



Celebrating NYEMA's 10th Anniversary

The NYEMA Sun

NYEMA Projects' annual newsletter on humanitarian projects in eastern Tibet

Letter from the Chairman

Dear Friends:

So much has been accomplished over the past ten years through the activities of NYEMA Projects, Inc. So many people have been helped, both directly and indirectly, and I am very happy with the wonderful developments that have taken place due to the kind patronage of many, many benefactors. Education in Nangchen has improved tremendously thanks to your support. Medical help is available to many people who had no access to it at all ten years ago.

Korche Monastery, where I received my own education and religious training 65 years ago, has been rebuilt. The progress at Kala Rongo has been nothing short of incredible. The nuns there suffered a setback several years ago due to a fire that destroyed their main shrine hall. However, they immediately began to rebuild, and now the new building is finished on the outside. But there is still much work to be done on the interior.

Please help us continue our work in Nangchen. There is an ongoing need for support of education and medical help there. The children who attend the schools founded by NYEMA Projects live far from a city, and for many, Korche and Kala Rongo Schools are their only hope of receiving a basic education. The Kala Rongo medical clinic, too, is in need of our continued support. Apart from providing medical care to rural residents of Nangchen, the clinic serves as a medical school for women, who have never had the opportunity to become physicians in this part of the world.

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Our Mission: To help the impoverished people of the Nangchen region raise their standard of living by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevail in the modern, global world without sacrificing their unique cultural heritage.

Photo credits: Christopher Allen, Megan Doherty, Alexander Noel Kornhuber, Mike Miller, NYEMA Projects Inc., Tsultrim Oser, Bari Perlman, S. Zangmo.



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Letter from the Chairman

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In fact, women have a very difficult time in Nangchen in many ways. Traditionally they have not had access to education, and many of the religious practices that are considered so important in their culture have been performed almost exclusively by men. Thanks in large part to help from NYEMA Projects, things are improving, and women are making themselves stronger. In particular, Kala Rongo Monastery, with its first-ever monastic college for women, is at the forefront of groundbreaking social change.

There are many ongoing projects at Kala Rongo at the moment – for example, rebuilding the main shrine hall, sending forty nuns into three-year retreat, and urban outreach in Shornda. All these projects are expensive, and NYEMA Projects must rely, once again, upon the generosity of sponsors, people just like you who want to see a little bit of good done in the world. Fortunately money goes a long way in Nangchen, and when you donate, you can be assured that your gift is making a very noticeable and profound difference.

On behalf of all of those whom you have helped NYEMA Projects to serve over the past ten years, thank you.

Best wishes,

Lama Norlha Rinpoche
Lama Norlha Rinpoche
Chairman





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A Decade of Making a Difference

History of NYEMA

The story of NYEMA begins in Nangchen, eastern Tibet, in 1982, the year Lama Norlha Rinpoche was asked by the leaders of the monastery in which he received his own monastic training to help them rebuild. Korche, like many other monasteries, had been razed during the Cultural Revolution, and reconstructing it was insurmountably difficult without outside help. Lama Norlha Rinpoche made his first visit to Nangchen from his exile in the United States in 1984.

In the years since, he has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for Nangchen residents and to help them restore their cultural heritage. Between 1982 and 1995, he rebuilt Korche Monastery and established a monastery for nuns, a rarity in male-dominated Nangchen, at the sacred site of Kala Rongo. In 1996, Lama Norlha Rinpoche and another Nangchen native, Dr. Pema Dorje, obtained permission to establish a primary school for children who would otherwise have grown up illiterate.

Riding the tidal wave of these successes, Lama Norlha Rinpoche and Dr. Dorje together founded the Nangchen Yushu Educational and Medical Association (NYEMA), a non-profit organization with the mission of establishing schools and medical clinics in Nangchen, reviving its cultural and monastic legacy, and improving the standard of living in this impoverished region.

Since its founding 10 years ago, NYEMA has succeeded admirably in these goals, as the timeline on the following pages illustrates. The next phase of our work will be to help the institutions NYEMA has created to become self-sustaining.

Clearly, none of these remarkable accomplishments could have been achieved without the help of NYEMA's very generous supporters. Once again, on behalf of those people in Nangchen whom all of you are benefiting, "Thank you!"

