



Press Release

Western Buddhists ask for recognition of Tibetan Buddhist leader

Western Buddhist organizations have asked H.H. Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje to recognize H.H. the 15th Shamar Rinpoche, second highest leader of the Karma Kagyu lineage / Central issue for followers of Tibetan Buddhism / Official announcement presented to H.H. the Dalai Lama

Renchen-Ulm | Paris | Darmstadt, October 24, 2014: Western Buddhist organizations representing more than 700 Buddhist centers, monasteries and institutes of the Karma Kagyu tradition have requested their spiritual leader, His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa Thaye Dorje, to recognize the 15th reincarnation of the recently deceased 14th Shamar Rinpoche, Mipham Chokyi Lodro.

International headlines about cremation ceremony in July, 2014

The 14th Shamar Rinpoche, also referred to as Shamarpa, was the second highest Karma Kagyu leader and died in Germany on June 11, 2014. His passing made international headlines for weeks (see links below), mainly triggered by a temporary refusal of the Nepalese government to allow his mortal remains to be brought to Kathmandu where he had wished to be cremated.

After the final approval by the government, H.H. Karmapa Thaye Dorje conducted the traditional rites on July 31, 2014, accompanied by some of the most senior lamas from several schools of Tibetan Buddhism and in the presence of tens of thousands of devotees from all over the world.

Official announcement by Western Kagyu organizations

The devotees of the 14th Shamarpa also follow his main student H.H. Karmapa Thaye Dorje who received all of his spiritual transmissions. Therefore, only H.H. Karmapa Thaye Dorje will be able to transmit them back to the 15th Shamarpa in the future. For these reasons, the devotees of the 14th Shamarpa regard it as essential that his next reincarnation be recognized by H.H. Karmapa Thaye Dorje.

Accordingly, three Western organizations representing more than 700 institutions and many thousands of engaged Buddhists in more than 40 countries, have sent an official request to the 17th Karmapa Thaye Dorje to recognize the next reincarnation of the Shamarpa, thus acknowledging Thaye Dorje's full authority and responsibility for the process.

In an [open letter](#) published on October 3, 2014, Bodhi Path Buddhist Centers, the Diamond Way Buddhist Centers and the French Federation of Karma Kagyu Buddhist Centers state as their goal both to avoid conflict and to strengthen harmony within the



Karma Kagyu school. As soon as the 15th Shamar Rinpoche has been recognized by H.H. Karmapa Thaye Dorje, they will respectfully inform H.H. the Dalai Lama and other leaders of Tibetan Buddhist traditions of the good news.

A copy of the open letter was sent to the office of the Dalai Lama on October 2, 2014. Traditionally, the Dalai Lama, himself belonging to the Gelug sect of Tibetan Buddhism, only acknowledges the recognitions of other sects once they have come to a conclusion based on each sect's own unique proceedings.

Political and spiritual consequences

The Tibetan system of recognizing reincarnations dates back to the first Karmapa (1110 – 1193) and has repeatedly had strong political implications. Finding the authentic 15th Shamarpa, one of the most highly recognized Buddhist leaders, will be an important issue both for harmony among Kagyu followers worldwide as well as for the Tibetan population.

Links to the official announcement

<http://www.diamondway-buddhism.org/recognition-15th-sharpa/>
<http://www.dhagpo-kagyu-ling.org/fr/presentation/enseignants/shamar-rinpoche>

International headlines, July, 2014 (NY Times, BBC News, Kuensel online etc.)

<http://nyti.ms/1qfxKJH> | <http://ind.pn/1rpTCfP> | <http://bbc.in/1w5vh6v>
<http://reut.rs/1t5fceT> | <http://bit.ly/1pyu8wU>

General info

www.sharpa.org | www.karmapa.org

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