

Düzang: Auspicious Days

On the Bhutanese calendar, auspicious days known collectively as *düzang* (དུང་འབའ་) take place almost every month. Observing auspicious days is strongly driven by the Buddhist precepts of not harming any form of life. Farming involves tilling and digging the earth, which kills numerous insects. In the lunar calendar month, the 8th, 10th, 15th, 25th, 30th and other holy days are considered *düzang* and any non-virtuous deeds carried out on these days will result in manifold karmic consequences. Therefore, farmers try to observe *düzang* and instead try to visit monasteries, temples, and sacred sites to offer prayers and otherwise accumulate merits.

Even if people are not able to make a pilgrimage to a sacred site on an auspicious day, they avoid harnessing their oxen and tilling the soil. *Düzang* is known by the term *sanyen* (ས་གཉན་) in some communities. It is said that carrying out activities on inappropriate dates will result in misfortunes. *Düzang* days are good for invoking Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Guru Rinpoche is said to have had stated that in each month, the 8th, 10th, 15th, 25th and 30th are auspicious days. If one undertakes good deeds on those days, the merits will multiply; yet, if one indulges in evil deeds, the negative actions too will have manifold effects.

The 8th, 10th, 15th, 25th and 30th of each lunar month are associated with the Medicine Buddha (སངས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ལྷ་), Guru Rinpoché (གུ་རུ་འཛིན་པོ་ཆེ་), Buddha Amitabha (སངས་རྒྱལ་འོད་དཔག་མེད་), dakini (མཁའ་འགྲོ་) and Shakyamuni (ཤ་ཀྱ་ཐུབ་པ་) respectively. There are also other *düzang* connected with the death anniversary of Zhapdrung Ngakwang Namgyel (ཞམ་པ་སྐུ་ལྷ་མཚན་), the birth anniversary of Guru Rinpoché (གུ་རུ་འཛིན་པོ་ཆེ་འཁྲུངས་སྐར་དུས་ཆེན་), first sermon of Lord Buddha (བདེན་བཞིའི་ཚོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱོར་བའི་དུས་ཆེན་), descent of Lord Buddha (ལྷ་བབས་དུས་ཆེན་) and Lord Buddha's Parinirvana (བདག་ཅག་གི་སྤོན་པའི་དུས་ཆེན་ལྷ་འཛོམས་). On this day, farmers and other residents go to monasteries and temples to pay their homage and circumambulate sacred sites.

The eighth day of every month is associated with the Medicine Buddha (སངས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ལྷ་). Seeking refuge in him will help purify negative actions of thirty eons. Those in the hell realms, suffering under the heaps of dead bodies, will also get relief.

The tenth day of every lunar month is considered to be Guru Rinpoché's day. Most importantly, the tenth day of the fifth month is auspicious day. It is a day for paying reverence and remembering the great tantric master Guru Rinpoché. On the 10th day of every month Guru bestows numerous remarkable blessings to humans and other sentient beings all over the world. As per the legend, Guru Rinpoche was born from a sacred lotus flower as an eight-year-old child, miraculously appearing in the center of the lake Dhanakosha on the tenth day of fifth lunar month in the year of the earth-

monkey. Thus, the 10th day of the fifth month is a sacred day to worship and pay homage to Guru Rinpoché.

On the fifteenth day of every month, one should pray to the Buddha Amitabha to purify negative actions and obscurations of two thousand eons. Those in hell realms of freezing world will also get relief. On the twenty-fifth day of every month, one should pray to the *dakinis* to purify sin and obscurations. The thirtieth day of every month is the day of Buddha Shakyamuni. By seeking refuge in him one can purify negative actions and obscurations of eighty thousand eons. Those in the hell realms of the fire pitch will also get relief.

In some communities, some households sponsor the *tsechu* ritual on auspicious days such as on the 8th, 10th, 15th 25th and the 30th day of every month on a rotation basis. Some farmers are visited holy sites to offer prayers, incense, butter lamps, and etc. on the auspicious days and other holy days to commemorate and reverence for the great saints.

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