

# SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

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## Newsletter 175 – 7 May 2015

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### SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

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#### SASNET News

##### • Seven panels at SASNET 2015 Conference on Structural Transformation of South Asia



Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) at Lund University organises a three-day international conference on the structural



transformation of South Asia on 20–22 May 2015. The conference is entitled

*"South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, labour, and family changes in a dynamic region"*. The conference will have seven panels, each one led by eminent researchers. The theme of the panels vary from *"Urbanization and Social Sustainability"*, to *"Ethnicity, Religion and Changing Caste Relations"*, *"Changes in Family and Household"*, *"Migration, Environment and Social Sustainability"*, *"Governance in South Asia"*, *"Changing Labour Markets"* and *"Structural Transformation and Social Conflicts"*. See the poster.

The four keynote speakers are Prof. Gita Sen from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India (and Harvard

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Gita Sen, Ruth Kattumuri, Abram de Swaan, and Rajni Palriwala

School of Public Health, Harvard University); Prof. Ruth Kattumuri, London School of Economics, UK; Prof. Rajni Palriwala, University of Delhi, India; and Prof. Abram de Swaan, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The conference will be inaugurated by Jonas Hafström, newly appointed Chair of the Board of Lund University. The purpose of the conference is to explore the social consequences of the transformation of South Asian

societies (and by implication, the world). Structural transformations produce new opportunities and risks as job possibilities and wealth are created and redistributed unevenly. This may lead to the marginalization of some groups as well as social conflicts. The aim of this conference is also to map the social impact of South Asia's structural transformation so far, with specific reference to changes in labour migration patterns and in the composition of the care economy of families and households. Each of these aspects is often studied in isolation despite the fact that they are deeply interrelated. [Full information about the conference.](#)

• **Lund University organizes Ninth EASAS PhD workshop in Falsterbo**



On behalf of the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS), SASNET hosts the Ninth European PhD Workshop in South Asia

Studies in Höllviken, south of Malmö, Sweden, on 18–19 May 2015. This is a two-day annual workshop for a maximum of 20 PhD candidates and six faculty members from European universities with an aim to give PhD students an opportunity to receive feedback on their theses from senior scholars and fellow PhD candidates who are also working on South Asian topics. Dr. Jayakumari Devika from Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in



Thiruvananthapuram, India, will hold a keynote speech.

SASNET has organised these EASAS workshops twice before (*photo from the successful 2012 workshop*). Participants are PhD candidates in their second or later year at a European university, working on any topic that has a strong relevant to South Asia. SASNET/Lund University invited European universities to nominate a maximum of three students each for the workshop. The full workshop programme is now published. [Full information about the 2015 EASAS PhD workshop in Falsterbo.](#)

• **SASNET lecture on remixed histories and smart images in post-exotic India**

Ravinder Kaur, Associate Professor of Modern South Asian Studies at University of Copenhagen, held a fascinating SASNET lecture at Lund University on Wednesday 6 May 2015, 15.15–17.00. She talked about *“Post-exotic India On Remixed Histories and Smart Images”*. Venue: Department of Sociology, room G 335, Paradisgatan 5 G, Lund. See the poster.



The lecture was based on a paper that examines the aesthetics of *remixing history* at the heart of the neoliberal project of India's image makeover as 'land of limitless opportunity' for global tourists and investors. Prof. Kaur argues that the project of remixing India's history is predicated upon the ontological fault line of how to retain and erase the *original* simultaneously while shaping the new in the contemporary global. Taking *Incredible India* as an example, she shows how the original essence of India is revealed and authenticated in the very moment of its disappearance as it is remixed and morphed in the aesthetics of the contemporary global. The post-exotic self, she further argues, is not produced by effacing the exotic past, but by remixing, condensing, accelerating and fast-forwarding it into a timeless, infinite global present. And in doing so, it also reveals the blueprint of the ongoing visual rearrangement of nation's civilizational past in the making of new India.



Ravinder Kaur also directs the Centre of Global South Asian Studies, besides holding a Visiting Professorship at the Centre of India Studies in Africa, Witswatersrand University, Johannesburg. She is currently engaged in two long-term research projects. The first focuses on post-reform India's transition into an attractive 'emerging market' in the global political economy, and second, explores the yet unfolding connections between Asia and Africa via a study of new business connections between India, China and Africa. Her previous research focused on the questions of forced migration, refugee resettlement, social class and caste and the making of modern citizenship during India's Partition in 1947. Her publications include *Since 1947: Partition Narratives among Punjabi Migrants of Delhi* (Oxford, 2007), *Religion, Violence and Political Mobilization in Contemporary South Asia* (Sage 2005), a co-edited special issue 'Governing Difference: Inequality, Inequity and Identity in India and China,' *Third World Quarterly* 2012 as well as many journal articles.

