



# FRIENDS OF TIBETAN SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA (FOTSI)

## Annual Report and Newsletter for 2023-2024 Projects in Mundgod and Other Tibetan Settlements



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## *Food, Education, Health, and Cultural Survival for Tibetan Refugees in India*



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## **Financial Report for 2023** (ref. IRS Filing, BDO (Boulder Office))

Use <https://www.sos.state.co.us/ccsa/pages/search/basic.xhtml>, type “FOTSI” and click on “Search.” Wait to see details. **Our 2024 Report will be in the 2024-2025 FOTSI newsletter.** We wait to check that the IRS, the state of Colorado, and our records all agree.

### **Income 2023**

Donations	\$ 64,488
Interest/dividends	\$ 4,287
Other Income (bank reward)	\$ 77
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 68,852</b>

### **Expenses 2023**

<b>Program service</b> (see details below)	<b>\$ 71,599</b>
Program service expenses (travel)	\$ 4,330
Fundraising (newsletter, mail, copies, software, printing, supplies)	\$ 816
Administrative (IRS reports \$2,325 -18 mos., state fees, PayPal)	\$ 2,460
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 79,205</b>

### **Program Service Details 2023**

<b>Education Aid (part of Program Service)</b>	<b>\$36,146</b>
College/nursing scholarships, school fees (TCV), Dre-Gomang School (DGS), Sambhota Tibetan School hostel food, nuns' education	
<b>Health/Hygiene/Emergency Aid (part of Program Service)</b>	<b>\$14,180</b>
Representative Office Emergency Fund, monks/nuns medical, Gajang Hospital aid, crucial road repair project (Camp 9)	
<b>Sponsorships/Group Support (part of Program Service)</b>	<b>\$21,273</b>
Regular sponsored/aided people: 19/1 through Rep. Office, 14 nuns sponsored, 23/1 monks sponsored/aided, group aid at Elderly Home, nunnery's poorest and special needs, monastery's general needs, Lhamo Tsokpa Tibetan Performing Arts, health worker	

At year end 2023 FOTSI carried forward \$118,105, \$10,353 less than at the end of 2022. Early on as CFT/TSI and through 2006 as FOTSI, our program and direct service expenses exceeded \$353,618. Adding in only program service since then, we have sent out more than **\$1,418,521** for residents of Tibetan Settlements in India. As usual, **no salaries were paid to anyone in FOTSI.** We deeply thank all who donated for FOTSI's operating expenses! **We know most of our donors are aging and struggling to cover their own expenses. We always thank you all, from our “heartbone” as the Tibetans say, for your kindhearted generosity!**

These are troubled times for much of our world. Here I note many worsening situations in 2024 and 2025 for Tibetans in Tibet as well as in India. Although not often mentioned in our news sources, I always share these issues in the newsletter as they are the reason that FOTSI exists to offer what support we can. In addition, beginning in 2024 and continuing in 2025, some problems sprang up that impacted our ability to continue some of FOTSI's usual activities because of changes in laws and their interpretation by the government of India. But first, I will review news about Tibetans and Tibet to highlight that ongoing struggle as such news is heavily restricted by the Chinese government.

The most devastating and important news in Tibet is the increasing impact and scale of Beijing's closing of schools that use the Tibetan language and the forced enrollment of over a million Tibetan children, some as young as preschool age, in Chinese government boarding schools. Surveillance guarantees that most children are in those schools. To see the excellent New York Times article about that program you need to *search on the internet for "New York Times How China is Erasing Tibetan Culture One Child at a Time."* Also, *Frontline* presented the same issue and others in its February 18, 2025 documentary, "Battle for Tibet" also at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDyMHic\\_WGI/](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDyMHic_WGI/)



With the removal of children from their homes to boarding schools, the children's ties to their families have been cut as parents are generally not allowed to visit. The children are being steeped in the Chinese Communist Party's views and losing both the ability to communicate in Tibetan and knowledge of Tibetan culture. Chinese schools for Tibetans celebrate



"Serfs' Emancipation Day," which refers to the anniversary of the Communist Party's takeover of Tibet in 1959, driving the Dalai Lama into exile. As early as 2023, UN experts who visited expressed alarm at what they said appeared to be a "policy of forced assimilation of the Tibetan identity into the dominant Han-Chinese majority." If you search for "closure of schools in Tibet," you can learn more about some established Tibetan schools that have been forced to shut down. All the photos shown here are of Tibetan boarding school students.



In addition, environmental activists and whistle-blowers are being imprisoned on false charges, and some have had their sentences extended if they don't plead guilty. Examples are *Tsongon Tsering* whose sentence was lengthened: <https://tchrd.org/chinese-authorities-extend-tsongon-tserings-prison-term-for-defying-guilty-plea-pressure/> and *Karma Samdrup*, who was just released in bad condition and under surveillance after serving nearly 15 years in prison.



Karma Samdrup

Serious environmental damage in Tibet has been done by the Beijing government itself, even when doing so has broken its own laws. *A-Nya Sengdra*, a Tibetan nomad renowned in his local area for his campaigns against government corruption and serious harm to the environment from illegal mining, hunting and poaching of endangered animals, was finally granted a family visit

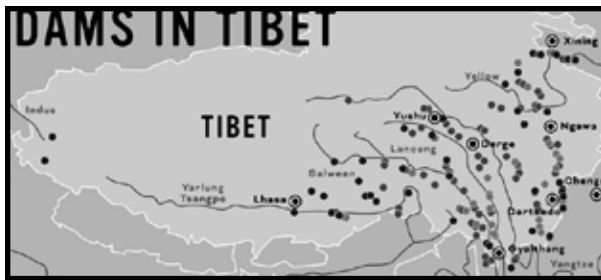


after six years in prison and was found to be in deteriorating health.



*A-Nya Sengdra*

The Beijing government's dam-building spree is understandable to an extent as their industrial growth and production do need increasing power, and hydropower has advantages such as apparent pollution reduction. However, hydropower is not a carbon neutral energy source. China's extremely zealous dam building has been and is being used to inundate monasteries, historical sites, water-based livelihoods, and villages that the government appears to wish to remove above and beyond the need for power generation. Dam building can also affect adjacent countries, as well as downstream Tibetans, that have long relied upon the water and the nutrient flow of newly dammed rivers. Many recent dam locations are not actually environmentally suitable due to increased risk of earthquakes, landslides, and flash floods. Affected communities and countries are not consulted about dam locations. See the article, "***Chinese Hydropower: Damning Tibet's Culture, Community, and Environment***" online at <https://www.savetibet.org/chinese-hydropower/> and the related article about cultural destruction: <https://www.savetibet.org/china-misuses-law-to-demolish-historic-atsok-monastery-for-dam-construction/> .



*Dams Operating, Under Construction, & in Early Stages*



*Huge Dam Projects Underway*



*Villagers Protesting Dam, Yena Monastery*

Another major problem for Tibetans is the multi-pronged attack on the use of the Tibetan language in Tibet. Removing children from their homes where Tibetan is spoken to Chinese-language based boarding schools is Beijing's major strategy in that regard. In addition China has banned the use of Tibetan language on Douyin, the Chinese name for TikTok. This ban includes all streaming material. In films and photos of Lhasa one can see that most signs and storefronts there are in Mandarin Chinese. On various pretexts, the government persecutes and prosecutes those who actively defend the use of the Tibetan language like **Gonpo Namgyal**, a village chief, who was arrested and who died in prison at the end of December 2024 from severe beatings and burns from electric shocks he had received.



*Gonpo Namgyal*

Tibetan activists who point out the many human rights that are violated, such as freedom of speech; of assembly; of internal travel; of religion; or of unlawful arrest, detention, and torture, are routinely imprisoned after secret or rigged trials. The Chinese Human Rights Defenders website wrote that the UN had documented 168 cases of forced disappearances of Tibetan, Chinese, and others in China as of 2022. In 2024 and early 2025, we learned of more Tibetans who are known to have been arrested, tortured, or who have died in prison, often with no prison visits or viewing of a dead prisoner's body allowed. Singer **Golog Palden** was lucky; in the fall of 2024 he was released early from a three-year sentence imposed at a secret trial for performing a "patriotic song." He was warned of rearrest if he performs any song deemed to be "politically sensitive."



