

Press Release on clarification of the term "Sowa-Rigpa"

Sowa-Rigpa, the extraordinary system of Medicine of Tibet is one of the four Great Medical Traditions of the World. Nowadays, it is termed as "Tibetan Medicine" in other languages and Tibetan Sowa-Rigpa and so on but Sowa-Rigpa and Tibetan Sowa-Rigpa are synonyms. There is no any phenomenon that is Sowa-Rigpa and not Tibetan Sowa-Rigpa. And some uses Sowa-Rigpa as a common term for all systems of medicine like Western Sowa-Rigpa, Chinese Sowa-Rigpa similar to designating a particular term as a common term which is a mistake that has come into being lately. Even without purposely adding Tibetan to Sowa-Rigpa, it does not mean it is not Tibetan system of Medicine like Ayurveda which means Indian system of Medicine even without adding Indian to it.

The term or doctrine of the term "Sowa-Rigpa" is designated on the basis of the knowledge of the system or the philosophy of the system. When the four elements of the body neither increases nor decreases from its required normal range, it is termed as the healthy state of being. And when the elements increases or decreases from its normal range due to any causative factor, it then turns into a state of disease or ill-health. Since after thorough understanding of the nature of the diseases, the Sowa-Rigpa practitioners have to restore the decreased or degenerated qualities of the elements, through recommendation of diet and medicine possessing such qualities, it is termed as Sowa. And Rigpa is knowledge, the knowledge of thorough recognition of the object of healing, the therapeutic agent and treatment methodologies of restoration thus implying Sowa-Rigpa.

Therefore, Sowa-Rigpa means none other than the traditional system of Tibetan Medicine and does not mean any other medical system of the world. Moreover under any circumstances of time or place, even without particularly mentioning Tibetan with Sowa-Rigpa, it should only mean the traditional medical system of Tibet.

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Central Council of Tibetan Medicine