• **Pakistan in focus for third SASA/SASNET 2015 Fika without borders seminar**



The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University organises its third 2015 Fika without borders seminar on Thursday 7 May 2015, 17–19, at the usual venue: the basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. [See poster.](#)

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The May 7th event is dedicated to Pakistan, and presentations will be given by Dr. Uzma Rehman from the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, and Associate Professor Peter Lund-Thomsen from

the Department of Intercultural Communication and Management at Copenhagen Business School (CBS). They both work on Sufism, Religious co-existence, and Social Entrepreneurship in Pakistan. Delicious South Asian snacks will be served. Fika Without Borders South Asia events is a project started by SASA, in collaboration with SASNET, in which SASA organises a fika once a month, each time focusing on one of the eight South Asian countries. The 2015 series started with a Nepal fika on 5th February, and an India fika on March 19th.

• **Thomas Blom Hansen held SASNET lecture on how communal conflicts transform Indian cities**



Thomas Blom Hansen, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Center for South Asia at Stanford University in USA, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Monday 27 April 2015. He talked about "Vernacular Urbanism: Community, Capital and Urban Space in Middle India". Venue: Lecture Hall



Eden at the Department of Political Science. Prof. Staffan Lindberg was the discussant. [See the poster.](#)

In his presentation, Prof. Blom Hansen described how, in the 1970s and 80s, the city of Aurangabad in Maharashtra was a by-word for bitter and violent conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. In the late 1980s, Shiv Sena won political control over the city, a dominance the party has retained ever since. During the same period, the city almost tripled its size and became a major center for manufacturing and tourism and home to a powerful new elite. Based on fieldwork in 1991 and again in 2012, he explores how the violent street battles in the city along communal/religious lines over the past decades have been transformed into "infrastructural violence": heavy handed demolition of Muslim owned properties, and markets; renaming of public spaces and re-framing the city's history; the emergence of networks of private enterprises and public institutions sharply divided along community lines. Aurangabad share many features with other large provincial cities in India. Its combination of rapid growth and a dominant Hindu nationalist presence in politics and public life may indicate and illustrate what "urban middle India" will look like in the near future. [Read more...](#)

• **SASNET South Asian short-term fellowship holders all set to come to Lund**



In early 2015, SASNET announced the results of applications for short-term (1-2 months) PhD or post-doc fellowship stays at Lund University, financed by SASNET, during the academic year 2015-2016. The results were made public on 16 March 2015. Five researchers were accepted:

- Dr. **Anindita Majumdar**, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, India, to be hosted by the Dept. of Gender Studies, Lund University
- PhD candidate **Shveta Soam**, Centre for Advanced Bioenergy Research, Faridabad, India, to be

hosted by the Division of Environmental and Energy Systems Studies at the Dept. of Technology and Society, Lund University

- Dr. **P. R. Nisha**, Department of History, University of Delhi, India, to be hosted by the Dept. of Human Geography, Lund University
  - Dr. **Mashiur Rahman**, Dept. of Sociology, Dhaka University, Bangladesh, to be hosted by the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University
  - PhD candidate **Kanika Rakhra**, Center for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi, India, to be hosted by the Dept. of Political Science, Lund University
- The first researcher to arrive in Lund is Mashiur Rahman (*photo*) from Dhaka University. He arrives on 15h May and will stay for two months, and during this period participate in the SASNET May conference and lecture at the Dept. of Sociology. The other four researchers are expected to come to Lund in the Fall or winter 2015-16.

The positions were open to PhD candidates in their final year, recent PhDs, and post-docs who have been students at universities in South Asia (i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). Applicants should also have a research topic concerning the geographical area of South Asia or be doing a comparative study including South Asia. It was also stated that candidates should arrange their own affiliation with a Lund University department or research center before submitting their applications, since it is the department that provides them with working space and include them in departmental activities. Further, SASNET expects that candidates will present their research projects at a public event during their stay in Sweden.



• **Lars Eklund on tour to Kolkata, Shantiniketan, Dhaka and Imphal**

SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund visited India and Bangladesh during the period 18 February-15 March. He mainly stayed at his Kolkata office and on behalf of SASNET visited some of the many universities and eminent research institutions in the city – including Jadavpur University, Rabindra Bharati University, and the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS). Of course he also visited the Vishwa Bharati University in Shantiniketan. Besides he travelled to Dhaka in Bangladesh where meetings at Dhaka University and three other universities were planned for, and also at



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the Swedish Embassy. Finally Lars went to Imphal in the northeastern Indian state of Manipur, and the University of Manipur.



- Read Lars' report from Dhaka universities
- Read Lars' report from the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka
- Read Lars' report from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata
- Read Lars' report from University of Manipur
- Report from Viswa Bharati University, Shantiniketan
- Report from Jadavpur University and IACS, Kolkata

• Neil Webster and Pamela Price present SASNET external evaluation report

SASNET was established in 2000-2001 as a national network to promote research and education related to South Asia at all Swedish universities. For ten years it was mainly funded by the Swedish government through Sida, with one third of its budget coming from the hosting Lund University. However, from 2010 SASNET has been solely funded by Lund University, and funding is currently provided till the end of 2015.



Neil Webster and Pamela Price.

It is now time for SASNET to plan for its future activities after 31 December 2015, and deliver a budget proposal to Lund University. Prior to this, a team of evaluators consisting of two eminent Nordic researchers – Dr. Neil Webster from the Danish Institute of International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen; and Professor Emeritus Pamela Price from the Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History at University of Oslo – have carried out an Evaluation of SASNET activities and operation from January 2013 till March 2015.

