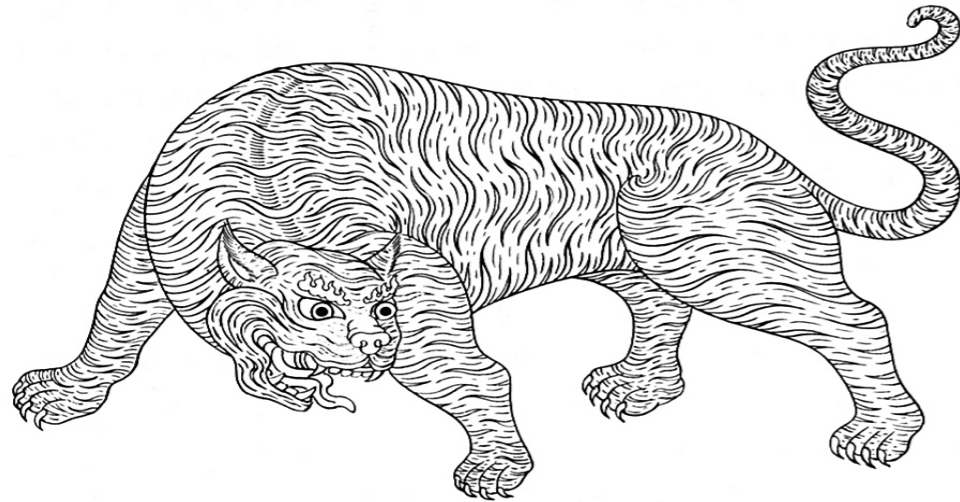


We thank you very much for your support!
All the best for the coming powerful iron tiger year

Marietta Kind, Jenny Bentley
and the Tapriza Team



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NEWSLETTER 2010

Successful graduation – What comes next?

In spring 2009 the first ten students left the Tapriza School after ten years with the school-leaving certificate in their hands. They passed their exams with excellent grades and are among the best fifteen students of the district Dolpo, including first place. Now the doors are wide open for them, and they venture on to further education. In Nepal students can continue an advanced schooling for two years after completion of Class 10. This is called Class 10+2 or Associate Degree. With the completion of these two years the students receive the higher education entrance certificate, which means they can study at a university or college. Unlike the Swiss schooling system, Class 10+2 is already taught in a university institution.



The first ten graduates from Tapriza School

Of the 10 former students two are staying in Dolpo for financial and family reasons and are enrolled in the Class 10+2 at the government college in the district headquarter Dunai. However, there only the humanities program is offered as a field of study.

The main problem with government colleges in Nepal is that the political parties instrumentalise and pressurise the students there. Frequent demonstrations and strikes of the student representatives of various parties strongly affect the quality of education, the curriculum is put across inadequately, exam results can be delayed by up to one year and the results are at times 'bought' in the end. Therefore, a certificate from a government college is not acknowledged in the private sector. For this reason the eight remaining students decided to enrol in a private college in Kathmandu to do their Class 10+2. In the capital they have access to high quality education. Thanks to their excellent school-leaving certificates (SLC) from the Tapriza School some of them can even opt for the science division with emphasis on mathematics.

The two girls could start their further education with the support of *WWF Nepal* and a scholarship from the *Soroptimist International Union Switzerland* and *Club Zürich*. Together they are attending Class 11 in the humanities division with the main subjects communication, tourism and English. While Sherab Sangmo is attempting a degree in humanities, Pasang Dolma would like to become a trained nurse and return to her home in Dolpo to support the region with her medical knowledge. She took the corresponding entry exam and started with the study of humanities in the time period until the results came out. By now the news has come that she has passed the entrance exams. This gives her the right to start the education at a college in Nepal. Unfortunately, in Kathmandu most of the places are already occupied. Now discussions are being held about where she should start the nurse training, so that the village girl does not have to do her education away from her fellow students in an unknown city.

The three boys with the best grades in their school-leaving certificates, Khamsum Lama, Nyima Gyaltzen Baiji and Chime Baiji had the possibility to enrol into the

science program. The successful graduation from this division grants access to study medicine, architecture, engineering or science. This program is the most difficult and competitive. No one from northern Dolpo has ever had the possibility to achieve this higher education entrance certificate. Khamsum Lama, the student with the best grades in the entire Dolpo, is receiving financial support from the Swiss organisation *Stipendien zur Selbsthilfe*.

