

Professor Geshe Ngawang Samten
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Born on July 7, 1956 at Dokhar in Central Tibet, Professor Samten came to India along with his parents after the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959. He studied at the Central School for Tibetans in Chandragiri, Orissa, and thereafter at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies at Sarnath, where he earned the titles of Shastri, Acharya and M.Phil.

He possesses a rare combination of the schooling on modern lines as well as the Tibetan monastic education system. He had his monastic education at Gaden Shartse Monastery at Mundgod in Karnataka. He obtained Geshe Dhorampa and later Geshe Lharampa degree, equivalent to Ph.D. degree in the modern system.

He began his academic career as Research Assistant at Sarnath Institute, and became Head of the Research Department devoted to the restoration of the lost Buddhist texts into Sanskrit, based on the classical Tibetan translations made in ancient times jointly by the Indian and Tibetan Pundits. This unique research activity evinces his erudition both in the classical Tibetan and Sanskrit languages as well as the rare translation skills. As a result of his outstanding achievement in his field, he was promoted to the position of Professor of Buddhist Philosophy. He is also actively engaged in Hindi translations of Buddhist texts in Sanskrit and Tibetan. Professor Samten, with his special interest in the philosophy of Nagarjuna, published the definitive critical edition of the *Ratnavali* with its commentary as the result of his post-graduate research. He is credited with important publications, such as a critical edition of *Abhidhammattha Samgaho*, a critical edition of Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the *Pindidrita* and the *Pancakrama* of Nagarjuna, and co-authored *The Ocean of Reasoning*, an annotated English translation of the commentary on Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamaka Karika* by the Tibetan master thinker Tson-Kha-Pa, published by Oxford University Press. *The Ocean of Reasoning* is acclaimed far and wide.

He is instrumental in promoting Buddhist Studies in India. A number of Indian universities have greatly been benefited by his scholarship and insight in formulating courses in Buddhist studies. He strongly advocates to make the education system instrumental in transforming the students through inculcation of value along with development of skills in various fields.

He frequently travels across the continents lecturing to academic audiences in the United States, Europe, Australia, Russia, some of the Asian countries and as well in India. He has been in action at various national and international seminars, workshops and conferences. He has held Visiting Professorial assignments at Hampshire, Amherst and Smith Colleges in the USA and at the University of Tasmania in Australia.

In virtue of his sagacity and wisdom, Professor Samten has been on numerous academic bodies, Universities and expert committees of the Ministries of Government of India, and as a member on the boards of several Institutes in USA, Canada, Thailand, France and Austria. He has also served in the Editorial Board of International Association of Tibetan Studies in Harvard. He is a member of various committees including the Governing Council of Association of Indian Universities and also chairman/member of various expert committees constituted by the University Grant Commission of India.

In 2009, he has been awarded **Padma Shri** (one of the country's highest civilian awards) by the President of India for his distinguished services in the field of education and literature.

He is currently the Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi.
