

SHABTEN PRACTICE

At our sangha's request, Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche completed a *mo* (divination) in relation to Ven. Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche's shabten for the year of the Iron Hare (2011 – 2012), and he told us to do the shabten practices listed below.

- Long Life Mantra 100,000
- Raising or releasing of lungta prayerflags 10,000
 - Cloth or paper prayer flags can be raised and/or paper prayer flags can be released from high places. Purchase paper prayer flags at: <http://www.hitherandyon.com/servlet/the-2564/tibet-prayer-flags-windhorse/Detail>
 - Flags should be raised on days that are especially designated for this meritorious activity. For a listing of auspicious days please see this year's Rigpa Calendar available through Zam Publications.
 - Those who have received the Riwo Sangcho transmission may do this practice immediately after raising/releasing prayer flags. Those who have not received this transmission are still welcome to raise/release flags without doing an accompanying formal practice.
- Tsethar, Life release 1000 lives

Download the liturgies at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/msbstudypractice/home/liturgies>

The goal is to have 100% sangha participation, and it's very beneficial for us to exceed the minimum numbers outlined above before the end of this Tibetan year.

Individuals are responsible to accumulate and keep track of the exact number of mantras recited, prayer flags raised or released, and/or lives saved. Please email Valeska at khenchungvaleska@mangalashribhuti.org to report your accumulation numbers on a regular basis. Another option is to contact Valeska immediately to let her know a certain number that you pledge to accumulate over the next month or so, and then send her an email when your pledge is fulfilled to confirm that you successfully accomplished your pledge number. Please keep in mind that our collective goal as a sangha is to complete the total accumulation numbers as quickly as possible at the start of the year.

CONTRIBUTE

As an expression of appreciation and devotion we would like to offer \$1300 on behalf of the MSB Sangha to Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche, his nunnery, and Tai Situ Rinpoche for their activities related to this year's shabten. Please make checks payable to MSB and write "Shabten" in the memo. Checks can be mailed to the

MSB PO Box 4088. Please contact us at treasurer@mangalashribhuti.org to make a credit card payment or cash donation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following is a short paragraph from His Eminence Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche. He wrote this so we could have a better understanding of why we engage in the shabten practice on a continual basis.

"The reason our teacher has appeared and is still in this world is to show us how to be free from samsara and get enlightened. This depends on our cleansing our obscurations and gathering merit. For this we can always benefit from the advices of an enlightened being who can help us remove any specific obstacles and enhance our teachers activities. This contributes to our merit and cleansing of obscurations, that is why requesting the Buddhas to stay and not pass away is one of the 7 branches. In brief doing shaptens for our teacher, accumulates merit and cleanses our obscurations. It dispels obstacles to our teacher's activities because we are their field of action and it is important to dedicate it for that, amongst other things. This is just my humble opinion, I am sure there are better explanations. I hope this helps you contribute to Rinpoche's activities. Tashi deleg."

The shabten practice is still somewhat new to us in the West, but is a very longstanding tradition in Tibetan Buddhism. Disciples make this part of their daily practice, either as a group or individually. Sometimes there are very big shabten practices and numbers to complete, and sometimes they are small. Seeing how integrated this activity is to our own practice and progress on the path, Dickey Lama (Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche's sister and MSB Sangha member) made a very helpful suggestion in that we could make the shabten recitations part of our regular daily practice, setting aside maybe a half an hour at the end or beginning or this purpose alone. We have learned that it is important for the students to recite the shabten each day on a regular basis.