*Golog Palden*

**Tsedon**, a second-year undergraduate at Tibet University in Lhasa, died in detention two weeks after she was arrested in December 2023. It was only then that her family was informed of her arrest. They were told that she had been under investigation for a year “for many reasons.” Officials refused to return her body to her family, who suspect that she was beaten and tortured to death by Chinese police. Tsedon tutored and helped numerous students.



*Tsedon*

**Ven. Jampa Choephel**, a monk from Penkarthang Monastery in Amdo Rebkong (now Tongren, Qinghai), reposted a speech by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Tibetan National Uprising Day (March 10) using his WeChat account. He was under surveillance because he had left Tibet in 1986 and studied at the Institute of Dialectics in Dharamsala before returning to Tibet in 1996. Most of his time was dedicated to meditation retreats and spiritual practice. He was skilled in both Tibetan calligraphy and English. He was arrested in March 2024 and is still in prison. In November 2024, another longtime monk, **Ven. Gedun Losel**, 38, from Sera Monastery was beaten to death in a prison in Lhasa. His crime was “sharing information with outside sources about the situation in Tibet.”



*Ven. Jampa Choephel*

Here we give only a few examples of the dangers and lack of freedom Tibetans have been enduring for a long time. Unfortunately, the noose seems to be tightening, not only for Tibetans, but also for Uyghurs and other minorities. In February 2025, **Namkyi**, an exiled Tibetan activist and former political prisoner, addressed the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy. Her talk explained in detail, “we have no freedom in Tibet.” That refrain was also heard at the UN Human Rights Council in July 2024, where clear criticism of China’s abuses in Tibet was voiced, and in a “Joint statement on the human rights statement in Xinjiang and Tibet” from Australian speakers who delivered the same message.



*Namkyi in Geneva*

The tightening noose on freedom in Tibet seems worse every year. The varieties of surveillance, including the almost ridiculous, is increasing, with both high-tech cameras and digital software, and low-tech spying, like cameras disguised as prayer wheels and food delivery services incorporating police spies.



*Prayer Wheel Camera in Lhasa*



*Earthquake, near Shigatse Jan. 2025*

In addition to all their other challenges, Tibetans near the town of Shigatse suffered a major earthquake that killed at least 126 people, possibly 400, and injured at least 388, according to Wikipedia. Tibetans everywhere, including the USA, said prayers for the deceased for their customary seven weeks after death. The usual celebrations of Losar in late February 2025 were muted on that account. There are many reports of this earthquake on the internet.



*HH Dalai Lama Escapes Tibet 1959*

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will celebrate his 90th birthday on July 6, 2025. In June 2024, he underwent a successful knee replacement surgery at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City and spent time recovering there. So much has happened since he escaped from Tibet after China invaded in 1959. He has been very active since his surgery, traveling, speaking and meeting individuals and groups in person and online. In January 2025 he went to the Tibetan Settlement in Bylakuppe, India, and met many

people individually, including most of the elderly from the Old People's Home in Camp 3 who were bussed from the Mundgod Settlement 250 miles away. He also met others, including a FOTSI donor and a young Tibetan woman, formerly sponsored by FOTSI, who is now a physical therapist in India. His Holiness has been trying to counter the Chinese government's attempts to choose the next Dalai Lama and other Tibetan



*President Tsering & HHDL*

Buddhist leaders traditionally NOT selected by any government. Last year the democratically elected President, Penpa Tsering, of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile referred reporters to a 2011 document from His Holiness that says that when he (HHDL) reaches the age of 90, he will consult the senior Buddhist hierarchy concerning his reincarnation. He has long tried to keep China guessing, but he was crystal clear on March 10, 2025, when he declared that his reincarnation will be "in the free world, not in China."



*HH Dalai Lama Meets OPH Elder*

An abrupt surprise that FOTSI and I have faced since April 2024 has to do with the aid that we have sent for decades to the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA), a charitable nonprofit in the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement. I had sent \$3,840 to the DGBCA in April to help with sponsorship of Tibetan refugee monks, a health fund for ill or injured monks, needy lay people in emergencies, and the Drepung Gomang School. These projects are among FOTSI's earliest and most helpful projects and have amounted to about a third of all the funds we wire to India. I was shocked when \$3,790 was returned to FOTSI's account, with \$50 removed as a penalty. We also received a message that the DGBCA was no longer FCRA-compliant due to enforcement of the **updated FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) Indian law**. The DGBCA's staff was shocked too. They were told that some nonprofits had abused the system, but that the DGBCA could easily be FCRA-compliant again if they reapplied to be compliant and got a new State Bank of India account. They worried that the staff to handle the tens, or perhaps, hundreds of thousands of re-applications, was not increased and had perhaps even been cut. "Don't worry," the DGBCA was told, "all will be fine in 6 months." The school and monks would have to wait. That deadline passed. The DGBCA *still* has no FCRA status, even after three monks went to New Delhi. No one there even agreed to meet them. The DGBCA and I have sought ways for FOTSI to continue funding its projects for almost a year.

We spoke to administrators of The Tibet Fund and learned that they had encountered similar problems. The good news is that, as of January 2025, we have found a new FCRA-compliant way to support the Drepung Gomang School, and a legal way to send funds to the monks' health committee. We will have to send all emergency aid for laypeople through the Tibetan Settlement Office. We plan to send all funds for individual monks directly to the bank accounts of a subgroup of them to distribute to the

others so we don't have to wire funds to more than 20 separate accounts. Various rules do not allow us to send individual sponsorships to the monastery. The internet has articles entitled, "Modi government's crackdown on FCRA cripples civil society organizations," and "FCRA: The background, the myths, and the facts." All the problems the Indian government cited as reasons the new law was needed don't apply to FOTSI. A knowledgeable Indian friend said that apparently Iran had sent large sums of money to fund charities that were fronts for terrorist organizations, and there were other abuses with some "religious" connection. I wondered if the "Buddhist" connection could be an issue.

The Mundgod Tibetan Settlement has had staff changes affecting FOTSI in 2024 and 2025. A new Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO), appointed in late 2024 did not stay, and another TSO, Ms. Rinchen Wangmo, was recently announced. Our longtime FOTSI sponsorship facilitator, Dickyi Chodon, left the settlement and was replaced by Mr. Tenzin Choezin, who is working hard with too much to do. There is great concern about possible loss of aid for Tibet's Government-in-Exile and Tibetan refugees due to *staff cuts and the possible removal of funds from USAID*, now under threat from the Trump administration. What a shame, since all foreign aid is less than 1% of the USA's budget! Tibetans and others are also appalled at the possible elimination of VOA (Voice of America) and RFA (Radio Free Asia). RFA's website helped me write this newsletter! Xi Jinping recently praised President Trump for those efforts. Thirty-four Anti-Xi protesters outside a meeting Xi attended were harassed and assaulted by organized supporters of the Chinese Communist Party. Still, Tibetans have not been silent, as shown by their fall 2024 protest at the Chinese Embassy in Delhi.

On June 9, 2024, a memorial gathering was held at *Camp Hale near Leadville, CO*, to commemorate a formerly hidden CIA training facility for Tibetan freedom fighters. Tibetan leaders from around the world met that day at this old military base, where the 10th Mountain Division trained to fight Nazis during World War II. From 1958 to 1964, Camp Hale became "Dumra" (The Secret Garden) where the CIA secretly trained about 300 Tibetan soldiers before they parachuted into Tibet or did undercover work in India and Nepal. The soldiers were members of the Chushi Gangdrug citizens' army formed to defend the Dalai Lama, Tibet, and Buddhism from the Chinese People's Liberation Army. Many soldiers in that guerrilla army died when they went back to Tibet. The memorial was organized by the Anthropology Department and Tibet Himalaya Initiative of the University of Colorado. Dr. Carole McGranahan, a CU professor who wrote a book on Tibetan resistance soldiers, played an important role in this event.



C. McGranahan

Last June eight monks from the Drepung Gomang Monastery in the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement stayed at my home in Boulder County for six days while they met with local Tibetans and a few FOTSI donors, did house blessings, and were invited to visit the Renée Crown Wellness Center. What a great experience we had! They will be at my house again from May 9 to May 12, 2025. Let me know if you want to meet them. Visit the Tibetan Association of Colorado's website ([www.coloradotibetans.org](http://www.coloradotibetans.org))! Consider helping the *International Campaign for Tibet* ( [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org) )!



