

AROUND THE SGI

SGI-Cuba Music Festival in Havana, Cuba

On June 30, SGI-Cuba held a music festival at a theater in Havana City to commemorate the fifth anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's visit to their country. An SGI-Cuba leader gave opening remarks and another read President Ikeda's message. Young members presented dynamic, original and traditional dances of the Caribbean.

SGI Members from 24 Countries Participate in European Summit

On June 30 and July 1, SGI representatives from 24 European countries met for the 2nd European Summit Meeting at the SGI-France Culture Center in Charterettes, France. The meeting commemorated the 40th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's first trip to Europe. Participants discussed plans for holding small discussion meetings across Europe aiming to involve 50,000 people; a summer session for 10,000 focusing on the study of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism; and a European general meeting in Milan, Italy, in autumn 2001. The group also discussed the fundamental spirit of leaders to serve the members and foster capable people.

Representatives reported on activities conducted in their respective countries. In SGI-Italy, more than 30,000 attended discussion meetings during one month, while 17,000 young people gathered for a meeting in March and 13,000 women gathered for their division meeting in June. In SGI-Germany, 4,000 members attended local discussion meetings during May. In SGI-France, discussion meeting participants during May exceeded 13,000 and about a month ago, the youth hosted cultural events in eight cities. Representatives from Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland also reported on activities in their respective countries.

SGI-Peru Engages in Relief Activities

In response to the June 23 earthquake that jolted southern Peru, killing at least 115 people and leaving more than 185,000 homeless, SGI-Peru members are engaging in emergency relief activities. The members are donating food, clothing and other daily necessities, which are transported by air to distribution areas for delivery by SGI-Peru volunteers to earthquake victims. On June 7 and 8, SGI-Peru volunteers hand-delivered emergency supplies to about 6,000 families. Aftershocks are continuing and SGI-Peru is committed to helping rebuild the ravaged areas.

SGI-Thailand Hosts Education Lecture

On June 30, Samakom Sang Kunka Nai Prates Thai (SGI-Thailand) sponsored a lecture by Dr. Nibondh Sasidhorn, former education minister, at the Thonburi Center titled "Aiming for a Society for the Sake of Education." The lecture commemorated the 130th anniversary of the birth of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, educator and first Soka Gakkai president. More than 600 people attended the lecture, including Professor Maneewan Kamonpatana of Chulalongkorn University, president of the Thai Ideal Graduates Association.

Dr. Nibondh is an advisor to Siam University, which conferred an honorary doctorate

on SGI President Ikeda in November 2000. Touching on President Ikeda's education proposal made in September 2000, Dr. Nibondh said school is a place that allows children to exercise their creativity and flourish—a place that makes real contributions to society.

During the lecture, SGI-Thailand presented scholarships and grants to 10 Bangkok elementary schools and their students.

'The Prince and the Coral Sea' to be Published in Hindi

President Ikeda's *The Prince and the Coral Sea*, a book for children, will be published by the National Book Trust, India, in English and in 12 Indian languages, including Hindi. The National Book Trust publishes books considered to be of importance to society in English and 12 of the major Indian languages. In June 2000, it published a Hindi translation of *Education for Creative Living* by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, first president of the Soka Gakkai, and work is underway to translate it into 11 other Indian languages within the next two years.

Courtesy of SOKANET (www.sokagakkai.or.jp)