

We are very sad to learn that our beloved friend, teacher, and former board member of the Tibet Fund, Kyabje Gelek Rimpoche passed away this morning at 6. We were truly blessed to know him and receive his profound wisdom. In 2015, we had the opportunity to honor Gelek Rimpoche during our 6th Annual Tibet Fund Gala celebrating his extraordinary achievements as a spiritual teacher who worked tirelessly to promote Tibetan Buddhism and the just cause of the Tibetan people.

Born in 1939 in Lhasa, Gelek Rimpoche studied at Drepung Monastery and received the Geshe Lharampa, the highest degree of scholarship at an exceptionally young age of 20. Rimpoche gained reputation for his powers of memory, intellectual judgment and penetrating insight. After coming into exile in India in 1959, Rimpoche first taught Tibetan language to young students in Simla and later became the principal of another school in Dharamsala. Rimpoche was also the director of the Tibet House in New Delhi and became the head of All India Radio's Tibetan Program Section.

Rimpoche conducted over thousands of interviews in compiling an oral history of the fall of Tibet to the Communist China. He also edited and printed over 170 volumes of rare Tibetan manuscripts that would have otherwise been lost to humanity. In the late 1970s Gelek Rimpoche was directed by both the Senior and Junior tutors to His Holiness the Dalai Lama to begin teaching Western students. Since that time, he established the Jewel Heart Center and has given Buddhist teachings and helped spread His Holiness the Dalai Lama's message of peace and harmony to make this world a better place to live in.

Rimpoche had served as one of the key members of the Tibet Fund's Board and we remain grateful for the significant ways he had helped The Tibet Fund to rebuild and sustain the culture of Tibetans in exile and in Tibet.

Kyabje Gelek Rimpoche is revered for his loving kindness and compassion, pure upholding of ceaseless dedication to the welfare of all beings. He will live on forever in our hearts.

With a heavy heart, the entire Board of Directors and staff members of the Tibet Fund would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to the members of Jewel Heart Center.

Comment by Tibet Fund — February 17, 2017