The most important events leading up to the creation of NYEMA in 1997, listed here in chronological order, serve as testimony to the perseverance of the people of Nangchen, as well as to Lama Norlha Rinpoche's dedication to helping them. A great deal was accomplished in those 15 years:

- 1982** Lama Norlha Rinpoche is asked by leaders of Korche Monastery for assistance.
- 1983** Lama Norlha Rinpoche raises \$20,000 from generous donors to rebuild Korche Monastery.
- 1984** Lama Norlha Rinpoche makes first visit back to Nangchen since his exile.
First retreat begins at Korche Monastery since its rebuilding.
Rare statues of the masters of the Kagyu Golden Rosary Lineage are commissioned for Korche Monastery.
Sangye Tenzin Rinpoche, with Lama Norlha Rinpoche and 150 monks, perform one week of rituals and offerings to bless the land where Kala Rongo Monastery will be built.
- 1990** Kala Rongo Monastery for nuns is established and construction begins.
Korche Monastery's Lama Gyupa organization is founded, with government approval, to support advanced practice of Lamas who have finished three-year retreat.
- 1991** First three-year retreat begins at Kala Rongo – a great accomplishment for nuns in Tibet!
- 1996** Korche Monastery's monastic college is established.
Korche Monastery's second retreat facility is completed and retreat begins.
Lama Norlha Rinpoche and Dr. Pema Dorje obtain permission to establish Yonten Gatsal Ling Primary School.



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A Decade of Making a Difference

Timeline of Events and Accomplishments

1997



NYEMA Projects, Inc. is established.



Over the years, Korche Monastery has been rebuilt from rubble left after its destruction in the late 1950's to a thriving monastery with a monastic college and two three-year retreats.



Kala Rongo has developed into a flourishing monastery of several hundred nuns who have boundless energy for future projects.



17 medical clinics are developed and sponsored by NYEMA in remote areas.

1997



Yonten Gatsal Ling Primary School is established.



51 satellite schools are established by NYEMA Projects in its first few years of operation to teach basic literacy and math skills to nomadic children.



1998



Construction begins on the first of seven stupas to be built: three border stupas in Amdo, two at Kala Rongo, one at Korche and one in the city of Shornda.



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1999



Building of Korche's monastic college in progress.



NYEMA continues to improve Nangchen's basic health care through expanded support of 17 local primary care clinics and health care personnel.

2000



Building of Kala Rongo's monastic college begins.



A new retreat facility at Domka, a small, remote monastery that has been affiliated with Korche since its founding four centuries ago, is completed through the generosity of NYEMA Projects.

2001



40 nuns, all graduates of the first three-year retreat program at Kala Rongo, enter Kala Rongo's monastic college as its first class.



NYEMA continues to support Domka's monastic college.

2002



Solar panels are purchased and distributed to communities in six counties (Nangchen, Yushu and four other neighboring counties).



Solar and generator electricity powers Korche and Kala Rongo Monasteries.



As agreed, local authorities take over the operation of Yonten Gatsal Ling. Now the school is fully run by the government and it continues to be very successful.



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A Decade of Making a Difference

2002



Beginning of the Kala Rongo Medical Clinic.



NYEMA sponsors save many yaks from slaughter. These yaks are cared for by the nuns of Kala Rongo.

2003



Classes for orphaned children from the local area begin in a classroom at Kala Rongo's monastic college.

2003



NYEMA, along with the Gracious Glory Buddhism Foundation and Water for Humanity, provide running water to Korche Monastery.



2004



Completion of five bridges at Korche provides easier access to the main road.



A primary school is established at Kala Rongo Monastery, giving local children an opportunity to learn Tibetan and Chinese languages and math.

2004



A new three-year retreat facility is constructed at Kala Rongo.



Improvements are made to Korche school, raising its status from satellite school to permanent primary school.



Fire devastates Kala Rongo Monastery. Rebuilding begins five months later through the generous support of NYEMA sponsors.



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A Decade of Making a Difference

2005



Kala Rongo receives official government permit confirming its legal status as a monastery for nuns.



Doctors at Kala Rongo's women's clinic train nuns in basic evaluation and treatment of women's health problems.

2006



Plans are underway to purchase Nyungne and Mahakala Houses in Shornda.



Korche shedra monks win the debate competition for Qinghai and Sechuan provinces (27 colleges) for the second consecutive year.

