

*The Report about the International Soroban Test*

On 24th January (Sun), the 1st International Soroban Test was held. Only Genius Map (Lebanon) took it, but they made an excellent record as follows (except for absentees).

The Test Section of International Soroban Diffusion Foundation

Levels	Candidates	Passed	Full Score
5 kyu	2	2	1
6 kyu	5	4	0
7 kyu	6	6	3
8 kyu	16	16	8
9/10 kyu	41	*41	27
Total	70	69	39

(persons)

\*Test takers of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> kyu shall be put the same questions (from two subjects of multiplication and addition/subtraction) and judged to pass the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> or fail both by their total score. All the test takers passed the 9<sup>th</sup> kyu.

\*According to the weather forecast, it would snow heavily in the Lebanon Mountains on the very day of the test. The test takers from far away assumed that the mountain road would be blockaded due to snow, and they stayed at a hotel in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, on the night before the test.

\*The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Soroban Test was held on 24<sup>th</sup> April (Sun). The numbers both of participating organizations and test takers increased extensively. They said delightedly, "The use of the test raised their motivation to learn."

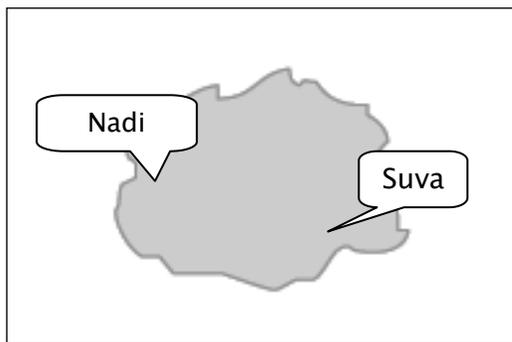
\*The Anzan Test will start from the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Soroban Test held on 24<sup>th</sup> July (Sun). Only people living abroad can take the International Soroban Test.

*The Memory of “the Republic of Fiji”  
in the middle of the South Pacific*

**Takayoshi Sano (Shizuoka)    Executive Director of ISDF**

I will tell of soroban lessons in “the Republic of Fiji” near Australia.

“The Republic of Fiji” is as large as “Shikoku” in Japan, and needless to say a country of perpetual summer. There are two main regions called “Nadi” and “Suva.” The capital lies in “Suva,” but rather “Nadi” has been developed for a sightseeing area and seems to have more tourists.



(MAP) Viti Levu Island, the Republic of Fiji

I have always heard about the importance and necessity of soroban diffusion abroad from Dr. Toshio Nakano, Honorary President of ISDF, and I happened to hear about the project for soroban diffusion in “the Republic of Fiji” in March. That is why I joined the project.

We took the midnight flight at Narita Airport. The other members of the project were Dr. Nakano, Mr. Fujii, Mr. Takarada, Ms. Sakuma and Ms. Morita. Early morning on the next day, we arrived at Nadi Airport. We spent the night at a hotel in Suva to which it took an hour from the airport, and visited local schools from the day after we arrived.

At first, we visited an elementary school in Suva, whose children were a mixture of native Fijians and Indo-Fijians.

Mr. Fujii and Mr. Takarada explained the four basic operations of arithmetic using a big soroban and taught how to calculate mentally. Both teachers and children seemed to take a special interest in Mr. Takarada’s performance of mental multiplication.

We spent three nights there visiting three elementary schools, Japanese Embassy, and a local college. When we came back to Narita Airport, the cherry trees were in full blossom. The days remain in my memory.

## *Soroban School in Indonesia*

**Ken Sano (Shizuoka), CEO of HamaZo Co. Ltd.**

On 27th February, I held “Soroban School” at SMP Nurul Iman Sukakarya, a junior high school in Bekasi located in the east of Jakarta, Indonesia.

It started when Jaen who has run the school after he stayed in Hamamatsu as a Technical Intern Trainee for three years asked me, “I would like you to stimulate children, Mr. Sano,” and I thought of “soroban.”

I asked Indonesian people about soroban, but they didn’t know much. Also, Mr. Fujii, President of International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, NPO, said, “The project for soroban diffusion has not yet started in Indonesia.”

ISDF lent me soroban for a teacher and provided Indonesian students with fifteen soroban at my request for their cooperation.

When I arrived at the school, I was surprised at welcome performance. I was made very welcomed by all the villagers.

Both students and teachers smiled and enjoyed “Soroban School,” I am sure.

I hope that all children in the world learn soroban. It is an effective “educational tool” in improving “calculating ability.” After they finished school, “calculating ability” is important. If they couldn’t calculate, they might not live in a society. However, if they learned soroban, it would be also “courage to live.” I hope that Indonesian students will learn some soroban. I hope that today will be a start. I ended lessons, giving soroban textbooks and thirteen soroban to a headmaster.

I was brought up by soroban and have limitless gratitude for soroban. There is a declining number of children in Japan, but there are many countries where there are many children. I think seriously that I will make an effort to diffuse soroban into the world in my old age.

I am grateful to Jaen. I hope that he will keep up the good work. I expect all the students of SMP Nurul Iman Sukakarya will study hard and do all they can for Indonesia.

Though I was in Japan, I realized keenly the necessity of English. I hope to improve my English and guide foreigners as thoroughly as I can without an electronic dictionary this year.