“Now I am studying in the science program because in Dolpo there are many possibilities on this field. After completion of my Class 10+2 I want to be a district forest officer because in our locality the environment is in a very bad condition. The forest is being cut down day by day and the people do not care about the current situation. Therefore, I want to learn forestry and do something against the miserable condition of the forest.” Chime Baiji, 17.

The other three boys, Tsewang Gyalbo Lama, Gyamtso Rokaya and Namgyal Gurung have started Class 10+2 in management studies with the main subjects tourism, hotel management and business management.

“I would like to be a hotel manager because my land has so much natural richness and beauty. Many tourists come to my village, but we have no infrastructure or accommodation for them.” Namgyal Gurung, 17.

Private schools are more expensive than government schools. Our graduates receive a small price reduction because they come from a remote area and from financially disadvantaged families. Their parents help them in the range of their possibilities but this is barely enough for food in Kathmandu. Therefore, the graduates spent their time between the final exams in spring and the beginning of further education in late summer in Dolpo and picked the valuable and much desired caterpillar fungus



“Yartsa Gumbu”. So they earn some money to pay the entry fees and the first part of their education. As mentioned, we could arrange scholarships from Switzerland for both girls and one boy, the others are however still looking for assistance. All contributions to our newly established scholarship fund are more than welcome so that the further education and professional careers of our former students can be supported. A future vision would be a Dolpo student’s home in Kathmandu to cut down the costs of accommodation. Further, in a shared home the students from Dolpo could support each other and preserve a part of their culture.

Tapriza School in Dolpo

In Dolpo the school lessons continue as usual for the younger students. Thanks to the success of the first graduates and the growing good reputation of the Tapriza School in the district the demand to enlist at the school is ever increasing. Parents from Dunai and other distant places brought their children to the school, already supplied with the yearly requirements of food and parent contributions so that their children would find a place at the Tapriza School but there is not enough capacity to accept all children applying. Therefore, for the first time fair



and transparent rules for the school admission had to be negotiated. First priority though is for the children of the region Phoksumdo because the school is well-grounded here and was built with the support of this region and the parents. The school quality would suffer under an increased growth, additionally the premises and the land are limited.

Besides the rush of new applications, other schools in northern Dolpo requested us if their students could attend the secondary level from Class 6 to 10 at our school, so that they do not have to provide this facility in the wintery north. At present we are reviewing our capacities and respective possibilities. It remains our hope that in future the other schools in Dolpo can improve their quality, the secondary schooling can be provided locally, and in this way education is uplifted in the entire Dolpo.

Unfortunately, at present it is a problem to find skilled teachers for mathematics and science who are willing to work in a remote area for a reasonable salary. In 2009 the regular mathematic teacher could not teach at the school due to his father’s severe illness and until today no replacement could be found for him. Therefore, three graduates took the time to teach the students. They spent the spring and summer in Dolpo – as mentioned they were picking Yartsa Gumbu to earn money for their education. Still they found time to help “their” school and give their knowledge on to the younger students. We are thankful for their dedication and connection with the school! Maybe one or the other will return to the Tapriza School as a teacher – this of course would please us!



Captions

1. Sherab Sangmo and Pasang Dolma Rokaya, the first girls of the region to successfully complete Class 10
2. Celebrating the passed final exams
3. Felicitation of the ten students with *kbatas* for their excellent results
4. Semduk Lama thanks the district president and the education department for their support
5. The district president honours the students with a *tika*
6. Nagendra Budhatoki explains the excellent results of the Tapriza students in the district headquarter Dunai. All of them passed, 90% of them in the first division.
7. The entire Tapriza family 2009

photos: Semduk Lama, Ram Chandra, Tapriza students
Text: Jenny Bentley und Marietta Kind



Advance notice GA & event note

General Assembly Tapriza Verein NGO

Friday, 28th of May 2010, 19:00

Centrum 66, Hirschengraben 66, CH-8001 Zürich

www.tapriza.org

Bön Master Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Chöd Practice in the Bön Buddhist tradition: „Chöd - Cutting through Fear and Attachment, Cultivating Generosity“

22-25th of April, from 10:00-17:00, Volkshaus Zürich

www.garudaszweizerland.org