

TIBETAN LAMAS PERFORM BLESSING CEREMONY FOR TKU

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Due to the inauguration of the Center for Tibetan Studies at TKU, the former TKU president, Chang Horng-jinh, Chung Yueh-fong, the Director of the Department of Tibetan Affairs, a cabinet-level organization under the Legislative Yuan, and Tsegyam, one of the board members of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Foundation, Taiwan, accompanied by 9 Lama Rinpoches arrived TKU to perform a blessing ceremony known as purification for the university.

Before the ceremony, Tsegyam, who spoke on behalf of the Dalai Lama, was pleased to see the establishment of such a center at TKU. It is the only academic body on Tibetan studies in Taiwan, even though institutes of this nature have been well established in Europe as well as the US. There are of course some similar organizations in China, but, he points out, they are more political than academic. Hence, he places great hope on TKU's role in creating a fair and scientific research environment for Tibetan studies in Asia, which in turn will promote a greater understanding of Tibetan issues.

The resident Master of Sera Monastery, where the Dalai Lama is enthroned, Wysel Rinpoche, also expresses the deepest wishes of the Dalai Lama to the center that any academic research on Tibet should be objective, and free of personal agendas. Furthermore, he says that the importance of having such a institute is the beauty and serenity of Tibetan Buddhism which can not only bring peace to soothe many troubled souls, but also greater wisdom to resolve confusion connected to our modern world.

The idea of setting up such a center was born out of Chang Horng-jinh's meeting with the Dalai Lama in the winter of last year. Out of his admiration for the wisdom and graciousness of His Holiness, Chang promised to promote understanding and preserving Tibetan culture by having a

research institute at TKU. The first director of the Center for Tibetan Studies is Professor Wu Kuan, from the Spanish Department who has been keen scholar for Tibetan Buddhism. She has already arranged an exhibition of Buddhist statues and Tangas at the center.

Dr Flora Chang, the President of TKU gave the center her full endorsement as she sees the future benefits of being the first university to support Tibetan studies in Taiwan. Both she and Professor Wu Kuan would like to see important academic contributions TKU is able to make to the international community in this regard. The research interests are divided into religion, history and language, and there will be a seminar every two weeks, held by Gartoo of Nyingma School, Dundhul Rinpoche. Everyone is welcome to participate if they so wish.

