

Mr. Angdu writes:

Hello and Jullay,

My name is Tsering Angdu and I live in Stok. I belong to a simple and typical Ladakhi family. I have known Khensur Rinpoche from my younger days and we have been friends since then. We served as teachers in the Government High School in Sakti village about 40 Kilometers from my village in the years 1977 to 1978. We have very good memories from then, when he had a good vision regarding education in Ladakh. We used to stay in a rented house there in the village and I remember we used to help each other during school hours as well as off school. In the end of the year 1978, Rinpoche went to New Jersey (USA) and after couple of months I left my job as government teacher and I started to work in a private tour and travel agency in Leh town as I was more interested in promoting tourism in Ladakh. Since then we had a very good relationship.

Later years in 1993 to 1995, that is for three years I was appointed as head of the Stok village and during my tenure I helped Rinpoche to allot the current land for the school to be built. During those three years, I remember that Rinpoche was committed to open the school for the needy children and had a meeting in Leh with fourteen people and formed the Siddhartha Culture and Welfare Society (SCWS) in the summer of 1995. Since then I have been serving the SCWS and the Siddhartha School and I am honored and happy to serve the school as long as I am mentally and physically able to, as I and Rinpoche have a very good and mutual understanding.

For fifteen years (1995 to 2010) I joined the politics with the will of my people in the village and had a great honor to serve them. From 1995 to 2000 I was elected as Councilor of four villages: Stok, Matho, Martselang and Stakna for Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ladakh_Autonomous_Hill_Development_Council,_Leh, from 2000 to 2005 I was elected again as the governmental head of the village and from 2005 to 2010 I was elected once again as the Councilor for my constituency in LAHDC. During that decade and a half, I gave my best to help the school regarding all the governmental paper works.

Now Ladakh has become the Union Territory of India which means we are no longer with Jammu and Kashmir politically and it is now administered directly by the Central Government of India. In the beginning in the year 1995 when SCWS was formed, Rinpoche and his close friend Mr. Sonam one of the Board members were the signatory Secretaries, but unfortunately Mr. Sonam passed away then and I was appointed as Secretary of the Society (SCWS). Since then I have been working as Treasurer and Secretary along with Rinpoche's younger sister Tsering Kunzom. I am also a member in SSP, US representing Ladakh Board (SCWS), following Sir Eshay Tondup.

Presently, I think many of you know that I have a small resort in the name of 'Highland Heritage Resort' in Stok, previously known as 'Golden Retreat'. I had to change the name because of some formalities to be done in the Tourism Department of Ladakh and I feel very fortunate to host many of our sponsors and donors there from SSP, US along with other guests.

In the end I would like to assure you all, as I mentioned before that as long as I am mentally and physically strong, I am always there to serve Siddhartha School and SCWS. Also, most importantly, I would like to pay my deepest gratitude to all our philanthropic sponsors, donors, the Board of Directors and Staff of SSP, US and also our philanthropic donors and sponsors of 'Les Enfants Du Sourire' (Switzerland) for their kind and continuous support for the Siddhartha School, without their support the school would have never been achieved its vision and development so far.

Thank you so much.

Tsering Angdu

Secretary, Siddhartha Culture and Welfare Society, Stok.