

**The New Human Revolution, Volume 6, Chapter 2**  
**Long Journey**  
**BY HO GOKU – ILLUSTRATED BY KENICHIRO UCHIDA**

Translation of parts 28–30 of the ‘Long Journey’ chapter, as printed in the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai’s daily newspaper. Ho Goku is the pen name of Daisaku Ikeda, who appears in the novel as Shin’ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1962.

**Shin’ichi Yamamoto** and his group were scheduled to fly from Cairo to Karachi, Pakistan, on Feb. 9, departing at 8:15 a.m. They arrived at the airport a little after 7:00, only to find that their flight would be substantially delayed. An airline official told them that they were waiting for the plane to arrive from London, where it was grounded due to heavy fog. They didn’t seem to know yet when the plane might take off.

Yusuke Yoshikawa muttered angrily about this unexpected interruption to their plans: “What a disaster! There goes our entire schedule.”

Akira Kuroki tried to placate him, saying: “This happens all the time. The last time we were in Europe, we had to wait more than six hours in the London airport because of fog.”

Shin’ichi, standing beside the two men, laughed: “Kuroki, you’ve become quite an old hand at traveling, haven’t you? Yoshikawa, I know Japanese trains always run on time, but you mustn’t judge the rest of the world according to those standards. We’re taking a plane, not a train, and Japan isn’t the world.

“Look at the bright side and be glad that we now have unexpected bonus time to discuss future activities. Nichiren Daishonin said: ‘The generals in a tumultuous age develop strategy behind drawn curtains, and victory is decided thousands of miles away [from the field of battle]’ (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 183). Detailed advance planning is very important.”

And so their discussion began in the waiting lounge.

Shin’ichi offered an idea: “We’re stopping over in Bangkok again after Pakistan, and I’d like to form a chapter there. What do you think?”

Eisuke Akizuki replied, “It will be an important new move — the first Soka Gakkai chapter in Southeast Asia.”

Shin’ichi gazed at each of them as he continued: “Unless someone disagrees, then, let’s plan on doing that. Our flight from Bangkok to Japan will make a stopover in Hong Kong. Will Hong Kong members be coming to meet us at the airport?”

Once again Akizuki replied: “When we left Japan, the Overseas Affairs Bureau had already received notice that members wanted to meet us at the Hong Kong airport.”

“I see,” said Shin’ichi. “Then let’s also form a Hong Kong chapter. Would you contact the Headquarters and suggest some leadership appointments for these two new chapters?”

Though noon rolled around, there was still no word on their flight. They ate lunch and discussed until nightfall various activities scheduled after their return to Japan, including youth division events to celebrate March 16, Kosen-rufu Day.

It was night by the time the plane finally left Cairo. Because of the late departure and the time difference, Shin’ichi and his group arrived at the Karachi airport at 3:00 a.m., Feb. 10.

Though it was the middle of the night, several people were waiting for them. One was Shingo Shiroyama, a Japanese member in his 50s, sent to Karachi by his Japanese employer as a technical instructor to help introduce more advanced textile-dyeing technology. Another was Masao Kawakita, about 27 or 28. He and his wife were both living in Pakistan, where he had been posted by the Japanese import–export company for which he worked. Kawakita would be the guide for Shin’ichi’s party during their stay. He wasn’t a member of the Soka Gakkai, but his mother-in-law was; Shin’ichi had met her

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before he left Japan.

A young Pakistani man, a student of the University of Karachi, was also there to greet them. He had been asked by Gakkai member Asanobu Komori, who was engaged in technical training at the tire factory run by the young man's father, to meet Shin'ichi and his party at the airport, and show them around Karachi. Mr. Komori himself, the young man said, was currently back in Japan on a short visit. Shin'ichi sincerely thanked the Pakistani youth for coming all the way to the airport and staying so late to meet them, explaining with deep regret that they had already arranged for Mr. Kawakita to be their guide.

A representative of the Japanese trading company stationed in Karachi which would help Shin'ichi and his group purchase materials for the Grand Reception Hall at the head temple was also there.

Shin'ichi expressed his sincere thanks to all for coming to meet them in the middle of the night.

The group's plans had originally called for touring Karachi starting on the morning of Feb. 10, but Shin'ichi announced that they would push the schedule back to the afternoon.

When they arrived at their hotel, Yusuke Yoshikawa commented, "If we don't start our day until the afternoon, we're going to be very rushed."

"I, too, prefer to start moving in the morning," said Shin'ichi, "but when we think of our driver, of course the afternoon is better. He came to the airport to greet us in the middle of the night. If he has to drive us around and be our guide from the morning, he'll be lacking sleep. How terrible it would be if that resulted in an accident! How could we ever apologize to him and his family if that happened?"

"As leaders, we must be careful to always think first not of our convenience but of the others who are working so hard for our benefit. Nor can we ever let up our guard against accidents. These are very important points for leaders to bear in mind."

Shortly after noon on Feb. 10, the group began their tour of Karachi. Masao Kawakita, their guide, and Shingo Shiroyama accompanied them.

Pakistan had split off from India as a separate Muslim country when India declared its independence from Britain in 1947. At that time, Pakistan was divided into East and West Pakistan, separated geographically by northern India. (Later, in 1971, East Pakistan would become an independent nation under the name Bangladesh.)

Karachi, as the capital of Pakistan,<sup>1</sup> had received a huge influx of Muslim refugees from India immediately after the partition and grown suddenly into the newly independent country's most populous city.

Everywhere they went, Shin'ichi's group saw camels not only carrying people and goods on their backs but pulling large carts. The animals were clearly an intimate part of Pakistani life, much relied on for their physical strength.

After seeing the city's main sites and buildings, the group visited the ruins of Bhambhore, 36 miles east. The ancient port of Bhambhore had flourished from about the beginning of the 1st century C.E. It was here that, in the 8th century, the Umayyad general Muhammad bin al-Qasim landed, thus marking Islam's first step onto the Indian subcontinent. In that sense, Bhambhore could be regarded as the origin of the modern Islamic state of Pakistan.

History is a series of new steps, one following another, Shin'ichi mused. The far-distant future begins right here and now. That is why the present moment is always a beginning, the first step on a long journey. To weave a tapestry of eternal peace, we must win in each present moment. We must rouse the sun of courage in our hearts and make a rainbow of hope shine there, winning one day at a time, opening the door to triumph again and again.

Shin'ichi had made arrangements for a banquet at a Chinese restaurant in Karachi that night. Those who had met his party at the airport and shown them around the city were all invited.

At the dinner, Shiroyama spoke to Shin'ichi about something troubling him: "Sensei, I have five children. Two of them, one son and one daughter, are not practicing Buddhism. I am disappointed that I have not put into practice Mr. Toda's guideline of 'faith for a happy, harmonious family.' I'm ashamed of my failure."

"How old are your children?" Shin'ichi asked.

"They are all adults already."

*(To be continued)*

1. Karachi was the capital 1947–60. The present capital is Islamabad.

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