2007



The schools at Korche and Kala Rongo continue to flourish. Many Nangchen students have gone on to pursue higher education. Education officials are impressed by how well-trained and eager these students are, and how well they perform compared to their peers from other areas.



Three statues are purchased for Kala Rongo's shrine hall, the Guru Rinpoche Palace and the Nyungne House.



Construction of the Glorious Copper Colored Mountain Pureland Palace of Guru Rinpoche begins at Kala Rongo.

2007



Nyungne House in Shornda begins.



Construction of new shrine hall at Kala Rongo begins.

Only through the support of our donors has NYEMA been able to accomplish so much within a decade. Although many of our projects are now self-sustaining, others still require our assistance. Please help us to continue our work in Nangchen by supporting Korche and Kala Rongo Monasteries in their quest for self-determination, or by helping us to fund Korche and Kala Rongo schools. We are also in need of donations to keep the Kala Rongo medical clinic open and running smoothly. Once again, thank you for all you have done and continue to do for the people of Nangchen!



Celebrating NYEMA's 10th Anniversary

Monastic Initiative: Kala Rongo Palchen Gön

Kala Rongo Shrine Hall Construction Well Under Way



In a dramatic and devastating turn of events, Kala Rongo's main shrine hall was destroyed by fire in October 2004. The nuns of Kala Rongo gradually cleared away the ruins (*pictured left*) and prepared ground for a new shrine hall while maintaining their practice and study commitments and dealing with other repercussions of the fire, including the loss of their entire food supply.

Rebuilding of the shrine hall began last spring and the four-storey exterior is now complete (*pictured left*). The most striking feature of the building's interior will be its spacious and spectacularly high-ceilinged shrine room. This room, which will serve as the primary site for the nuns' collective practice, will rise through two storeys of the building.

On the ground floor, the shrine room will be flanked by two smaller rooms for daily practice. It will share the second storey with quarters for His Holiness the Seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa and His Eminence Tai Situ Rinpoche, as well as other visiting teachers, who will be able to observe practices going on in the shrine room from above through a large glass panel.

The third storey will house a library and a Golden Rosary Shine with statues of the masters of the Kagyu lineage. The kitchen, pantry and dining area will be in the basement.

Work to date has cost US\$300,000. An additional US\$200,000 is needed to complete the building and replace furnishings.

Statues Have Arrived from Nepal

The first floor of the Guru Rinpoche Copper-Colored Palace was completed this year. In the spring, with the arrival of warmer weather, construction will continue on the second and third floors. The building will eventually stand 45 feet tall and will house a large statue of Guru Rinpoche.

This statue is one of three that were commissioned in Nepal and transported to Kala Rongo by truck during Lama Norlha Rinpoche's visit last summer. Two statues of Guru Rinpoche, one 15 feet high and the other 10 feet, will adorn the shrine hall and Copper Palace, respectively. A five-foot statue of 1,000-armed Chenrezi now resides in the Shornda Nyungne shrine room.





