



## Inauguration of the Soka Bodhi Tree Garden

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The Soka Bodhi Tree Garden was formally inaugurated on 12 September 1993, by Dr. Yoichi Kawada, Soka Gakkai Vice President and Director, Institute of Oriental Philosophy and Dr. N. Radhakrishnan, then Director, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti by planting the Bodhi tree of the three presidents of the Soka Gakkai. BSG members present on the occasion also planted a total of 121 Bodhi tree saplings in dedicated to SGI members in various SGI countries and Indian States who are diligently striving for kosenruffu.

For almost 72 hours before the inauguration it rained heavily, as if to prepare the soil for the Bodhi saplings. The clouds parted and the sun came out just as Dr. Kawada dug the spade into the ground to plant the sapling. “The beam of sunlight fell on the area where the three trees were being planted” recalls Mr. Hardyal Sharma. “A few moments later a beautiful rainbow emerged.”

Since the beginning, Soka Bodhi Tree Garden, has evoked a sense of joy in the hearts of the people closely associated with it “Even when it was a barren land, there was something about this place that gave immense happiness,” says Mr. Sharma. Later the adjoining land was bought and the total area of the garden expanded to around 162 acres.

In the message sent on the occasion of opening of Soka Bodhi Tree Garden Ikeda Sensei said:

“I am positive that from among those who will come to visit this garden in the future .... there will emerge great leaders .... It will be a place where leaders from various fields around the world will come to meet in order to cultivate and develop themselves, inspiring and stimulating each other’s growth. May the ‘tree of happiness’, the ‘tree of enlightenment’ and the ‘tree of human revolution’ of each one of you flourish and grow as vigorously as the Bodhi tree in this garden.”

Ikeda Sensei’s message gave the motivation and enthusiasm to the further development of the Soka Bodhi Tree Garden. When BSG members began to work on the newly purchased land, there were lot of challenges—the whole area which was divided into different plots bound by fences was to be consolidated; there was little transportation facilities and connectivity with Delhi was only through a double lane accident prone highway; there were no reliable communication facilities. With the committee members hard work and dedication, the coming years saw key buildings and facilities being came up in the coming years.



BSG members have planted and nurtured nearly 4,000 Bodhi saplings over these years. The plan is that the Soka Bodhi Tree Garden will have 10,000 Bodhi Trees by 2030.

Peacocks, pigeons, geese, rabbits, parrots and kingfisher frequent the garden. With its open fields, dense foliage and water bodies, the SBTG is a haven for migratory birds round the year.