During one month, February-March 2015, they have conducted interviews and thoroughly reviewed the SASNET work reports and other documentation, and on 17th March a final report was submitted to the SASNET board and the Lund University Vice Chancellor. In their report, Neil Webster and Pamela Price give constructive recommendations on how, according to their views, SASNET should work. They argue that SASNET should get a stronger institutional anchoring within Lund University while maintaining the national and international work that SASNET has become recognised for; that SASNET should focus its work around a set of short to medium term objectives as a means to facilitate and complete the ongoing transition of SASNET; and that the management and organisation of SASNET should be strengthened so that it can best meet the requirements of the other two objectives. Regarding the SASNET website, the evaluators suggest that its should continue as a core SASNET activity, seeing itself as a national resource, but also more as a part of LUND University's internationalisation. [Go for the full Evaluation Report.](#)

• Student volunteers wanted for the SASNET May 2015 conference



On 20-22 May 2015, the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) is organizing an international conference exploring the impact of the ongoing structural transformation in South Asia. The conference

will have nine panels and will be attended by renowned scholars from South Asia and Europe ([more information](#)).

SASNET is now looking for students who can assist with practical matters during the conference. Particularly students with an interest in South Asia who seeks to gain academic work experience are encouraged to apply. Responsibilities include:

- Registration of conference attendants and participants
- Assisting in technical matters (display presentations, sound etc.)
- Assisting in logistics (guiding grant holders and speakers to hotels and guesthouses in Lund and from and to venues)
- Being available for assistance and questions throughout the conference
- Attending an information evening in mid-May

We offer a stipend of 1,000 SEK for four days (May 19-22); free lunch and fika on all days, free attendance to the conference; and most of all, a unique experience to participate in an international conference, gain experience and network. Students are expected to be available to support us during the conference days from 9:00 - 17:00. Please send your application via email to [Jacco Visser](#), Chairperson of the South Asian Student Association at Lund University (SASA) not later than May 8th.

State 'SASNET Student Assistance' in the subject line. Emails must include: • Full Name; • Study programme; • Phone number; and finally a • Motivation Statement of no more than 100 words.



Student volunteers at the EASAS conference 2004, organised by SASNET at Lund University.

• Faculty of Medicine at Lund University sends students to Hyderabad and Cochin

On Friday 24 April 2015, Professor Carl Johan Fürst, Chief Physician at the Institute for Palliative Care at Medicion Village (jointly run by Lund University and Region Skåne); and Associate Professor Eva Brun from the Division of Oncology and Pathology, Lund University, visited the SASNET office and had a discussion with deputy director Lars Eklund on their ongoing educational collaboration project with hospitals in





Hyderabad and Cochin in India. A collaboration that was launched in 2011, and includes sending a number of medical students from Lund University to India every year. Currently two students in Hyderabad.

Eva Brun is one of the persons in charge of the clinical education in Oncology (Cancer diseases) at Lund University. She also supervises students writing their BSc and MSc level theses during their fifth and tenth semesters respectively, when some students choose to go to India for their field work, normally staying 5-6 weeks in India.

Eva has since several years developed a keen interest in Global Oncology, and has joined a network of useful contacts in India – the International Network For Cancer Treatment and Research (INCTR) with two offices in India, one located in New Delhi and the other in Hyderabad. The India Office in Hyderabad is home to the Palliative Access (PAX) Program in India. This office organizes training for doctors, nurses and social workers in palliative care and liaises with the state government to improve access to opioids for patients with cancer. It is in the process of developing new palliative care programs in other parts of the country.

Carl Johan Fürst has also developed an engagement in global palliative care, with a certain focus on India after being involved in a US based global leadership programme for palliative care doctors, the Leadership Development Initiative, and being a mentor for Indian participants. The common interest in India made a starting-point for the collaboration with Eva Brun. It should be noted that the collaborating partner institutions in India are hospitals, hospices and palliative home care programs, not universities. In Hyderabad it is the government funded MNJ Institute of Oncology and RCC.

Prof. Fürst and Dr. Brun had only recently learnt about the existence of SASNET, and now had a genuine interest to team up with other India related activities at Lund University through our network. The meeting with Lars was therefore very fruitful.



• **Catastrophic earthquake ravaged Nepal – international help needed**

The 7.8 magnitude earthquake that ravaged Nepal on 25 April 2015 will hamper the Himalayan country for years to come. Thousands of villages have been devastated, with up to 90% of clinics and schools in some districts rendered unusable. The Nepal earthquake death toll now exceeds 6,000, and with about 14,000 injured and thousands still unaccounted for. The head of the European Union delegation in Nepal says 1,000 people from the EU were missing and 12 were confirmed dead. Ram Sharan Mahat, the Nepalese finance minister, says that at least \$2bn would be needed to rebuild homes, hospitals, government offices and historic buildings. Other estimates have been higher. A large number of ancient monuments and important cultural buildings will also need to be restored, if they are not demolished. Palaces in Kathmandu have been damaged and cracked.



