Lama Choda was born at Namok Village to a humble farmers family. He had an interest in the Buddhist doctrine from his early childhood. When his family moved to North Sikkim he enrolled himself as a novice monk at Labrang Monastery. He spent most of his childhood as a monk learning to read and write the Buddhist Sutras. When he had mastered the basic sutras he came to Gangtok where he met the venerable Bermiok Rinpoche and under him he spent to learn the more advanced mantras and sutras. He spent a number of years under venerable Bermiok Rinpoche and mastered most of the advanced mantras and sutras. He then shifted to Ghanam and took to studying the mantras under the venerable Ugen Tenzing Rinpoche. Under Ugen Tenzing Rinpoche he learnt the secret tantric practices and got the empowerment to various tantric rituals. He also took lessons in advanced practices from venerable Khayche Tshonkpa Rinpoche. To learn more of the advanced Zogden doctrine he went to Tibet and became the disciple of the famous tantric yogi Thubtob Sakya Sari under whom he mastered the six major and inner Yogas. He also received empowerment to the secret tantra of Rigdzin-stog-grub-kyi-chos. After the death of Thubtob Sakya Sari he continued his studies at Cho-bo-ri under the chief disciple of Sakya Sari named Thiblay Rinpoche. He spent many years at Cho-bo-ri and mastered the Dzogchen teachings. He then came to Taeri and got further teachings from venerable Khayab-gnas-drupchen Rinpoche. At Taeri he mas-
tured the art of generating psychic body heat which allowed him to meditate on snow covered mountains naked without feeling cold. He also mastered the art of *Tsi-lung* which allowed him to travel hundreds of miles per day without feeling tired. He went on a pilgrimage to all the holy sites in Tibet and then returned to Sikkim. After his arrival in Gangtok he went for meditation at Lachung for several months and then to Takto where he spent several years in meditation. He then went for a pilgrimage to Pathing and met venerable Chonechok Tshampa Rimpoché who taught him some tantric practices. After his return from Pathing he went for pilgrimage to Tibet and also to Bhutan where he visited the holy sites of Bhumbhang, Kargay and Para. From Bhutan he went to Kham where he learned the secret practice of Chod from the venerable Chari Rangdhey Rimpoché. After finishing his studies at Kham he returned to Sikkim and spent some time learning from the venerable Yathang Rimpoché. He again retired to meditation in a cave above Chonga Lake for several months. From there he went to Yathang in Chumbi Valley and spent two years in meditation.

He then returned to Gangtok and went to Lingdum where he meditated for several months. He returned to Gangtok and spent some time receiving teachings from his Holiness Dzogchen Rimpoché.

On the invitation of the venerable khamba Lama of Mongolia, Labrang Gomchen went there with some followers. He was received in Mongolia with the highest honours by the lamas of Mongolia. In Mongolia he paid a special visit to the Alpolak and Hungreas monasteries. He gave a number of sermons to the Buddhist community in Mongolia and also cured a large number of sick people by his blessing. Labrang Gomchen and Lama Kambu also discussed the effect of the Vietnam war on the Buddhist community and appealed to them to stop the war. On his return journey from Mongolia he stopped at Moscow where he visited a small Buddhist Monastery. In the following year he went to Thailand to represent Sikkim at the World Buddhist Conference and later to Malaysia for the same Conference.

Labrang Gomchen had many students from different monasteries in Sikkim. Most of his students rose to the high positions of Dorje Lopen in various monasteries. Labrang Gomchen was connected to most of the monasteries of Sikkim but he spent a major part of his life at the Rinche Monastery in Gangtok. After spending most of his life in service of Buddhist doctrine he passed away to his heavenly abode in 1985 at the age of 95 years. Labrang Gomchen will be always remembered for his many miracles of curing men and animals possessed by evil spirits. He can be said of be one of the greatest tantric yogic to appear in the last few decades of Sikkim’s history.