

## AROUND THE SGI

### **More Than 20,000 Visit the SGI's Amazon Exhibit in Costa Rica**

The exhibition “Symbiosis and Hope: The Amazon—Its Environment and Peace” closed on July 6 at the Costa Rica Science and Culture Center in San José, the capital of Costa Rica. More than 20,000 visited the exhibition, which illustrates the contributions of the Amazon rain forests to the global ecosystem and promotes humankind’s harmonious coexistence with the earth through non-destructive, sustainable economic development. The SGI, SGI-Costa Rica, the Costa Rica Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Education cosponsored the exhibit. Costa Rica First Vice President Astrid Fischel Volio, during a visit to the exhibit, praised the show for heightening awareness of how we can contribute to environmental preservation, rather than to its degradation. Designated as an official Ministry of Education event, the exhibition received groups of elementary and junior high school students every day.

### **SGI Chapter Is Established in Hungary**

A new SGI chapter was established in Hungary. On July 21, members celebrated the event in Budapest, Hungary’s capital. Newly appointed chapter leader Toshikazu Nakagawa expressed his joy at being part of a new beginning in the history of SGI-Hungary, together with all those present. SGI East Europe Advisor Peter Kühn emphasized that in the SGI organization, the chapter’s function can be likened to the trunk of a tree, and when the chapter is healthy, the organization will flourish. On the following day, 50 people gathered for an introductory seminar on Buddhism.

### **Brazil Soka Kindergarten Holds First Day of Classes**

On Aug. 1, Principal Dirce Iwamoto, Vice Principal Emilia Watanabe Rocca, and the other faculty and staff greeted youngsters and their parents to their first day of classes at the newly established Brazil Soka Kindergarten, located in the Vila Mariana District of São Paulo, Brazil. The Brazil Soka Kindergarten opened June 6 of this year, coinciding with the 130th anniversary of the birth of educator and first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. Since 1994, the SGI-Brazil educators group has advanced the Makiguchi Project, which has brought Mr. Makiguchi’s value-creating educational theories—based on humane competition, value-creation and fostering the inherent capabilities of individuals—into the classrooms of some 60 Brazilian schools. Principal Iwamoto has introduced the kindergarten’s motto, “Grow up strong, true and free,” and expressed her resolve to establish SGI-Brazil Kindergarten as a model of Soka education. Based on Makiguchi’s value-creating pedagogy, she has resolved anew to develop Brazil Soka Kindergarten into a “castle of peace” for fostering capable leaders who will shoulder the future of Brazil.

### **SGI-Taiwan Opens New Center**

On Aug. 9, SGI-Taiwan opened a new headquarters building on Zhishan Street in Taipei, Taiwan. Equipped with auditoriums, exhibition halls and conference rooms, the building is located near many universities and museums, such as the National Palace

Museum. The Interior Ministry of Taiwan recently chose SGI-Taiwan as an excellent community organization for the ninth consecutive year for its active participation in humanitarian relief efforts and activities that promote international exchanges. SGI-Taiwan members hope the new center will further contribute to the enrichment of the community and society at large.

### **Singapore Soka Association Members Participate in National Day**

On Aug. 9, exactly 2,001 youth of the Singapore Soka Association participated in the National Day celebration at the national stadium commemorating the 36th anniversary of Singapore's independence. Singapore President SR Nathan and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong attended the celebration together with other national leaders and 60,000 citizens. The celebration was broadcast live by various TV stations and reported in national and local daily newspapers.

*Courtesy of SOKANET ([www.sokagakkai.or.jp](http://www.sokagakkai.or.jp))*