SASNET condoles the tragedy, and recommends every member of the network to help Nepal in the reconstruction. Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel at Kathmandu University has initiated a donations project to his home village, Gerku of Nuwakot district near the epicentre of the earthquake. The donations will be directed to build more sustainable shelter for the coming rainy season than tents, and the target groups are primarily to the ones without means (1 st single women without job/pension and earning siblings, 2nd households without anyone in job/pension and foreign employment). Uddhab and the village developing committee have estimated the costs to about 200 USD/house and about 70 households that needs support. If you want to support Dr. Pyakurel's worthy initiative, please contact him via e-mail, [upyakurel@gmail.com](mailto:upyakurel@gmail.com).

• **More information about SASNET and its activities**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet-news>

**Research Community News**

• **Successful FSAS 2015 conference on Paths to the Future for India and Pakistan**



The 2015 Forum for South Asia Studies (FSAS) Conference at Uppsala University was successfully held on 4 May 2015 in the premises of the

Dept. of Government. The theme for the conference was "Paths to the future for India and Pakistan". It paid extra attention to current developments and future options in India and Pakistan. Keynote presentations were given by Professor Ian Talbot, University of Southampton, who spoke about current Pakistani politics after the 2013 elections; Professor Mahvish Shami from London School of Economics (LSE), who spoke about Patron-Client relations in the Pakistani countryside determining the voting pattern in the country; and Professor Christophe



Keynote speakers: Ian Talbot, Mahvish Shami and Christophe Jaffrelot.



Jaffrelot from Sciences Po, Paris, who spoke about India after one year with Narendra Modi government – focusing on Economics, Politics and Foreign Relations.

In addition to the keynote speeches, three workshops were organised, one on "Environmental Issues in South Asian and Global Context", chaired by Prof. Margaret Hunt, Dept. of History; one on "Linguistics & Theology", chaired by Prof. Heinz Werner Wessler, Dept. of Linguistics and Philology; and finally one on "Politics & Development", chaired by Prof. Sten Widmalm, Dept. of Government. SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the conference as an observer, and so did the journalist Per J Andersson who will cover the conference for a Swedish research magazine.

[Read more...](#)

• **Swedish Secretariat for Environmental Earth System Sciences supports South Asia research**

Established in 2010, the Swedish Secretariat for Environmental Earth System Sciences (SSEESS) is a collaborative partnership between the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (FORTE), the Swedish Research Council Formas, the Swedish Research Council (VR), and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). SSEESS aims to increase Sweden's involvement in relevant international research programmes, thereby improving Swedish and international Global Environmental Change (GEC) research. Several funding schemes are available for projects related to South Asia, for example the Future Earth programme. [More information.](#)

A new grant scheme entitled "Research Links 2015" was recently launched (deadline for submissions was 31 January). Researchers within humanities, natural and social sciences were invited to apply for SSEESS grants related to networking activities, such as visits between the partners, seminars, workshops, and joint publishing/proposal writing activities, where one requirement is that the collaboration should involve scientists from developing countries. [More information about this scheme.](#)

Another SSEESS scheme is "Planning Grants for Sustainable Solutions". This programme, introduced in 2013, aims to enable scientists to produce project proposals targeting one or several of the five SDSN sustainable development challenges that have high relevance to Global Environmental Change (GEC). Every year five projects are selected, and so far four South Asia related projects have been selected.

In 2013, Urenja Shepherd from the Swedish International Centre of Education for Sustainable Development (SWEDESD) at Gotland University was given a planning grant for a project entitled "Sustainable Urban Transport in Pune, India – Using Collaborative Conceptual Mapping and Collaborative Learning". In 2014 South Asia was represented by two projects both at Lund University – one by Sara Brogaard at the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS), for a project entitled "Sustainable Energy: Exploring the sustainability of the community-run hydropower development in Nepal" ([more information](#)), and a second one by Richard Bradshaw, Dept of Physical Geography and Ecosystem Science, for a project entitled "Mitigation of future FIRE impact in SE Asia and India (NOFIRE)".

In early 2015, another Lund University researcher was given a planning grant for an India related project, namely Dr. Luis Mundaca at the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE). His project is entitled "Governance and management of low-carbon economies to promote sustainable economic welfare in megacities? Mumbai as a case study", and has been planned in collaboration with Prof. Vinod K Sharma at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research in Mumbai.

Mundaca and Sharma has now assembled a team of researchers at Lund University to proceed with the planning of a major project along the lines of the one being given a planning grant. On 6 May 2015, a meeting was organised at IIIEE to discuss the project plan. SASNET acting director Lars Eklund was also participating in this meeting.



Luis Mundaca from IIIEE, Lund University, receiver of a SSEESS planning grant in 2015, with his Indian collaboration partner Vinod K Sharma, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai.