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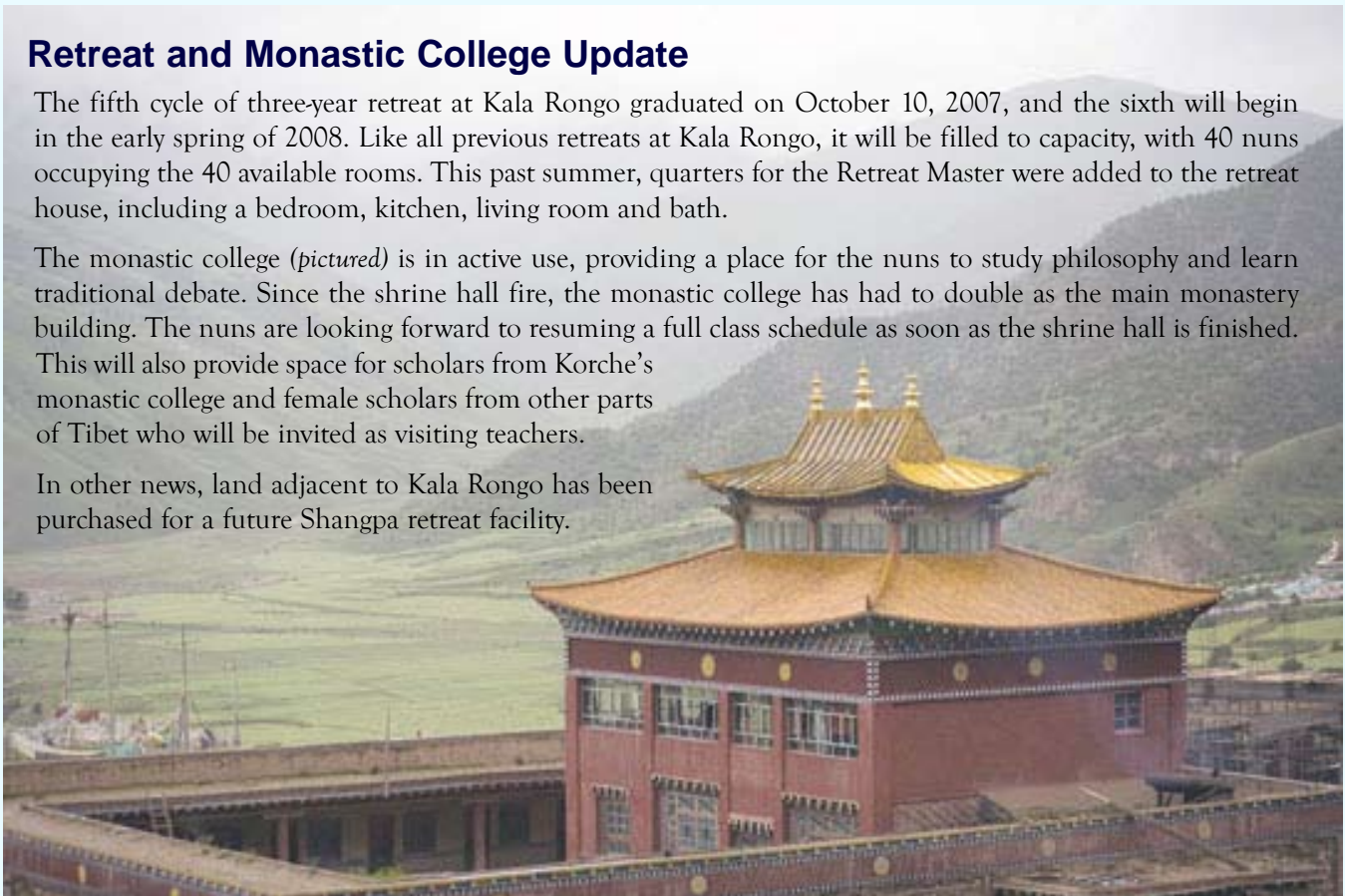
Monastic Initiative: Kala Rongo Palchen Göñ

Retreat and Monastic College Update

The fifth cycle of three-year retreat at Kala Rongo graduated on October 10, 2007, and the sixth will begin in the early spring of 2008. Like all previous retreats at Kala Rongo, it will be filled to capacity, with 40 nuns occupying the 40 available rooms. This past summer, quarters for the Retreat Master were added to the retreat house, including a bedroom, kitchen, living room and bath.

The monastic college (*pictured*) is in active use, providing a place for the nuns to study philosophy and learn traditional debate. Since the shrine hall fire, the monastic college has had to double as the main monastery building. The nuns are looking forward to resuming a full class schedule as soon as the shrine hall is finished. This will also provide space for scholars from Korche's monastic college and female scholars from other parts of Tibet who will be invited as visiting teachers.

In other news, land adjacent to Kala Rongo has been purchased for a future Shangpa retreat facility.



Nyungne House Helps Preserve Endangered Tradition, Benefits Sponsors

In 2007, Kala Rongo Monastery expanded its base of operations to Shornda in order to continue to serve the population of formerly nomadic families who have relocated to the city in recent years. Currently 15 nuns at a time alternate month-long rotations at the Shornda Nyungne House.

Each month, 15 nuns perform a total of 150 two-day Nyungne practices in 20 days and 150 one-day Shingdrup practices in 10 days. Both practices may be sponsored in order to create merit and benefit designated prayer recipients. They also harmonize the

five elements, pacify illness, engender happiness and joy, and bring benefit to one's country and the world.

According to Lama Norlha Rinpoche, in the changing culture of Tibet, interest in these very powerful practices is waning, and Kala Rongo's Nyungne House is helping to keep them alive. Sponsors thus contribute to the survival of these practices, in addition to the benefits listed above.