With love, Chela

**THANK YOU for helping Tibetans! Tashi Delek!**  
**Have a healthy, happy Tibetan Wood Snake Year 2152!**





*Geshema D. Choezom*

# *True Colleagues — People at the Heart of FOTSI's Work*

Without the wise advice and hard work of **many** Tibetans, our projects would never arise and flourish the way they do. Those most **essential in 2023-2024** are shown and described here.



*TSO Lhakpa Dolma*



*Migmar Tsering*

**Geshema Dawa Choezom** (Ven. Tenzin Norzom) — Nun who facilitates FOTSI's aid to nuns and needy lay people  
**Lhakpa Dolma** — Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO), formerly Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama in Mundgod (ORM), to fall 2024. In January 2025 **Rinchen Wangmo** became the TSO (photos on pgs. 14 and 24).



*Geshe Lobsang Sangyas*

**Migmar Tsering** — Secretary of Drepung Gomang Monastery who works expertly, tirelessly, and kindly with all



*Sangpo Rinzin*

**Geshe Lobsang Sangyas** — Manager of our general monks' health fund who helps Chela a lot, and works at Drepung Gomang Monastery in various capacities

**Sangpo Rinzin** — Principal, Sambhota Tibetan School in the Mundgod Settlement and Rector of the associated hostel. He was transferred to another Tibetan school in 2024. The new principal is **Namgyal Yemphel** (see pg. 18). The new rector of the hostel is **Tenzin Dakpa** (pg. 20).



*Kunga Lhundup*

**Kunga Lhundup** — Secretary of DGBCA who helps Chela when she visits India and also with extensive email



*Dickyi Chodon*

**Dickyi Chodon** — FOTSI's longtime sponsorship facilitator at the TSO served us through 2023; **Tenzin Choezin** took over in mid 2024 (no photo).



*Tamdin Dolma*

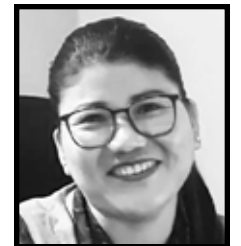
**Tamdin Dolma** — Director, Home for the Elderly (OPH)

**Dr. Kyizom** — Doctor of Tibetan Medicine and a big help in many ways, especially during Chela's visits to India



*Dr. Kyizom*

**Sonam Pelmo** — TSO Accountant



*Sonam Palmo*

## OTHER IMPORTANT COLLEAGUES INCLUDE

**Geshe Lobsang Monlam & Ven. Jampa Gyatso** — Gungru Khangtsen Health Committee leaders

**Tenzin Sangmo** — TSO Cashier

**Ms. Simki** — Tibetan Children's Villages (no photo)



*Geshe L. Monlam*



*Ven. J. Gyatso*



*Tenzin Sangmo*



# *Office of the Representative (ORM) (now the “TSO”)*

## *In 2023-24 FOTSI Continued Working with Mundgod’s Tibetan Settlement Office (TSO) on Youth, Elder, & Medical Needs*

FOTSI sent **\$27,274 in 2023 and \$29,367 in 2024** for all the aid projects it supports through ***the ORM, that is now officially known as the Tibetan Settlement Office (TSO)***. These projects provide sponsorship and aid to individuals and their families, as well as temporary, 2023-only, post-Covid catch-up support for school lunches, bus fuel and maintenance. We also sent the TSO funds for post-high school scholarships, emergency aid, the Home for the Elderly (OPH), a major road repair project for Camp 9, and “Lhamo Tsokpa,” a dedicated group of residents preserving Tibetan performing arts.

The head of a Tibetan Settlement used to be the “Representative” (of His Holiness the Dalai Lama), but now is called the “TSO” (Tibetan Settlement Officer). That can be confusing since TSO can also refer to the office whose staff runs the settlement. The ORM abbreviation is still used, but now the “Representative” represents the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) of the elected Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

In last year’s newsletter we wrote in detail about our 2023 special post-Covid aid to help fund the Mundgod settlement’s Sambhota Tibetan School lunch program and the school bus fuel and maintenance (usually covered by local Tibetans). FOTSI sent a total of \$4,730 that made a huge difference for local families.



## *Camp 9’s Massive Road Repair Project (2024)*

In last year’s newsletter (pg. 5), Chela wrote that during her visit to the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement in late 2023 she met with the ***Camp 9 Road Repair Committee, who thanked FOTSI for our donation (\$3,000)*** to their project. They said they hoped this badly needed project would begin in 2024. In February 2025, Tsering Yangzom, a Project Officer at the settlement, sent us a report on the successful completion of that project by locals and hired professionals at the end of September 2024. The project, costing 6,450,000 Indian rupees (about \$75,000), replaced almost a mile of bad Camp 9 roads.



*Road Prep Begins, Camp 9*

The funds were provided by the Central Tibetan Administration, FOTSI, and a few other sponsors, as well as contributions from the residents of Camp 9. The materials used included 52 truckloads of moram (heavy, red sand), 18 truckloads of 40 mm aggregate (small stones), 32 truckloads of river sand, 8,287 kg of steel, and 1,167 bags of cement. The reports from Tsering Yangzom included many photos, some of which are shown here and on following pages. These included snapshots of each stage of the work and one showing Mr. Penpa Tsering, President of the Central Tibetan Administration, heading the inauguration of the project (pg. 11).

## ***TSO - Camp 9 Road Project (cont.)***

In July 2024, the old internal road system was cleared and the ground leveled to provide a stable foundation for the new road. The road replacement began when the moram (red sand) was laid and leveled. Next an aggregate mixture was deposited and evenly spread, followed with compaction by large rollers. After that, concrete placement could begin. Concrete was mixed, poured into a constructed framework, and then leveled and compacted. After curing for several days, cleanup completed the work, and a happy celebration followed, as shown on the next page.



Project Officer Tsering Yangzom wrote to FOTSI that the new concrete road has brought immense benefits to the residents of Camp 9. Daily travel is much easier and safer, and the road's new surface has significantly reduced dust and mud, creating a cleaner environment and better health conditions. She added that it marks a significant milestone in improving the quality of life in the settlement.

# *TSO - Camp 9 Road and Drainage System Project*



**MR. PENPA TSERING, PRESIDENT (SIKYONG) OF THE  
CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION (CTA), DHARAMSALA,  
GRACIOUSLY INAUGURATED THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED  
INTERNAL ROAD OF CAMP NO. 9 DURING HIS OFFICIAL  
VISIT TO MUNDGOD FROM 25TH TO 28TH NOVEMBER, 2024.**

**THANK YOU!**

Ms. Tsering Yangzom just recently wrote, “We sincerely thank you (Chela) and FOTSI for your unwavering support in making this project a reality.” She added that, “During the road construction project, there was not enough funding to include the **drainage system**, which is essential to prevent cracks in the concrete due to rainwater as well as health problems due to stagnant water. On our side we are raising funds for this, but we will need help, and humbly seek your kind support again.”

