

THE 'WORLD TRIBUNE': A LETTER FROM SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

Renu Jiandani, SGI-USA young women's leader, shares what the 'World Tribune' means to her.

I write this story with my sincere and deep appreciation to SGI President Ikeda and the *World Tribune* staff.

The year 1990 was a hard one in my life. I had been practicing for two-and-a-half years, was new in America and experiencing many challenges in every aspect of my life.

I was a young women's district leader, and the women's district leader encouraged me by saying, "If you do your best in the district, in your family, at work and chant 1 million daimoku [Nam-myoho-rence-kyo], you will get whatever you wish."

I did my best and chanted 1 million daimoku. Guess what? The day I finished my 1 million daimoku, not only did I *not* get what I wanted, but the Persian Gulf War started instead. I was so disappointed. Here I am chanting to become happy and for world peace, but instead I was not happy and the world seemed to be moving in the wrong direction.

I decided to write a letter to President Ikeda. It was my first time to write to him so I almost wrote a book. Just kidding! I shared with him that I was born in India, grew up in Okinawa, and now, in America, was facing many struggles. However, I was confidently told by my leaders that if I did my best and chanted, I would get whatever I wished for. I did not—why?

I really wanted to understand why things happened this way so that I would know what to do next. I had no idea what would happen to the letter as I put it in the mail.

A few weeks later, I received my *World Tribune* and saw that President Ikeda was in Okinawa giving a speech about the life of an Indian princess, Jansi. He talked about her courage, describing scenes of her as she put her child on her back and jumped on a horse to fight on the frontlines of battle. She was killed in the battle. Although she was only 19, she courageously took action to stand up for her people.

He went on to say that sometimes you may think you have done your best in your family, district, work and chanted but did not accomplish what you wanted. Why not?

It was exactly from my letter. Just imagine how shocked I was to see this in the *World Tribune*. I was amazed that President Ikeda had received and read my letter. It was an awesome feeling.

He went on to answer my question. He explained the Buddhist concept of the simultaneity of cause and effect, saying that the moment the cause has been made the effect is already created. Through his speech, I gained tremendous hope that, even though I could not see it at that moment, the very fact that I had made the effort ensured my victory. With time, I found it was true.

Because of this experience, the *World Tribune* holds a deep and significant place in my life. I have continued to write to President Ikeda and, although I know it is not possible for him to respond to each letter, I always find the answers in his speeches to the millions of questions in my mind. It feels like we are pen pals.

More than ever before, I have come to realize the spiritual value of this great newspaper. Recently, a young man in prison sent a letter to the SGI-USA office asking about the SGI.

We sent him some issues of the *World Tribune* and *Living Buddhism*. A few days later, he responded by letter saying that he was deeply impressed by the writings and virtue of Mr. Ikeda. He had found hope in his life and had begun to practice. There was no verbal communication with this young man, but his heart was moved by the publications.

President Ikeda writes: "Becoming happy ourselves is nothing. It's easy. The essence of faith, however, is to help others become happy as well" (March 31 *World Tribune*, p. 6).

Taking this to heart, I have begun to share the *World Tribune* with others. I even gave a subscription as a gift to my hair dresser, since she has been asking me questions about this practice. I want to help others become happy. I want to encourage my members and friends who are struggling.

I believe this newspaper has the spiritual nourishment that people are looking for in their lives. The *World Tribune* can motivate and inspire us anytime, anywhere.

As you may have guessed, I love the *World Tribune*. I am determined to share this paper with everyone until one day when one hears the words *World Tribune*, it inspires instant hope for America and the world.