• **Doctoral dissertation on emerging producer organisations in India**

Mathew Abraham at the Asia Research Centre, Department of International Economics and Management, Copenhagen Business School (CBS) defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "New Cooperativism: A study of emerging producer organisations in India" on Friday 10 April 2015. Using a conceptual framework of institutional and collective action theories, this study conducted a multiple case study analysis in an attempt to identify the (a) the importance of the producer organisations in mitigating problems of small and marginal producer access and production (b) how they are formed and coordinated to become effective collective actions and (c) what are the potential benefits these organisations bring to small and marginal households. His supervisor has been Associate Professor Peter Lund-Thomsen, Department of Intercultural Communication and Management at CBS.



The assessment committee was chaired by Professor Niels Mygind from the same department, and also included Associate Professor Ravinder Kaur, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, Copenhagen University; and Senior Lecturer Pernille Gooch, Department of Human Geography and Human Ecology Division, Lund University [More information.](#)

• **Doctoral dissertation on Cosmology in Hindustani Music**

Jon Skarpeid from the Institute of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTHU) in Trondheim, defended his doctoral dissertation entitled





*"Cosmology in Miniature? Narrativity in Hindustani Music in relation to Indian Religion"* on 24 April 2015. The evaluation committee consisted of Professor Jens Erland Braarvig, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo; Førsteamanuensis Hans Hadders, Department of Nursing, Sør-Trøndelag University College; and Dr. Nils Holger Petersen, Division of Church History, University of Copenhagen.

The thesis argues that the dominant narrative paradigm is expressed in both music and religion. The main example is how the narrative paradigm of Hinduism is reflected in Hindustani music. Skarpeid has analyzed a long series of musical samples and compared these to key aspects of Hindu philosophy. He finds support for asserting that music expresses Hindu cosmology in miniature. In addition to analyzing narrative structures in music and religion, the candidate has interviewed Hindustani musicians. These musicians argue in favor of a cyclic interpretation of the music. However, this suggests that the narrative paradigm is not static, but changing. It may seem like India is in a transition period where the audience applauds finality, while the musicians seek to express non-finality. The thesis concludes with a comparison of music and philosophy in India and Europe. In India, the cyclic time understanding has been the dominant paradigm, while in Europe the linear concept of time and the creation-apocalypse scheme have been most prevalent. India and Europe are both changing, and perhaps we are witnessing a development where common global forces are affecting both traditions.



• **SASNET support to Copenhagen workshop on Contested Narratives in Bangladesh**

An International Workshop entitled *"Contested Narratives"* was successfully held in Copenhagen 23–24 April 2015. The workshop was accompanied by a PhD course on the same theme, and was organised by the Dept. of Cross-Cultural & Regional Studies (ToRS) and Centre of Global South-Asian Studies at University of Copenhagen, but was partly funded by SASNET. The convener was Dr **Manpreet K Janeja**. SASNET was represented at the workshop by **Jacco Visser**. [Go to the conference website.](#)

Attended by renowned scholars working in the field of Bangladesh Studies, such as Prof. **Katy Gardner** (London School of Economics) and Prof.

**Thomas Blom Hansen** (Stanford University) the workshop dealt with varying frames of narratives in which Bangladesh is situated and illustrated how these narratives are constantly contested, ruptured and re-imagined. The first day of the workshop started with a PhD course led by Prof. **Willem van Schendel** (University of Amsterdam) and Dr. **Lotte Hoek** (University of Edinburgh) at which selected participants presented papers in line with the workshop theme 'Contested Narratives'. At the course, PhD students were given the opportunity to receive feedback on their projects and meet other PhD students working on Bangladesh and South Asia more broadly.



*Willem van Schendel and Lotte Hoek*

The well attended 2nd session of the first day consisted of keynotes by Prof. van Schendel, who identified the gaps in contemporary Bangladesh Studies and suggested the need for new narratives. His talk was followed by a presentation by Dr. Hoek who presented recent work on plagiarism and authenticity in the Bangladeshi film industry. The final session on day 1 included a speech by Prof. **Thomas Blom Hansen** (Stanford University) who shared his views on Bangladesh Studies and informed the audience about the network model of South Asian studies adopted at Stanford University.

The second day of the workshop started with a series of lectures contesting dominant narratives in Bangladesh studies. With presentations by Prof. Gardner on imaginations of development in a Sylheti village affected by gas extraction and Dr. **Delwar Hussain** (University of Edinburgh) lecturing on state relief on the Bangladesh-India border, state and development sector narratives were revealed to inadequately represent the impact of development initiatives for aid or 'relief' recipients. The workshop's final session was a closed-door discussion about future collaboration between institutions and the scholars present at the workshop.. Full information about the workshop and PhD course.

• **Heidelberg University Alumni becomes Indian research ambassadors**

On 23 March 2015, Professor Swapna Bhattacharya, former Head of the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies at Calcutta University in Kolkata, India, was honoured by University of Heidelberg, Germany, for her Alumni activities. A formal function was organised by Heidelberg Alumni International ( HAI), Heidelberg Centre for South Asia ( HCSA), and Heidelberg Alumni India ( HAIN).