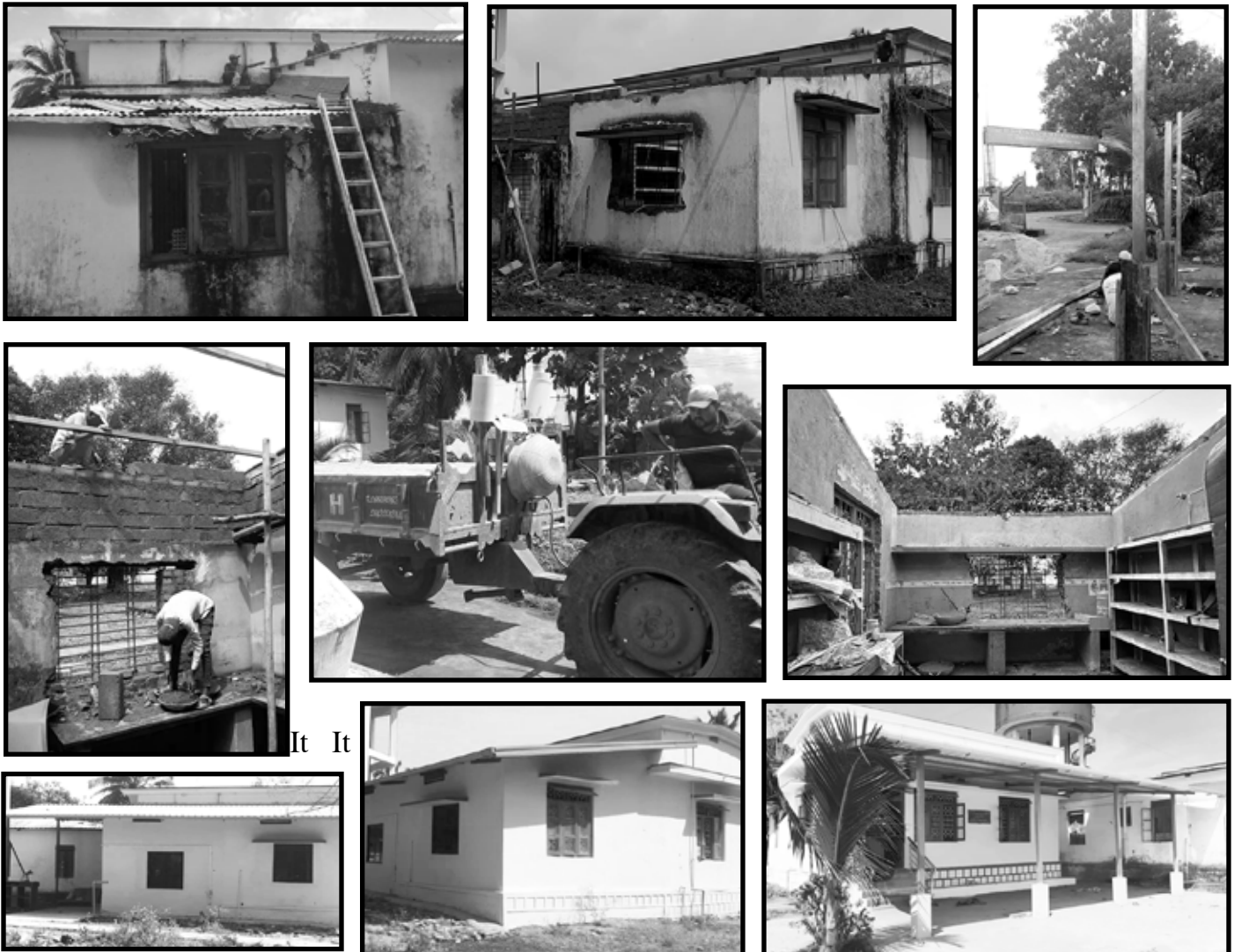
As we expected this second request might come, FOTSI is trying to help, and we hope to send a **modest** contribution before long, if possible. The total cost of this crucial piece is about \$94,600 (8,134,375 Indian rupees). We welcome **any** donation, however small, toward this end.



## ***TSO Aid to the Home for the Elderly (OPH)***

*In 2023 FOTSI sent the OPH \$2,500 for general purposes, and in 2024 we wired them \$7,772. The latter included \$1,772 for general purposes and \$6,000 to install new roofing and to make major repairs on their small office and larger food storage building* The new roof makes the building leak-proof and much cooler. The repairs sealed many holes that had allowed rodents and snakes easy access to the stored food and made the entire building more secure. Staff and volunteers had been afraid to enter the storage area of their building due to the snakes, and food had been rotting due to leaks.

On the next pages we share photos of residents plus news about additional services the OPH provides for the elderly in the Mundgod Settlement who don't live in the Home. Below are photos—before, during, and after completion of the much-improved office and food storage building.



It took some time for the Home's director, Tamdin Dolma, to find a good contractor who was willing to repair the existing building rather than build a new one. Finally, the project began and took three months, necessitating some inconvenience for the staff and residents. FOTSI received several emails full of gratitude, saying, "We thank you for your graciousness and kindness showered on us. You all are in our everyday prayers for your good health, happiness, success, and prosperity. Sent with lots of love and prayers," and "THANK YOU FOR BEING THERE FOR US ALWAYS."

## ***TSO Aid to the Home for the Elderly (OPH) (cont.)***

In late January 2025 FOTSI received an email about the services the Home provides the elderly residents of the Mundgod Settlement. These include both aid for the Home's residents and help for other elderly in the settlement who still live in their own homes. The head of the Home wrote, "Currently we have 50 residents, with 27 males and 23 females with 8 staff for their support. Of the 50 residents, 28 are above 80 years old. At present, we have 9 residents who are bedridden patients and need 24-hour care and support. Every day they are taken out of their rooms for their daily dose of sunbathing and also to have some refreshing/bonding time with other residents. Besides them, we have residents at home who are suffering from carcinoma, HIV, hepatitis, diabetes, high blood pressure, facial paralysis and other age-related diseases like arthritis, asthma and so on. Most of them are on allopathic or homeopathic medicine, or both."

FOTSI sponsors two residents who live at the OPH. One is **Tsering Choephel, 98**, who has kept his room and the OPH environment well-tended for years. He is happy at the OPH and has a lady friend there. They are rarely apart. Tsering and



*T. Choephel & Friend on Bus to Bylakuppe*



*T. Choephel Meets HHDL*

his friend were thrilled this year to be well enough to go on a **trip with all the other OPH residents fit enough to travel by bus the roughly 250 miles to Bylakuppe where they were able to individually meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama (HHDL) on January 8, 2025**. Our other sponsored person at the OPH is **Wangchuk Tsering**, who stays at the Home and eats his meals there. Director Tamdin Dolma wrote, "Wangchuk Tsering is doing well and DTR nurses help in providing the medicine on time for him." He still has serious psychological challenges, has trouble taking care of himself, and prefers to wander and spend time in the local cremation ground. Some people, and perhaps Wangchuk himself, think he is like legendary yogis in Tibet who did their spiritual practices in charnel grounds to focus on the realities of life and death. Unfortunately, Wangchuk Tsering was ill at the time of the trip to Bylakuppe, but he was given a gift from HH the Dalai Lama as were all OPH residents unable to go to Bylakuppe.



*W. Tsering*

Shanti Bhadriah's bequest to FOTSI a few years ago sent enough money to the OPH to sponsor **Tsokyi** for the rest of her life, so although FOTSI no longer sponsors her, she loves to visit with Chela during her visits to India and the Home. For years we have sent aid from one of our donors to **Sonam Tso, 96**. Her grandson found her in need of the Home's help and brought her there long ago. We used to send funds for her through the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA), but due to problems with the new FCRA laws in India



*HHDL Greets Tsokyi & Sonam Tso*

(see pgs. 6-7), we were unable to do that in 2024. We will send her aid through the TSO in 2025. FOTSI funds and sponsorships help all those whom the kind and hard-working staff of the OPH serve.



*Elders on the Bus & Boarding*

# TSO - Sponsorships, Aid, & Emergency Fund

In 2023 and 2024 FOTSI aided many Tibetan refugees — families, caregivers, young people, and elderly men and women in households and at the Old People's Home (OPH). ***In 2023 the amount for all regular sponsorships and extra help was \$3,863, and in 2024 it was \$4,690.*** In addition FOTSI sent the ***\$4,730*** in 2023 to supplement funds for school lunches and school buses. Donors sponsored and aided 22 people/families in 2023 and 21 in 2024.

A new Tibetan Settlement Officer, Ms. Tenzin Dhadon, was announced in late September 2024. We were sorry to see Ms. Lhakpa Dolma be transferred as is usual after three years and FOTSI had especially enjoyed working with her through the years following the major problems created by Covid-19 and its various consequences. However, a sudden change occurred in early 2025 when Ms. Dhadon was replaced by the recently appointed TSO, ***Ms. Rinchen Wangmo***.



*New TSO Ms. Rinchen Wangmo  
Signing Documents*



*K. Dolma*

Sponsorees include ***Ms. Karma Dolma***, 57, who suffered traumatic experiences early in her life. Although she needed deep vein thrombosis (DVT) surgery, she had to wait until a group of Tibetans could get this surgery at a discount from a good surgeon. Then she had some work she had to do and the needed surgery was put off. Fortunately, she was finally scheduled for the surgery in April 2025. We are hoping we will get good news about a successful surgery soon. Meanwhile a donor who saw our plea in last year's newsletter for a new sponsor for her stepped up, so we hope her life and health will improve.



*K. Dorjee*



*T. Dolma 2025*



*T. Dolma 2024*



*Sithar*

Last year Dolma Tsering requested that FOTSI switch her sponsorship to her then 83-year-old brother, ***Sithar***, who has high blood pressure and diabetes. This happened and we received a photo of him with a Christmas message of gratitude.