## *The Report about Soroban Diffusion Project in Palau (2)*

### **Katsunori Goto (Miyagi)**

I want to join soroban diffusion project in a foreign country, but I can't easily, because I come up against walls of language, expense, schedule and age. However, these walls were torn down by the encounter with Mr. Francis Matsutaro, the Palau Ambassador to Japan, who was present at the 60th anniversary of the founding of my town (Wakuya-cho, Miyagi).

At the reception held on the previous day, I handed my calling card to him, and he took a great interest in soroban. Then and there, he requested me to teach soroban to elementary school teachers in Palau. After the ceremony, the Ambassador and his staff visited my soroban school. He gazed in wonder at the demonstration of a soroban teacher.

I was also encouraged by Ms. Noriko Nishi who went with me. She is the late Mr. Teiichi Domoto's daughter and the president of an international law firm in Tokyo.

Palau won its independence in 1994. The national flag is a yellow moon design on a ocean blue base, which seems to be always shone upon by the rising-sun of the Japanese flag. It shows a pro-Japanese state. There are roads and bridges made by the aid of Japan everywhere, and a metal water tank with a diameter of two meters and a height of two meters, on which a sticker of the Japanese rising-sun flag is put up, is set up at an elementary school. We never intend to force soroban culture on them, but hope that soroban lessons will be adopted into a national curriculum for elementary schools.

You can search the Internet and find so much information on Palau. It is a very small country, which has a population of a little over 20,000 and whose area is the 194th largest in the world, but there is no end to interest in the country.

It has police stations but no army. I heard that U.S. Army is stationed there. There is no traffic light, but there are a lot of cars. They drive a car patiently and gentlemanly without honking a horn. No buses on a regular route are found. Only a family car is a means of transportation. I didn't encounter a traffic accident during my stay. A man who was fascinated by the sea in Palau, married to a local woman, and has managed a souvenir shop said that it is very comfortable to live there because both of nature's beauty and of few crime.

It takes only four hours and a half from Narita to Palau. I hope that a lot of well-mannered Japanese people will visit Palau, because the main source of national income is the tourist industry. I will try to do for soroban diffusion so that schoolchildren in Palau will make progress in their calculating ability.

*The Report about International Friendship Soroban Camp Training*  
*– The Essay Written by a Foreign Student –*

The essay written by Moustafa Chaaban who is an eleven-year-old boy from Genius Map in Lebanon as a representative of those which were written after the camp training will be shown.

## **My Trip to Japan**

**Moustafa Chaaban (Lebanon)**

One year ago, I have heard about Japanese way for mental calculation (ACMAS genius map). So, I asked my parents to let me join them and learn the best way for brain development. And after a couple of hard training months, I won a trip to Japan, I was so excited because I got this trip and my parents became proud of me.

Then, in 15 August, I went to the airport for the trip, and it was the first time I travel by an airplane. After some hours, we arrived to Abu Dhabi, and then, we arrived to Japan at Tokyo airport after 6 hours.

It was new for me being in Japan, it took me some hours to understand that I was really in Japan, but I was happy, even though I had a tommy ache. The first night, we slept in Tokyo, but it was hard for me to sleep there. At the beginning, I missed my country and family, but all of the camp was seven days, and they passed very fast. The second day, we went by bus to Oze for the camp, the way took about 3 hours, but there was a movie to watch on the way so I didn't get bored.

The third day, we had to wake up at 5:30 am, but I woke up 4:10am. We started the day with morning exercises, and then we had 15 minutes soroban training before breakfast. The breakfast and lunch and dinner were cornflakes and milk daily for about 4 days, so I was happy with food. Finally, we slept at 9:30 pm after 10 hours of soroban training.

The fourth day was normal like the third day except the barbeque that we had at lunch and the party at the evening.

The fifth day, we packed our items, ate lunch, and went back to Tokyo, where I got bored a little bit because we had nearly nothing to do.

The sixth day was the best day because we went to Disney Land, one of the most popular movie-making companies. The rides were so beautiful and I had one thing not good about it, it was that each line we entered, we waited in it at least 30 minutes, but that day was my best day in Japan.

Finally, at the last day, we went to the airport to go to Abu Dhabi and then back to Lebanon. That trip was my best trip ever.

## *The 9<sup>th</sup> International Friendship Soroban Mission*

Twenty-three people indicated their intentions to participate in the mission which would take off in the end of March next year. There are varieties of people, from the 1<sup>st</sup> grader of elementary school to university students in ages, and from the 10<sup>th</sup> kyu to the 10<sup>th</sup> dan in soroban levels.

The “Student Members’ Training” will be held at Musashino Civic Cultural Hall, Tokyo, in the afternoon of 18<sup>th</sup> July so that they will learn basic English conversation, English dictation of sums, magic and folding paper for cultural exchange, and manners for travelling abroad, and that they will build up a fine team for the mission.

The aims of the mission are both international friendship and introduction of every effect according to their soroban learning periods to the overseas. Therefore, any student of ISDF member’s soroban schools, regardless of the level, can participate.



The demonstration at an elementary school in New Zealand



The Homestay in Tonga

### **The Editor’s Postscript**

As soroban education makes more expansion, there have been more requests for an opportunity to measure educational effects such as a certification examination or a competition. Complying with these requests was one of urgent problems of ISDF. We had a plan one year ago and negotiated with a domestic association of soroban education. In January, it has been realized as “International Soroban Test.” Upon its start, we will try our best to accelerate the diffusion of soroban education to the world.