Along with four other scholars from India, Prof. Bhattacharya – an old associate of SASNET as well – was given the honorary title of Research Ambassador for her academic works on South & Southeast Asia. The function was held at Max Müller Bhavan ( Goethe Institute) in New Delhi and was attended by Heidelberg University officials, professors, and a large number of Heidelberg Alumni. [More information about Heidelberg Alumni Indien.](#)



• **More information about South Asia related research at Swedish and Nordic universities**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/research-community-news>

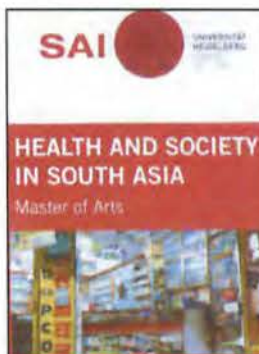
**Educational News**

• **Apply for Heidelberg's master's programme on Health and Society in South Asia**



Since 2008, the South Asia Institute at University of Heidelberg, Germany, runs an interdisciplinary Master's programme entitled "Health and Society in South Asia" (MAHASSA). The programme is a taught, two-year interdisciplinary degree with a focus on Medical Anthropology and South Asian Studies.

It is integrated with the curriculum of Heidelberg University's South Asia Institute, allowing students to integrate South Asian languages, geography, politics, etc. into their plan of study. Most students base their Masters Thesis on field research conducted in South Asia. The language of instruction is English. The programme is intended for students who plan to work (or already work) in health-related fields but also for those who wish to pursue an academic career. The programme is administered by





the Dept. of Anthropology at the South Asia Institute, specializing in Medical Anthropology, with various staff members conducting research on ritual healing, folk medicine, South Indian medicine, health and environment, Ayurveda, Tibetan Medicine, gender and health, women's reproductive health and Islam, and other topics.

The programme combines Medical Anthropology with South Asian Studies. Medical Anthropology is the study of healing systems, not primarily in terms of scientific theories or health policies, but also focusing on and analyzing how they are practiced in concrete, socio-cultural contexts. Admissions for the next program starting in October 2015 is now open and applications should have reached the University before 15 June 2015. [More information about MAHASSA.](#)



• Time to apply for MA programme in Modern Indian Studies at Göttingen

The Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS) at the University of Göttingen in Germany, now invites applications for its interdisciplinary two-year MA programme in "Modern Indian Studies" for the coming year. The programme includes one semester spent at one of the university's partner universities in South Asia. Applications are accepted until 15 May 2015. The contact person is [Michaela Dimmers](#), Study Programme Coordinator.



The English-language Masters programme at CeMIS integrates perspectives from the humanities, the social sciences and economics. Thematically, inequality and diversity link our analyses of modern Indian politics, history, society, religion and economy. The programme covers the following disciplines:

- Modern Indian History
- Indian Economic Development
- Indian Religions
- State and Democracy in Modern India
- Society and Culture of Modern India
- Anthropology of Public Health in South Asia

Masters students may select from a wide range of interdisciplinary courses offered by lecturers and researchers from CeMIS, and from the faculties of the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Economics. These are complemented by courses taught by international visiting scholars. Courses in modern Indian languages are also part of the programme. [More information.](#)

• Lund University student report from CREST school in Kozhikode



[Samantha Svärth](#), Lund University student in Development studies, with a focus on Political Science and Sociology, recently returned from India, where she was affiliated for a period to the Center for Research and Education for Social Transformation (CREST) in Kozhikode, Kerala state. She went there with support from SASNET. Here is her report: "CREST is an affirmative action organization aiming to help pave the way for a more socially equitable society in Kerala. This south Indian state has a history of left-leaning politics and adopted a broad-reaching welfare system early on, despite low economic indicators. CREST has the following mission: social, cultural and economic development for underprivileged youths. The organization takes in 40 students from traditionally marginalized communities (approximately 20 girls and 20 boys). CREST then works to empower them by building up their social capital, increasing their confidence, and add to their knowledge of job markets and employment skills. The ultimate goal after completing the five month program at CREST is that the students will better be able to achieve success with employment or with their continuing educational endeavors.

**Internship Structure and Duties**





I spent time at the school (CREST) Monday– Friday between approximately 08.30-18.00. There were 23 girls and 16 boys in this "batch" of students. I lived at the girl's hostel about 4 km away from CREST. The boys lived at a separate hostel, closer to the school. The students were between the ages of 20 and 26. Most of them have bachelor's degrees in Engineering/IT. See photo of the student group. I enjoyed every minute of my interaction with the students, and that was without a doubt the best part of the internship. The students also seemed to enjoy the opportunity to practice their English with me and most of them were eager to talk about themselves, their families, their goals in life, etc. My "official" lectures were held once a week on Tuesdays. These were focused mostly on issues of public health, which is my area of interest. I was also in charge of English learning activities every day between 16.40-17.40 and participated in the half-hour morning session involving songs and motivational speeches for the day. During the afternoon sessions I usually utilized some type of game to help the students overcome their shyness to speak English. One day, for example, I divided up the students up into small groups and instructed them to come up with their own TV commercials on various topics. My experiences at CREST contain memories that I will always cherish and I am so grateful to SASNET (Anna Lindberg in particular) for allowing me to find this opportunity! "



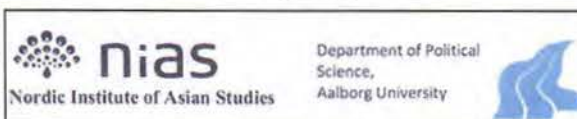
#### • Other educational news connected to South Asian studies all over the World

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/education-news>

#### Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

##### • Indo-Danish workshop on Internal and External Constraints on Foreign Policy in India

A workshop on "The Internal and External Constraints on Foreign Policy in India. Exploring Culture and Ethnic Sensitivities" will be held in Copenhagen on 7–8 May 2015. It is jointly organised by the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), and the



Department of Political Science at the University of Aalborg, Denmark, in collaboration with partner universities in India and Denmark and financed with generous support by the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. The workshop is open for participation, but registration is necessary. Venue: NIAS, Øster Farimagsgade 5, Copenhagen.