FOTSI has long sponsored ***Kalsang Dorjee***, who was partially crippled as a child. After caring for his grandparents, he works and helps his mother, ***Tsering Dolma***, who is losing her sight. She has consulted good eye doctors and tried various treatments, but so far none have been successful. FOTSI donors have provided funds



*P. Sangmo*



*Goki*



*Tsamchoe*

to help her find a solution but results have been discouraging. We continue to sponsor ***Phuntsok Sangmo***, 61, who cared for her mother for years, has had TB twice, can't do hard labor, but works with other Tibetans when they sell sweaters in big Indian cities. We also still support ***Goki***, 84, and his family—wife Lhaki, 83, and their son Tsering Dhondup who was hit very hard by TB as was Goki's whole family some years ago. ***Tsamchoe*** had a very difficult life for a long time. She cared for her sister who had severe diabetes, and then her strong son became ill and died of a devastating neurological disease. In early 2024 FOTSI sent funds to fix her collapsing latrine.



## ***TSO-Sponsorships, Aid, & Emergency Fund (cont.)***

FOTSI still sponsors **Dawa Bhuti** who is 87 and lives by herself in Camp 6. We also fixed her latrine in early 2024. We still sponsor and send extra aid to **Dechen Palmo**, who had a heart valve operation in 2019 and whose husband is unwell.



*D. Palmo*

**Gen Tashi**, whom we sponsor through the TSO and we also know as an English and math teacher at the Drepung Gomang School, had a major disaster with his outdoor latrine in 2024, and it was very expensive to get that replaced. FOTSI is sending funds to help him after we learned he was struggling to pay those bills.



*D. Bhuti*



*Gen Tashi*



*Old Latrine*



*New Latrine*

We sponsor Tenzin Tseyang who has completed her nursing training and is seeking her next step after doing very well in her studies and internship. We sponsor or aid 12 more good people not shown here.



*T. Tseyang*

When Chela was in India in late 2023, she donated additional funds so that urgently needed latrine repairs could be completed. The Tibetan Settlement Office later wrote that all the latrines were complete and asked permission to use the remaining funds for some kitchen pans, a pressure cooker, a kettle, and pillows for the Office itself. The Office gets little money and many workers spend late evenings or nights there as they work very hard. Chela happily said yes.

**FOTSI's Emergency Fund at the ORM** has long aided those needing surgeries, suffering from drug-resistant TB, HIV, or disasters like damage due to floods and storms. **In 2023 we sent the ORM \$1,805 for emergencies, and in 2024 we sent \$3,505.** In 2024 the TSO asked the elected leaders of each of the ten camps to choose the two poorest individuals/families in their camp. Each of these twenty people were given close to 4,000 rupees, or about \$50 at the time.

## ***TSO - Support for Performing Arts (Lhamo Tsokpa)***



*Lhamo Tsokpa Performing*

To support Tibetan performing arts, **FOTSI sent a small amount through the TSO (\$565 in 2023 and \$550 in 2024) for "Lhamo Tsokpa,"** the Mundgod settlement's own performing arts group. We encourage help for this group! Lhamo Tsokpa has sent us varied photos. As Tibetan song, dance, and musical entertainment are very important to Tibetans, performances are frequent at many events. His Holiness the Dalai Lama often speaks of the value of Tibetan arts for Tibetans and the world.



*Tibetan Opera*



*Lhamo Tsokpa Women*

# Student Scholarships (TSO)

## FOTSI College and Nursing School Scholars 2024-2025

Name	Major & Degree Sought	College, Location
<i>Sponsored students — new and continuing scholarships</i>		
Ms. Tenzin Tsepak*	B.A., 2nd year	Sarah College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Dharamsala
Mr. Tsering Dhonden	B. Bus. Admin. (BBA), 3rd year	St. Joseph's University, Bangalore
Ms. Passang Tsamchoe	B.A., 3rd year	Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, Bangalore
Ms. Tenzin Noryang	B.Sc., Nursing, final year and internship	Yenepoya University, Mangalore
Ms. Tenzin Chokyi	GNM Nursing & Midwifery, combined program	Nitte Usha Institute, Mangalore
Ms. Sonam Dolma	Career, 8th year	Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), Dharamsala
Ms. Ngodup Lhamo	B.Sc., Nursing, 4th year	JSS College of Nursing, Mysore
Ms. Tenzin Yangkyi	M. Comm., 1st year	St. Philomena College, Mysore
Mr. Tenzin Tsetan	Career, 9th year	Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), Dharamsala
<b>Mr. Tenzin Lektso</b>	L.L.B., 4th year	Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab
<b>Mr. Tenzin Thinley</b>	B.Sc., Software Engineering	(awaiting an update on his current status)



T. Dhonden



P. Tsamchoe



T. Noryang



T. Chokyi



S. Dolma



N. Lhamo



T. Yangkyi



T. Tsetan



T. Lektso



T. Thinley

**Tenzin Tsepak**, marked with an asterisk above, *is* enrolled at Sarah College, but FOTSI still does not have her photo. As they are paid little or nothing for their work during required internships, FOTSI helps during that time.

*In 2023 FOTSI sent \$10,811 for scholarships to the TSO* and sponsored three students for post-high school education through TCV. *In 2024 we wired \$12,850 to the TSO for scholarships*, and \$2,880 through TCV for college students who had graduated from their high schools (pgs. 21-22).

Last year we shared details about our students, most of whom we continue to support. Next we will focus on our recently sponsored students, **Tenzin Lektso** and **Tenzin Thinley**, and add some new information from three of our continuing students: **Tenzin Noryang**, **Tenzin Yangkyi**, and **Tenzin Tsetan**. This year we received cheery letters full of gratitude from two graduates: nurse **Tenzin Tseyang** and **Tenzin Tselha**. The latter has a good job and sends support to her mother and aunt.

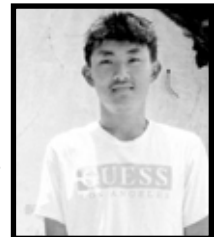
## *Student Scholarships (TSO) (cont.)*

In June 2024 FOTSI received a letter requesting that some of our scholarship funds be used to help **Tenzin Lektso** of Camp 9 in the Mundgod Settlement. The letter explained that Tenzin had been a scholarship recipient from the Department of Education (DoE), Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) who received support for the first three years of his L.L.B. or undergraduate law degree. This degree is often the first professional qualification for legal practitioners in common law countries and serves as a foundational step for those aspiring to enter the legal profession. Tenzin was studying at the Lovely Professional University in Phagwara, Punjab. His scholarship covered only about 40% of the university fees, with the family responsible for the remainder. For his fourth-year fee, the total was 160,000 rupees, about \$2,000, of which the DoE would contribute about \$625. Due to a sudden illness while at college, Tenzin was unable to submit his third-year report card to the DoE in time, nor inform them of his situation before the financial year closed. Consequently, his fourth-year scholarship was canceled, but he would still be able to apply for the fifth-year scholarship once he was able to submit his fourth-year report card on time. Meanwhile, Tenzin's father, the current camp leader of Camp 9 and an active community member providing various social services, was running a small store in the settlement to earn his livelihood. To cover the entire cost of the fourth year for Tenzin was extremely difficult. **FOTSI responded that we would support Tenzin's studies in place of the DoE scholarship.** It will be very helpful to eventually have someone who can practice Indian law and support others, especially Tibetans.



*T. Lektso*

We recently agreed to support **Tenzin Thinley** who is pursuing a degree in software engineering. We have not yet received more details, but we got a request from the Tibetan Settlement Office requesting financial help for him to complete his studies. Soon thereafter, nursing student **Tenzin Noryang** sent FOTSI thanks, a great photo, and the news that she had completed her 7th semester and will be doing a required internship until September 30. Her "Statement of Marks" from Yenepoya University shows outstanding study and work in community health, obstetrics and gynecology and nursing research and statistics. **Tenzin Yankyi**, who is pursuing an M.Comm., wrote to FOTSI, "I truly appreciate the commitment you've shown to all of us who are fortunate enough to receive your help. It's not just the financial support, but also the belief you have in us that motivates us to push ourselves forward." She sent us a report on her marks (course grades) that are excellent!