While many people are familiar with the Nyungne practice, there are fewer sponsors for Shingdrup, Rinpoche says. Besides the general

benefits similar to those of Nyungne, Shingdrup is specifically done on behalf of people who are very ill or dying, or who have died. It includes the Dewachen Monlam, an aspiration to be reborn in the Buddha Realm of Amitabha, and is said to be capable of curing serious diseases by purifying negative karma. Shingdrup is also said to promote health, peace and prosperity.

Either practice may be sponsored for any length of time, from one day to a year or more. **Please see our donation form on page 13 for sponsorship opportunities.**



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Monastic Initiative: Kala Rongo Palchen Göñ

Making Progress at Kala Rongo



The Guest House at Kala Rongo Completed

Last summer, Lama Norlha Rinpoche and his travel companions from the U.S. were accommodated at the newly completed guest house at Kala Rongo. It features 10 guest rooms, seven downstairs for all guests and three upstairs for Lama Norlha Rinpoche, Sabka Rinpoche and other special guests. It has two bathrooms plus a shower with hot running water, thanks to the solar energy project and a generator.



Running Water in Sight

The Kala Rongo water project is almost complete. All the pipes have been laid in the ground; this year, the water tank will be installed, making running water available to the shrine hall, retreat house, monastic college and school. Running water will be a substantial improvement in the nuns' standard of living, as they have been carrying water for cooking, drinking and cleaning since construction at Kala Rongo began 20 years ago.



Special Practices to Benefit All Beings

During the month of November 2007, the nuns chanted one billion Amitabha long-life mantras as a community, for the benefit of all beings. In December they completed one billion recitations of the mantra of compassion, *om mani peme hung*, and they recited one billion Guru Rinpoche mantras in January 2008. They again chanted one billion Amitabha long-life mantras in February.

Constantly renewing their motivation to benefit all living beings, the nuns of Kala Rongo also dedicate special prayers to the benefactors whose generosity has made it possible for them to live and practice in this sacred monastic setting.

Ceremonial Hats Replaced

The nuns of Kala Rongo were very pleased and grateful to receive 30 new ceremonial hats donated by NYEMA last summer to replace those lost in the 2004 fire along with so many other ritual objects and furnishings.

Women's Retreat Center at Samtenling

Affiliated with Kala Rongo Monastery is Samtenling, a small retreat center for women. Of the 40 resident nuns, 10 are engaged in the traditional three-year retreat program. The nuns, who have very little income, were very happy to each receive a new set of robes from NYEMA Projects this past year. Founded by a group of very determined nuns who originally did retreat in caves on a mountainside, Samtenling's remote location is very difficult and dangerous for retreatants and supplies to reach. Lama Norlha Rinpoche has suggested making it more easily accessible.





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Monastic Initiative: Korche Monastery

Korche Monastery Debaters Take the Prize – Again!

Beginning in 1982 and later with the help of NYEMA, Lama Norlha Rinpoche gradually rebuilt Korche Monastery (*pictured right*), where he received his own monastic training beginning at age five. Korche is now once again a flourishing monastery with a monastic college and two three-year retreat centers. It is known throughout the region, and its monks have bested all competition in formal debate for the past three years.

During Lama Norlha Rinpoche's visit last summer, more than 1,000 monks from 28 Kagyu monasteries in the region attended an inter-monastic conference at Thrangu Rinpoche's monastery in Cheku. The event featured teachings, communal study, recitation of sutras from memory, and a very enthusiastic debate competition (*pictured right*). In 2007, for the third consecutive year, Korche's monks took first place in debate! Lama Norlha Rinpoche made an offering of 50 yuan to each monk at the competition.

During that same visit, new robes were also presented to all the monks of both Korche's monastic college and the main monastery, courtesy of NYEMA.



Mahakala House in Shornda Established To Serve Local Community



Like Kala Rongo, Korche maintains a presence in the city of Shornda. Because so many of Nangchen's former nomads have moved to Shornda in recent years, Korche Monastery has established a Mahakala House there to serve this growing urban population. It is traditional for monasteries to have a shrine room (*pictured left*) or separate building dedicated to their Protectors, and people living near a monastery make offerings to the monks who then pray to the Protectors on their behalf. There are three resident monks at Korche's Mahakala House, and the money people offer for their chanting helps to support Korche Monastery. The monks in residence at the Mahakala House cover their own expenses and send remaining donations to Korche.