The programme includes a presentation by Prof. Ravinder Kaur, University of Copenhagen on "Brand India: New Perspectives on Cultural-Economic Diplomacy in 21st Century"; a presentation by Prof. Jørgen Dige Pedersen, University of Aarhus on "Is India's foreign policy exceptional?"; and a presentation by Prof. Shantanu Chakrabarti, University of Calcutta on "Between defiance and dalliance: Evolution of India's Global South rhetoric". Discussant for Chakrabarti's paper will be Prof. Catarina Kinnvall, Dept. of Political Science, Lund University.

A follow-up workshop will be held in Kolkata, India in late November 2015. [More information about the Copenhagen workshop.](#)

##### • Oslo seminar on Buddhist-Muslim encounter in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand

The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) invites to a seminar entitled "Clash of Universalisms? The Buddhist-Muslim encounter in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand" on Wednesday 13 May 2015, 13.00-15.00. Conflicts over religion are increasing in parts of South and Southeast Asia, including Buddhist majority societies like Myanmar, Sri



Lanka and Thailand. Since the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka, violent attacks against religious minority groups have increased. Muslim communities in particular have become victims of severe attacks on their properties, as well as on mosques. Similarly, anti-Muslim sentiments have been sweeping over Myanmar, leading to violent encounters between Buddhists and Muslims, mainly affecting the Muslim Rohingya community in the Rakhine/Arakan state. In both Sri Lanka and Myanmar legal restrictions on minority religious practice are called for in order "to protect Buddhism". In Southern Thailand, the violent conflict between the Buddhist-dominated Thai state and Malay Muslim insurgency groups challenges Muslim-Buddhist relations in the region. What sparks off these conflicts and how can they be settled? How do wider regional dynamics inform local inter-religious relations? What measures are taken across the regions to reduce Buddhist-Muslim conflicts? This is the first out of a series of three public seminars where leading experts will analyze various aspects of the relationship between Buddhism and conflict, focusing on Myanmar, Thailand and Sri Lanka. The seminar series is organized by PRIO in collaboration with NOREF.

This seminar on Buddhist-Muslim relations in Buddhist majority states will focus on competing narratives regarding religious demographics, the "politics of religious freedom", as well as on religious nationalism and new forms of politicized religion. The seminar will also pay attention to the often-ignored fields of peaceful co-existence and cooperation across Muslim-Buddhist divisions in the region. Keynote speakers are Prof. John C. Holt, Bowdoin College, USA, and Asst. Prof. Alexander Horstmann, University of Copenhagen. Venue: PRIO, Hausmanns gate 7, Oslo. [More information.](#)

##### • Uppsala lecture on Nepalese village totally destroyed by the earthquake

Dr. Martin Tondel at the Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Department of Medical Sciences, Uppsala University, holds a public lecture together with Lena Lindahl on "Langtang – byn som försvann" (Langtang – the village that





disappeared) in Uppsala on Saturday 23 May 2015, 12.30 – 13.30 at Hamncentralen, Tullhuset, Hamnplan, Uppsala. [More information](#)

Tondel and Lindahl visited the Langtang valley in central Nepal just two weeks before the disastrous earth quake shook the country on 25th April. The area became totally isolated, and media has not been able to go there yet. Most of the population are ethnic Tibetans, with an economy based on potato growing, yak breeding and tourism. However, tragically most of the people living in the main Langtang village were killed, drowned by ice and mud that buried the entire village. [See a BBC reportage from Langtang.](#)



• **SCAS Symposium on Human Rights: Constitutive Moments, Intellectual Practices and Shifting Global Contexts**

The Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study (SCAS) in Uppsala organises a Symposium on "Human Rights: Constitutive Moments, Intellectual Practices and Shifting Global Contexts" on 25–26 May 2015. The invited participants include two eminent Indian professors and former fellows at SCAS, namely Jyotirmaya Sharma and Krishnan Srinivasan. The symposium is being held in collaboration with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences; the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities; the Swedish Academy; and Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. It will take place in Stockholm. Prior registration is required. Further information will be available soon. SCAS is a national Swedish resource for universities and research institutions in the social and human sciences at large. Its aim is to strengthen the historical and global orientation of the social and human sciences, to support humanistic disciplines, and to promote cooperation between the economic and other human and social sciences. The Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study also interacts and collaborates with a large number of scholarly institutions in Sweden and abroad.