*T. Thinley*



*T. Noryang*



*T. Yankyi*

**Tenzin Tsetan** is in his ninth year at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), a very active cultural center. After TIPA's Yarkyi competition, Tenzin wrote that teams had to compete in individual singing, two dance presentations, and live band performance. As the senior artist for his team, Tenzin had to research and choreograph the dances and plan the group songs. He and his team worked hard, won the competition in all four categories, and celebrated with a picnic. Tenzin also wrote of the increasing loss of elderly Tibetans who carried forward Tibet's rich, unique tradition of performing arts, and TIPA's role in saving that cultural treasure. The Dalai Lama has said that Tibet's ancient culture is "now facing the threat of extinction." For more see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fH7UHSwpMfc>.



*T. Tsetan*



# *Tibetan Children's Education and Welfare Fund (TCEWF)*

## *Supplementary Food for Sambhota Tibetan School Hostel*

FOTSI has provided supplementary food since 2010 for students living in the hostel connected with the *Sambhota Tibetan School* in the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement. This school has been run by Tibetans for the last seven years and provides classes for grades 1 through 12. Information about the secondary school is available at <https://sambhota.org/sts-mundgod/>. The cost is borne by local Tibetans, as well as Tibetan donors outside the settlement, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala, and a few organizations like FOTSI. The hostel houses about 100 students who come from Tibetan settlements where no adequate high school exists or who have special needs. ***FOTSI sent \$4,500 in 2023 and \$5,000 in 2024 for food.*** Forty different FOTSI donors sent funds used for the school food in one or both years.

Recent letters from the school principal, Mr. Namgyal Yemphel, and the rector, Mr. Tenzin Dakpa, have expressed gratitude for FOTSI's aid. When we started our support of the school meals, a disturbing number of students were being diagnosed with tuberculosis each year. After 15 years of our involvement in food aid, this number is down to zero or only a few occasional cases. Below and on the following page we share some photos, material from the school, and letters from residents of the Girls' and Boys' Hostels received by FOTSI in early 2025.



*Principal N. Yemphel*



Thanking you  
Yours Children  
Tenzin Tsepak  
Tenzin Yeshe  
Rinchen Tsaphel  
Boy's hostel  
Camp 3

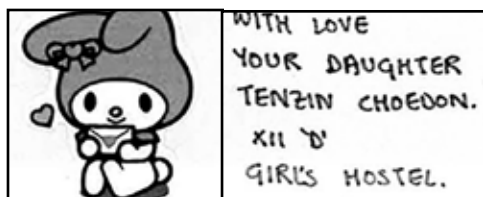


# TCEWF — Sambhota Hostel Food Supplementation

In 2025, FOTSI sent \$5,000 for food to the Sambhota Tibetan School's Hostel, which they received through the Tibetan Children's Educational and Welfare Fund administered by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala. FOTSI received a warm response: "We are deeply grateful for your generous efforts in raising \$5,000 for the hostel students of STS Mundgod. We plan to utilize the entire amount towards providing supplementary diet for the hostelers, ensuring their nutritional needs are met. We understand that raising funds each year requires significant effort, and we are sincerely thankful for your continued support in helping to provide for the STS Mundgod hostelers. Your kindness and dedication mean so much to us." Common themes in the many letters from individuals, specific classes, and subgroups at the hostel emphasized their enjoyment of the food, how good food helps them study, how grateful they are, and how they believe that the kindness of the donors will somehow be repaid even though they cannot directly do much in return except to be worthy, kind and educated contributors to others in our shared world in the future. Below are selections from various letters.

I would again like to thank you for infusing us with new hope and new energies by making us feel that you care for all of us. We are truly grateful to us and you'll be forever be in our hearts.

Tenzin Koudak. Tenzin Dhatpa.  
Tenzin Namdol.



Thank  
You

Words cannot describe how thankful we are

Your selflessness act has made

our day better

On behalf of the all the hostel boys, I would like to kindly appreciate and thank you for the education facilities and great foods you are providing us now. Due to that our students are happily enjoying the food and doing our best.



your organisation have made a positive impact to our hostel and we are very grateful. I personally love monday food as it consist of chicken during lunch and you have made it happen. Thank you and may your organisation have a good run in helping people. ♡

THANK YOU!

# ***TCEWF — Sambhota Hostel Food Supplementation (cont.)***

Just when it seemed that the data, photos, and bits of some of the many letters from the Sambhota Tibetan School Hostel students about the food aid from FOTSI had said it all, I received the letter below from the current Rector of the hostel, Mr. Tenzin Dakpa. It brought up points that hadn't been made earlier, so it seemed good to share it here along with his photo that he sent at our request.

Dear Ama Chela (and FOTSI donors),

I am Tenzin Dakpa, the Rector of STS Mundgod. Since joining the school in March 2024 and taking charge of the hostel, I have observed that the supplementary diet you provide has been immensely beneficial for the health and academic performance of our students. Many of our students come from different Tibetan refugee settlements and some from very disadvantaged family backgrounds, often with poor health. To address this, we offer extra dietary support to improve their health.

During our monthly health check-ups, the school nurse has reported significant improvements in the health of these students. Notably, those with weaker health have gained weight and shown marked health improvements. As a result, they now take fewer leaves from classes, which has been instrumental in enhancing their academic performance.

I have also had the opportunity to meet many Tibetan parents who wish to express their gratitude for your generous support in providing a supplementary diet. On behalf of these parents and our hostel students, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks for your assistance.

Additionally, I would like to express my appreciation for the funds provided for sanitary pads. This support is crucial for the health and hygiene of our female students, ensuring they can attend classes without interruption. Your contribution has made a significant difference in their well-being and academic engagement.

Furthermore, your support has fostered a positive environment within our hostel, promoting better health, nutrition, and academic success among our students. We are grateful for your commitment to enhancing the lives of these young individuals and hope that you will continue to support us in our efforts to provide them with the best possible educational experience.

Thank you once again for your generosity and ongoing support.

Sincerely,  
Tenzin Dakpa, Rector, STS Mundgod





# *Tibetan Children's Villages (TCV) — In 2025 FOTSI Is Sponsoring Seven Middle and High School Pupils and Three Students in College or Nursing School*

The *Tibetan Children's Villages (TCV) in India*, comprising eight boarding and three day-schools, a summer camp, three vocational training centers, and three hostels (each housing about 200 students) constitute a great educational community for poor Tibetan children-in-exile as well as those who have escaped from Tibet in the last few years. See <https://tcv.org.in> for photos and information about this wonderful organization, begun in Dharamsala in 1960 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his elder sister, Mrs. Tsering Dolma Takla, with continued support by His Holiness's younger sister, known as Jetsun Pema. These days TCV also helps many of its high school graduates get support to complete vocational, college, or training programs for Tibetan government work.

In 2024 FOTSI sponsored three post-high school students at two colleges and a nursing school as well as nine students at TCV Bylakuppe. As 2025 began, we continued sponsoring three post-high school students (*Tsesum Dolma*, *Jinpa Tashi*, and *Pasang Khandro*), four Bylakuppe high school students (*Tenzin Ogyen*, *Tenzin Tsetan*, *Tenzin Namdol*, and *Ngawang Norbu*), and three Bylakuppe middle school students (*Tenzin Tsephel Sangha*, *Tenzin Tsering*, and *Tenzin Konchok*). We sponsored high school student *Ngawang Norbu* through the spring 2025 semester, and he has passed all his exams and will be graduating this month. At the request of our TCV contact, we have taken up the sponsorship of ninth-grader *Lhawang Namgyal Norbu*. Post-high school scholarships are \$720/year; others are \$480/year. *In 2024 we sent TCV a total of \$5,200 in two payments, and through April of 2025 we have sent TCV \$5,520.* These generous donations for education were funded by 20 donors.

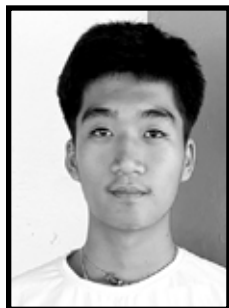
Below are recent and matching earlier photos of five of the TCV students we supported in 2024 and continue to help in 2025, and photos of *Ngawang Norbu* who is graduating this month. *Ngawang* lost his sponsor last year. FOTSI stepped in for him for which he was most grateful. He wrote to us



*Tsesum Dolma  
Now and Earlier*



*Jinpa Tashi  
Now and Earlier*



*Tenzin Ogyen  
Now and Earlier*



*Tenzin Tsetan  
Now and Earlier*



*Tenzin Tsephel  
Sangha  
Now and Earlier*



*Ngawang Norbu  
Now and Earlier*



# TCV Students (cont.)

saying, “I am filled with emotions, as I am excited for the upcoming life adventure and new opportunities, and its ‘heart-aching’ I have to leave this beautiful school. The exams are done. It went quite well for me. Your sponsorship has not only alleviated my financial burdens but also encouraged me to strive for better. Once again ‘thank you’ for supporting me without even knowing me. I will keep hold with the motivation you gave me towards achieving my goals.”

