

INFORMAL GATHERING BENEFIT AS HIGH AS MOUNT EVEREST

SGI President Ikeda attended an informal gathering with representatives from France, the United States, Hong Kong, Luxembourg and regions throughout Japan on the evening of Dec. 28, 1998, in Shinjuku, Tokyo. He expressed his deep appreciation to the members, praising the momentous accomplishments SGI organizations around the world had achieved in 1998, surmounting all obstacles.

He said: "All these achievements are the result of the dedicated efforts of sincere SGI members, who enjoy little recognition or fame, but who are the true Bodhisattvas of the Earth. These are people working earnestly to protect the SGI and support the kosen-rufu movement. They are more praiseworthy than any celebrity or notable."

The SGI leader then cited a passage found Nichiren Daishonin's writings by the Great Teacher Dengyo: "Those who praise him [the votary of the Lotus Sutra] will receive blessings that will pile up as high as Mount Sumeru, while those who slander him will be committing a fault that will condemn them to the hell of incessant suffering" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, p. 281). These words, President Ikeda declared, attest that all who strive ceaselessly for the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law will accumulate benefit that piles as high as Mount Sumeru or as high as Mount Everest — benefit to be gazed upon with wonder by all.

In offering his best wishes for the coming year to those present, the SGI leader said: "I am earnestly praying each day for the health and happiness of all my fellow members throughout the world. Please have a really wonderful new year!"

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