

The Situation at Tashigar North, Margarita Island, Venezuela

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It is not an easy time for us here in Venezuela. Most of you are probably aware of our general circumstances through the media reports; of course these reports always come from a certain point of view. Normally we try to report optimistic news from our side of the history, but it would be very naive not to make clear that certainly we are facing difficult moments. We are revealing the true story with the intention to ask for some international support that for sure will be needed soon, both spiritually and relatively – meaning financial.

So far we are doing well inside the [Gar](#). Margarita, in general, it is not that active in public riots or demonstrations pro or against the regime. So this gives us a certain peace that does not exist on the mainland. Economics are really crazy. It is expected that inflation reaches 10.000.000 % for 2019. That is not a mistake; seven zeros. So that has increased our monthly maintenance expense from US\$ 1.000 to US\$ 2.500. Lately Rinpoche advised us to keep a low profile in our activities until these bad times are gone. He wisely provided us with some savings from the 2010 Drubchen that are lasting until the present day. But that money will be finished soon.



In the current economy we cannot work on any project because we do not have enough resources to cover even the cost of the provided product or service. Inflation eats all. We tried many ideas, from guided school visits, room rental, house rental and the aloe business. With some donations we recorded a video for the inauguration of the Gönpa of Dzamling Gar. We agreed to use some shots of it to make a kind of promotional video for Tashigar North with the intention to refresh the connection we know a lot of us have with the place. In order to finish the video, we are seeking video images from the Drubchen (2010). If you have some material please contact us at rolocb76@gmail.com. The idea is to show the video during the annual meetings at Dzamling Gar to collect some funds for us, exclusively to be presented inside the IDC.

At the level of spiritual activity, we perform our Ganapujas together and some special dates in the calendar. On average, we have around ten participants. Due to local circumstances it is very difficult to have any international instructor visit us and it is hard to cover the cost to bring the instructors living in Venezuela. Now it is even difficult to follow webcasts as our internet connection is damaged (it is provided by a governmental company).



We have suspended any major maintenance projects, nevertheless we need to **raise some funds to maintain the wooden doors of the Gönpa**. They need some care urgently because the doors are under risk to get permanently damaged. The ARP, Animal Rescue Project, we presented a few years ago at Merigar West turned into the **FFF (Free From Fear Project)**. **We have provided surgery for more than 300 dogs/cats and there are currently fifteen living in our refuge**. If you are interested in supporting this project, please write to kashkurova@gmail.com.

For security issues we have decided to take care of the night shifts ourselves, so two nights a week we have to be on guard from 10pm to 6am to prevent any difficult situation. We have installed a new surveillance camera tower in the North Eastern border of the Gar.

Some of us grow some vegetables in little orchards near home, some others in little lots of what used to be the aloe field. We are without a Gekö since last October, so in this case too a few of the residents share some of the duties to keep things running. If you are interested in applying for the Gekö position, please write us at tashigarnorteseecretary@gmail.com.





We are convinced that we have a special protection coming from the blessings of Rinpoche. We believe we are going to be ok during all this process, as long as it will take. We encourage you to keep supporting us, we here do our best with what is given to us. Please keep us in your practices and let's keep thinking of the day when all of us will be together again for a long pagchen Sunday in our beloved Tashigar North. We keep going!

By Rolo Carrasco

Photos: Rinpoche's house at Tashigar North.
Olga, former blue gakyil. Douglas and Amma, residents.
Rolo Carrasco, administrator. Tata, yellow gakyil.
Ana Maria, member. Dmitri, red gakyil.