**Lhawang Namgyal Norbu**, now sponsored in Ngawang Norbu’s place, also wrote to FOTSI, saying his favorite subject is Tibetan, and “**I am greatly thankful and so happy to have a sponsor like you.**” He closed with “**THANK YOU SO MUCH, WITH LOVE, Lhawang Namgyal Norbu.**”

## List of FOTSI-sponsored TCV students for the rest of 2025

Name	Age	Grade or Degree Status	Institution
Mr. Jinpa Tashi	25	1st yr. M.Comm.	St. Joseph College of Commerce
Ms. Tsesum Dolma	22	3rd yr. B.Sc. Nursing	Indiana College of Nursing, Mangalore
Ms. Pasang Khandro	24	Internship post-B.Comm.	from Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Edu.
Ms. Tenzin Namdol	21	Grade 11, Science Stream	TCV High School, Bylakuppe
Ms. Tenzin Tsetan	19	Grade 11, Arts Stream	TCV High School, Bylakuppe
Mr. Tenzin Ogyen	16	Grade 10, Arts Stream	TCV High School, Bylakuppe
Mr. Tenzin Konchok	15	Grade 9	TCV Middle School, Bylakuppe
Mr. Lhawang L. Norbu	13	Grade 9	TCV Middle School, Bylakuppe
Mr. Tenzin Tsering	14	Grade 9	TCV Middle School, Bylakuppe
Mr. Tenzin T. Sangha	15	Grade 8	TCV Middle School, Bylakuppe

**Pasang Khandro** intends to return to college to seek a master’s in Commerce or some targeted training after exploring different possibilities through internships and volunteering this year. **Tenzin Namdol** has enjoyed her correspondence with her FOTSI sponsor who has been solely funding her scholarship for two years. Tenzin



Pasang Khandro



Tenzin Namdol

wrote that she is studying biology, chemistry, physics, English, and Tibetan this year. She said, “**I appreciate your kind support from the bottom of my heart.**”

**Tenzin Tsering** wrote that he was studying hard, and that the school’s sports competitions were great. **Tenzin Konchok** wrote similarly. Tenzin Ogyen was proud of a successful singing competition. Nursing student **Tsesum Dolma** wrote that her rural community posting was “good exposure,” and that she looked forward to future pediatric and psychiatric postings. College student **Jinpa Tashi** wrote about how much he enjoyed a visit to relatives in the Bylakuppe settlement and the “festive Tibetan New Year atmosphere filled with prayer, laughter and delicious food.” He still remembers his difficult escape from Tibet long ago. All of our sponsored students come from poor families or are orphans, and each one strongly expressed their gratitude for the aid they have received from FOTSI donors.



Tenzin Konchok



Tenzin Tsering

# Drepung Gomang School

The *Drepung Gomang School (DGS)*, run by the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA) and connected with the Drepung Gomang Monastery, offers classes to young monks arriving from ethnic-Tibetan areas near and in India as well as from countries with a strong Tibetan Buddhist community like Mongolia. Subjects include English and Tibetan language skills, math, science, and Buddhist studies. For the Tibetan lay children of the local Mundgod Tibetan Settlement, there is a summer session during which Tibetan language and Buddhist topics are taught in a relaxed and fun way. Normally, summer is a time local Tibetan families welcome the opportunity to do extra work while the kids enjoy classes about their traditional culture.



*DGS Pupils, Teachers Night Assembly 2025*

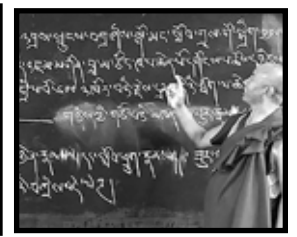


*Some of the Teachers at Drepung Gomang School*

Due to seemingly arbitrary enforcement of a new version of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) in India, FOTSI was not able to send funds to the DGBCA for the Drepung Gomang School after March 3, 2024



*Drepung Gomang School Students*

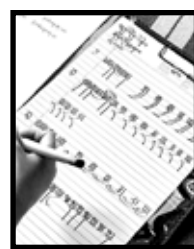


*Tibetan Language Lesson*

(see pg. 6). Hence, although FOTSI was able to send the school **\$10,465 in 2023**, ***we were unable to send anything more after we wired the school \$2,760 in January 2024.*** Both the staff of the DGBCA and Chela worked very hard to find a new way to follow the updated Foreign Contributions Regulations Act. We have been sending the DGBCA funds for the school for decades. The school was FOTSI's first charitable effort, and the support has always been appreciated by the lay and monastic communities in the Mundgod Settlement. The school kept on going without donations not only from FOTSI but all foreign supporters. ***Finally, in January 2025, FOTSI was able to send \$8,820*** to the "Gomang School Project Fund," a unique new project created by the Drepung Gomang Monastery. That money had been collected for the school between April 2024 and January 2025, and when received helped pay the teachers, most importantly the lay teachers who support families. The school was at a crisis point when the new plan began in January and so grateful when FOTSI immediately sent funds. Due to the havoc that the yearly monsoon rains bring, the school then quickly did some exterior painting and continued to improve their library. FOTSI will now be able to continue our support for the school as we have done for so long.



*Teachers S. Dorjee, C. Dorjee, Gen Tashi*



*DGS Summer School—Tibetan Language for Little Monks & Lay Students*



*Springtime Exams for Young Monks Can Be Fun*



# ***Drepung Gomang Monastery (DGM)***

*In 2024, FOTSI sent the monastery \$2,086.* This money was given in three ways. Six of our donors sent a total of **\$600** to the Drepung Gomang Monastery to support food, shelter, education, and a portion of medical expenses for its monks. In addition, four people donated **\$801** to DGM monks who were in the United States raising funds to support the monks at the monastery by creating sand mandalas at museums and educational institutions and churches. These monks also met with people who wanted to talk with them or have them perform traditional prayers. The eight monks, who were in the USA during 2024 and who will stay through part of 2025, spent six days at Chela's home in Boulder. Several Coloradans came to speak with them and enjoyed their chanting and simple ceremonies. They accepted an invitation to dinner at a home near Boulder and were invited to visit the Renée Crown Wellness Institute at the University of Colorado and Naropa University. These same monks will be staying again at Chela's home between May 9 and May 12, 2025. They will be hosted at the Tibetan Association of Colorado's location in Broomfield, Colorado on May 10.



*Tibetan Parliamentary Visit to Drepung Gomang Monastery Included Tibetan Settlement Officer Ms. Rinchen Wangmo (second from left)*



*Coloradans Meet the DGM Monks June 2024*

Another way a few donors helped both the monastery and one of its monks in 2024 was by sending **\$685** to the young monk **Geshe Lobsang Tashi** for the Geshe Tongor ceremony (see photos on the next page). Funds for such scholarly graduation ceremonies support all the monks. Geshe Lobsang has helped many monks get medical care and understand their medicines and treatment.

## ***Sponsorship and Aid for Monks***

FOTSI has long sponsored or sent aid for monks, including those needing help and those helping others. *In 2023 FOTSI sent \$7,360 to 22 monks. In 2024 we sent \$3,580 to 23 monks.* All are members of Buddhist monasteries in the Mundgod Settlement. The reason the amount of funds to support monks dropped by more than fifty percent was that the Indian government removed the ability of the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA) to accept foreign donations when India changed its FCRA law (see pg. 6). The Tibetan monks at the DGBCA and Chela worked hard to find a way to continue FOTSI's support of its sponsored monks, but the only solution was to send the money directly to bank accounts of some senior monks. As the USA's Internal Revenue Service and Chela both prefer there not be too many dispersals to individuals, we settled on sending funds to a third of the monks, who would each then disperse funds to a few of the other sponsored monks. In 2025, with a lot of effort, FOTSI is sending out all the money on hold for our sponsored and aided monks since last April in the manner we have described.

