

## **Indian School Dedicates New Building to SGI President Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER**

On Aug. 15, the 50th anniversary of India's independence, the Sethu Bhaskara Matriculation Higher Secondary School of Chennai (formerly Madras) inaugurated a new four-story building called the Dr. Ikeda Block.

The SGI leader's philosophy of education is highly prized by the students, teachers and administrators of the school, which has integrated study of Mr. Ikeda's poems into its curriculum. The Dr. Ikeda Block houses the Makiguchi Library, named in honor of the first Soka Gakkai president, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, who devoted his life to education, peace and human rights. It also contains chemistry and physics laboratories, a computer room and other facilities. The purpose of the school, as stated in its handbook, is to promote value-laden education and raise genuine world citizens.

The opening ceremony was attended by some 2,500 students and 2,000 parents. Special guests included Krishna Srinivas and Shanmughasundaram Mohan, the president and vice president of the World Poetry Society, and Naveena Reddi, chief secretary of the Bharat (India) Soka Gakkai.

Sethu Kumanan, managing trustee of the school, who is himself a poet, described Mr. Ikeda as a world-renowned poet, writer, philosopher, pacifist and educator without parallel. He went on to relate how, by studying Mr. Ikeda's poems, students have learned essential principles of humanism.

Dr. Mohan, a former justice of the India Supreme Court and a co-founder of the World Congress of Poets, declared that by dedicating the facility to Mr. Ikeda the school has created a new history. He praised the school for its commitment to fostering spirituality and developing creativity both in its approach to learning and in the arts.

He added that he was greatly encouraged by the SGI leader's efforts to carry on the philosophy of nonviolence of Shakyamuni, King Ashoka and Mahatma Gandhi. In conclusion, Dr. Mohan called upon the students to strive to broaden their perspective and develop a spirit of universal compassion.

In a message, Mr. Ikeda expressed gratitude for the honor given him by the school, and stated his determination to do his utmost to support the school's activities.

As founder of the Soka schools system, he affirmed his belief that the future of humankind depends on the education of youth. He added that he felt the Sethu Bhaskara School motto, "Develop yourself by serving others, serve others by developing yourself," perfectly accords with the ideals of Soka education. Mr. Ikeda said he hoped that the students would uphold this noble motto throughout their lives while steadfastly working to contribute to society.

Afterward, a culture festival featured Indian folk songs and dances, in which representatives of the Bharat Soka Gakkai participated. In conjunction with the opening of the new building, the India and World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition was held at the new facility. The exhibition included 1,000 paintings by children from India and 100 by students of the school.

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