Although Korche Monastery is receiving local funds from the surrounding community, outside donations are still needed for its ongoing support. It is only with your help that NYEMA will be able to maintain Korche's facilities and to support its monks in their practice until they reach their goal of becoming self-sustaining.



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Education and Medical Initiatives

Korche and Kala Rongo Schools Well-Established



Korche School now has 108 students who are all studying voraciously. Classes are taught by monks from Korche Monastery. From Korche School, students may go on to attend public school in Shornda.

Korche School has a number of students who live too far away to come to class during the winter, when travel conditions in Nangchen are prohibitive. NYEMA Projects hopes to build a dormitory for these students to enable them to attend the entire school year.



Kala Rongo School is thriving, with approximately 50 children in attendance this year, and more who would like to attend. We hope to build another classroom to increase the number of children the school can serve. As is the case at Korche School, children who finish Kala Rongo School may continue their education at a public school in Shornda.

Training of Female Physicians Continues

At the Kala Rongo medical clinic, Dr. Guru Tsering (*pictured*) continues to train seven nuns in basic Tibetan and Chinese medicine so that they can eventually qualify as doctors and provide healthcare to the region's impoverished families.

The training of female physicians is especially important in Nangchen because many of the region's women often refuse, for cultural reasons, to be treated by a male physician. NYEMA plans to invite Tibetan and Chinese physicians to provide additional training in the future.



NYEMA Projects, Inc. Donation Form

Through investing financial resources, educational or medical supplies, time or skills, you can help the people of Nangchen improve their standard of living and protect their unique cultural heritage. Less than 5% of funding provided by our donors goes to administrative overhead. On behalf of the people of Nangchen, we thank you for your interest in these initiatives.

I would like to contribute to the following:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NYEMA Projects (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monastic Initiative (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo Monastery | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo's Shrine Hall | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo's Copper Palace | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo 3-year Retreat | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo Shedra (college) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nyungne House (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korche Monastery | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korche Shedra (college) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korche 3-year Retreats | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mahakala House (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education Initiative (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korche School | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kala Rongo School | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Initiative (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Initiative (general) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Project | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Housing | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solar Power Project | \$ _____ |

Donation Subtotal: \$ _____

Sponsor practice at Kala Rongo's Nyungne House:

☐ Nyungne ☐ Amitabha Shingdrup

Duration: ☐ \$35 for 1 day ☐ \$70 for 2 days
 ☐ \$350 for 10 days ☐ \$1000 for 1 month

Sponsor food at: ☐ Kala Rongo ☐ Korche

Select the meal(s) by circling the amount(s) below.

	Regular day	Chanting day
Tea	\$20	\$20
Lunch	\$100	\$120
All 3 meals	\$160	\$220

Donation Subtotal: \$ _____

Donation Grand Total: \$ _____

Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent of US law.

NYEMA Projects, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charity.

NYEMA (Hong Kong) Association Limited is a
Hong Kong SAR government registered charity.

To ensure proper handling, please complete the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Zip/Country: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Instructions/Prayer Requests (if any): _____

Payment Options (Please print clearly.)

☐ Check in the amount of \$ _____ is enclosed.

In U.S. and all countries except Hong Kong:

Payable to **NYEMA Projects, Inc.** and send to:

NYEMA Projects, Inc., Attention: Donations
247 Sheafe Road, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590-1103 USA

In Hong Kong only:

Payable to **NYEMA (Hong Kong) Association Limited**. Send to:

A. Michael Bough, Bough & Co. Solicitors

Room 2407, 24th Floor, Nan Fung Tower

173 Des Voeux Road, Central, Hong Kong

For your convenience, NYEMA (Hong Kong) Association Limited donations can be wired directly to: DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited (SWIFT: DHBKHKHH), A/C 788083955. Bank address: 16th Floor, The Centre, 99 Queen's Road, Central, Hong Kong.

☐ Charge US \$ _____ to my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

_____ Exp ____/____

Name on card: _____

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Important note: For your protection, please **DO NOT** e-mail your credit card number. You may send this form by mail or fax to (845) 297-5761. Charges must be sent to NYEMA Projects in Wappingers Falls, New York.