

Brazil – Permanently threatened by the advancing deforestation, the Amazon region lacks investments in research to develop in a sustainable way. The absence of Brazilian scientists in the area poses a risk to the country, both from the environmental and financial points of view, since it holds back, if not altogether compromises, new discoveries that would otherwise render patents to the country.

Capital goods – With unbeatable prices, Chinese machines flood the Brazilian market of capital goods. To counterattack, the Brazilian Association of Machines and Equipment opened up an office in Beijing with the aim of orienting domestic companies to sell to the Asian country, which is also a large importer in the area.

Communications – The official choice for the Japanese standard of digital television as a reference for the implementation of the system in Brazil has generated polemic. Many civil society entities, who fight for the democratization of the means of communication, complain about a lack of a broader debate regarding the decision.

Energy – As from January 2008, the diesel oil sold by Brazilian service stations will have 2% of vegetable oil. In 2013, the percentage will be of 5%. The measure, in addition to representing a considerable economy for Brazilian coffers, should boost family farming because of the incentives offered to producers who opt for the raw material produced by that segment.

Education – In Brazil's rural areas, the educational structure is quite precarious. Among the main challenges to be overcome are a shortage of schools, the pedagogic materials' syllabus, which overlooks the social reality of the rural population, and unskilled teaching staff.

Behavior – A human settlement which seeks to be ecologically, economically, socially, and ideologically sustainable: such is the definition of *ecovillages*, which since 1995 have been spreading throughout Brazil and worldwide.

Fruitculture – A native plant of the Amazon region, *açaí* is more and more consumed in Brazil and abroad, not only for its taste but also for its nutritious and healthy qualities. Now its berry is beginning to gain space in dentistry, as an identifier of dental plaque, and in medicine, as a contrast in tests of the digestive tract.

☐ **Memory** – The Largo São Francisco Law School Alumni Association completed 75 years of existence. Throughout its history renowned figures have joined its ranks, among them several presidents of the republic and personalities of the artistic and cultural area. ☐

Cities – Though renewing its focus over time, graffiti have survived in the big urban centers. From a form of protest against the military dictatorship, this "outcast art" has become an individual and collective form of identification for the youths of São Paulo's outskirts.

Dentistry – The University of São Paulo's School of Dentistry opened up a new clinic to cater to the needy. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the facility will be able to increase the number of patients treated from 500 to 1.2 thousand a day.

Health

- The recent opening of an obstetrics course aiming at training professional nurse-midwives brings hope that, with gradual changes in the birth delivery assistance model, the number of C-sections will drop in the country, now well above the 15% recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- According to the WHO, under the effect of drugs a worker's working capacity drops to 67%. With a view to improving both the quality of life of its workers and productivity, more companies are investing in drug-use prevention and combat programs.

Reading – *Roots of Brazil*, a work by historian and journalist Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, celebrates its 70th anniversary with a commemorative edition. A classic of Brazilian historiography, the book is still a reference in terms of the making of the national identity.

Thematic panel – Hugo Napoleão, ex-governor of the state of Piauí, is a lawyer and has occupied the posts of Minister of Culture, Education, and Communications, in addition to having been a federal deputy and senator of the republic. On 11 May 2006, in a talk to the members of the Federação do Comércio do Estado de São Paulo's Council of Economy, Sociology and Politics, he lectured on the right to defense and democracy. In his opinion, individuals and corporations are victims, in Brazil, of frequent violations of rights, in flagrant disrespect for constitutional precepts.