So far this is working well. In our previous newsletter we shared photos and news about quite a few sponsored monks. Next we share photos and details about some not mentioned previously along with a few updates on others we often mention.

## Sponsorship & Aid for Monks (cont.)



*Geshe J. Lodro*

**Geshe Jamphel Lodro** has continued teaching in the Siliguri area in India, but became very ill in 2024 and needed FOTSI's help during the challenging period when FOTSI was not able to send him help through the DGBCA. Although it took us several months (due to complicated, special forms that Geshe Jamphel's bank required), FOTSI finally got funds to him so he could pay his medical bills. We were so happy to hear that he is doing well now.



**Geshe Tenzin Changshai** is continuing to help his living group (Ngari Khangtsen), and this is especially important for young boys from poor families arriving at the DGM. **Geshe Lobsang Ngawang #2**, a former chant master for the DGM, now uses



*Geshe L. Ngawang*

his mastery of chanting to teach the special Tibetan chanting skills not only at DGM but also at remote locations in the Himalayas. *Geshe T. Changshai*

**Ven. Lobsang Tashi** has been interested in science and medicine for years and has helped many monks get treatment, recover, and care for themselves. He has helped Chela when she has been in the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement. This year he became a Geshe and several donors sent funds for his graduation ceremony that benefited all the monks. He also attended a special science workshop organized by HH the Dalai Lama for qualified monks.



*Geshe G. Tashi*

We support **Geshe Gonpo Tashi** who has a unique and joyful personality and who now lives in Drepung Gomang's Home for Older Monks. **Geshe Karma**

**Tsultrim**, who became an expert in Buddhist philosophy and a celebrated debater, continues as head of his living group at Gaden Shartse Monastery. He is teaching two post-graduate Prajnaparamita classes at his monastery's school, writing philosophical research papers on Abhidharma (Buddhist psychology and metaphysics), and teaching younger monks Tibetan grammar and literature while helping them learn the arts and other aspects of Tibet's unique culture.



*Science Program*



*L. Tashi Geshe Ceremony*



*Geshe K. Tsultrim Teaches*



*Student's Sacred Art*

## Health Aid for Monks

**In 2023 FOTSI sent \$2,670 for health aid for monks. In 2024 we sent \$700.** The reason for this drop in funding for their health needs is the same as it was for the drop in funds for sponsored monks as described on pgs. 6 and 24. Since promises by Indian government representatives that previous FCRA certifications would quickly be reinstated on reapplication were not kept, the solution was to send funds directly to the monks in charge of the health funds to which FOTSI's funds were given by the DGBCA in the past. This plan was successfully implemented in late January 2025. Those monks sent FOTSI documents showing they had transferred our funds into the proper health fund accounts. Through 2024 the monks used most of the funds on hand from FOTSI's earlier donations to their health fund; examples of that use are on the next page.

## Health Aid for Monks (cont.)

It is fortunate that the monks could use funds sent for health needs before our channel to send them aid was closed by India in April 2024 and that we could finally send them \$2,360 in January 2025. Pictured below are the primary recipients of our aid to the Gungru Khangtsen group at DGM, although we also send health aid to other monks. That group sent FOTSI a letter saying that they had said prayers for our good health in July 2024. They have done this periodically.

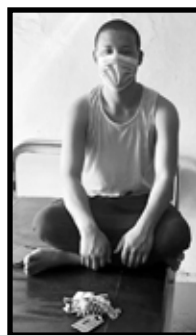
In return for our aid, the monks send receipts, photos and details of how our funds are used. **Ven. Ngawang Damchoe**, who has long been under treatment for hepatitis B, had two intestinal surgeries in 2024. **Ven. Thupten Rinchen** also had surgery in 2024. Fortunately, only **Ven. Passang Dorjee** in the Gungru group contracted tuberculosis this year. He has struggled with his health, as he has been treated previously for heart disease.



*Ven. T. Rinchen & Nurse*



*Ven. N. Damchoe Had 2 Surgeries in 2024*



*Ven. P. Dorjee*



*Ven. T. Lhadar*



*Ven. S. Wangchuk*



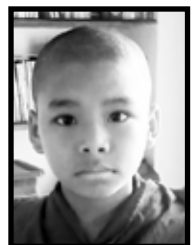
*Ven. T. Gyatso*

At least five monks, including **Vens. Tsering Lhadar, Sonam Wangchuk, Tsultrim Gyatso, and Palden Gonpo**, have received FOTSI's aid for diabetes treatment, an illness not uncommon among Tibetan monks. Hepatitis B is still an issue, but less so than in the past.

Last year there were also monks with eye problems, and Vens. Samchen Dachung and Gyaltsen Tsultrim had digestive and flu symptoms. One had a neurological issue and another had bad headaches. A young monk, **Ven. Gyaltsen Choephel**, got an infection on his scalp, and a monk that they call "**Raj**" broke his arm. Now in April 2025, the diabetes and hepatitis B patients are pursuing their treatments, the surgery patients wish for no further surgeries, and others are now well. Often Tibetans think it rude to smile when expressing gratitude, as it may appear they are not serious, but still we get photos of smiles and heartfelt thanks.



*Ven. S. Dachung*



*Ven. G. Tsultrim*



*Ven. G. Choephel*



*Ven. P. Gonpo*



*Ven. "Raj"*

## Hospitals & Clinics in the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement

In the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement medical help is available at **basic hospitals at the Drepung Loseling and the Gaden Jangtse Monasteries and in clinics run by the Drepung Gomang and Gaden Shartse Monasteries**. FOTSI sent \$700 to Gajang Hospital in 2023 and \$1,000 in 2024. A special aspect of both the Gaden Jangtse and Gaden Shartse Hospitals is that their administrative and medical staff includes monks from their respective monasteries who are well trained and provide skilled care. These facilities, close to the settlement's border, also serve many local Indian people.



# Sponsorship, Medical, & Special Aid for Nuns of JCN



*Sponsored Nuns (top row, left to right): Vens. S. Tsekyi, T. Deetaen, N. Jampa, L. Dolma Jupa, G. Choedron, L. Choeden2, T. Tsomo, L. Dolma Gapa, K. Choedon, D. Choetso, and L. Choeden. Bottom row, left to right: Geshemas D. Choezom (aka T. Norzom), Tenzin Dolkar, and T. Namdol*

**In 2023 we sent \$7,050 to the nuns of Jangchub Choeling Nunnery (JCN). In 2024 we sent \$8,605; \$3,150 supported 14 sponsored nuns and selected poor nuns, \$4,855 funded FOTSI's medical fund for them, \$200 was for educational needs, and \$400 was for the nuns' aid to laypeople in their community.** We got a clear acknowledgment that the funds we sent in 2024 were received. We also received a nice thank you for the funds we sent the nuns **Ven. Tenzin Deetaen** and **Ven. Ngawang Jampa** who live separately from the Mundgod nunnery when the weather is hot in Mundgod due to



*Geshema D. Choezom*

health problems. Many of the senior nuns spent time in Dharamsala as part of their studies. Ordinarily, our main contact at JCN, Geshema Dawa Choezom (formerly Ven. Tenzin Norzom), would have sent us photos and information about the use of FOTSI's medical funds for the nuns, as well as photos of some of the poor nuns who also receive FOTSI funds. However, this year Geshema Choezom was engaged with helping people in the Bylakuppe Settlement and could not send us the usual information. Here we will share a few



*Ven. Kalsang Choedon With Other Nuns Buying Produce*

photos of our sponsored nuns and some photos of the four JCN nuns who have been touring America creating sand mandalas and giving talks on a fundraising mission similar to that of Tibetan monks from monasteries in India, as mentioned on pg. 24. The mandalas are exquisite in color, and we are sorry there is not one in this year's color collage (pg.28).



*Ven. S. Tsekyi*



*Ven. L. Dolma Jupa*

Chela invited the four nuns (**Geshema Yeshe Sangmo**, **Ven. Sherab Dolma**, **Ven. Sonam Dolma**, and **Ven. Kunga Tsomo** to do a house blessing at her home, and she joyfully attended the lovely traditional sadhanas and prayers they chanted at the Tibetan Association of Colorado in January 2025.



*Nuns Working on a Sacred Mandala*



*JCN Nuns Chanting Traditional Prayers*



*Nuns Begin a Mandala in New York*



*Nuns Perform the Chöd with Drums*