Jyotirmaya Sharma and Krishnan Srinivasan.

• **Stockholm conference on migration and urban development**

The Royal Institute of Art (KTH) in Stockholm invites to a conference on migration and urban development on 2 June 2015. The conference, entitled "Sweden is Becoming" will invite speakers from different fields, who research, practise, voice or actively take part in the nexus of migration and urban transformation. The conference will address some of the conditions of migration and space, with a particular focus on Swedish society. The conference is based on the year-long research-based study programme "Resources.14/ A State of Migration: Sweden", conducted as part of the post-master course in architecture and urban planning at KTH. Last day of registration is 19 May 2015. [More information.](#)



• **CROP workshop on Poverty, Water and Development in the South**



The Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP),

based at University of Bergen, Norway, organises a workshop on "Poverty, Water and Development in the South" on 3 – 5 June 2015 in Foz do Iguacu, Brazil. It is co-organised

by the Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana (UNILA, Brazil), and the Nile Basin Research Programme (NBRP). Over the last decades, multilateral institutions, development agencies and states have promoted and strengthened a conventional view of the



relationship(s) between poverty, water and development. The fight against poverty is usually undertaken by the mere provision of water to the poor in order to meet their nutritional, cleaning and sanitation needs. Such a restricted approach has proved to be inadequate in preventing the production and reproduction of poverty through generations. Water allocation practices are becoming increasingly inequitable, inefficient and unsustainable. As water is perceived as a scarce natural asset, "More Value per Drop" has become the new credo for the commodification of a natural common good. As a result, water governance institutions are tacitly discriminating against poor households and communities that rely on values that go beyond market rules.

This workshop will focus on, but not be limited to, questions such as:

- How are water and development issues linked to anti-poverty policies and strategies? What are the conceptions of poverty underpinning pro-poor water policies? Are public investments promoting water justice?
- What are the processes and mechanisms that make water play a key role in the development of poor communities? How do water appropriation, management and use contribute to explaining and/or unveiling asymmetric power distribution, inequities and poverty?
- How are water-related conflicts and rights addressed at an institutional level, locally and/or nationally?
- Are energy-related infrastructure investments being designed and implemented without taking into account their impact on water resources and the needs-vulnerable sectors? Are current water policies actually promoting equitable and sustainable development?
- What is the achievement and relevance of local water policies with respect to the Millennium Development Goals and their successors (SDGs)?

[Full information about the workshop.](#)

• **2015 World Water Week focuses on Water for Development**

The 2015 World Water

www.waterfordevelopment.org



Week in Stockholm will be held 23 – 28 August 2015. World Water Week in Stockholm is the annual focal point for the globe's water issues. It is organized by Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). This



year is the jubilee year for both the Week and the Stockholm Water Prize. The theme for the 25th World Water Week is *Water for Development*. It will again, after a few years otherwise, be held in the heart of Stockholm at the City Conference Centre. Experts, practitioners, decision-makers, business innovators and young professionals from a range of sectors and countries come to Stockholm to network, exchange ideas, foster new thinking and develop solutions to the most pressing water-related challenges of today. Every year around 200 delegates from South Asia participate (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka).

The programme of 2015 World Water Week consist of over 160 events and 8 workshops. During the 90-minute events, the most relevant topics relating to "Water for Development" will be discussed – i.e. Financing, Gender issues, Climate Change, Energy, Sanitation, Food, Conflict Resolution, Water Management... Plenary speakers include Mr. Rajendra Singh – the 2015 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate ([more information](#)); Professor Hans Rosling, Chair, Gapminder Foundation (and Professor at Karolinska Institutet); and Mr. Adnan Z Amin, Director-General, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Registration to World Water Week is required for all participants, including speakers and invited participants. Registration is open from 15 April. Full information about the 2015 World Water Week.

In 2014, over 3,000 individuals and 270 convening organizations from 143 countries participated in the Week. The 2014 World Water Week report "*Energy and Water for Development*" is available. The report provides input into the discussions at the 2014 World Water Week in Stockholm. Go for the [2014 Summary Report](#).

#### • The Swallows invites to Glocal Development Talks! in Lund

The Swedish NGO The Swallows India Bangladesh organises what they call Glocal Development Talks! on 20–24 September 2015 in Lund, Sweden. In an effort to influence the decisions made under the umbrella of different development goals, the organisation aims to provide a platform for voices from the



Global South, whose inequality, the goals are meant to address. The effect of the global politics in local voices will come from partner organisations in India and Bangladesh who will share their views informed by their experiences. The invited speakers are people who represent mobilisation and the struggle for resistance and at the same time, people who are linked to a greater global discourse. The forum will stimulate debate around issues such as how Sweden support and relate to the BRICS countries and the upcoming Next Eleven (N 11), with the background of growing inequalities; and how Sweden's new and unique feminist foreign policy influence the development agenda. The Glocal Development Talks! aims to attract development practitioners, researchers, politicians, civil society organisations as well as the general public. Through seminars, panel debates and interactive methods, these talks will encourage and mediate direct communication between different stakeholders in Sweden and the Global South. It also gives an opportunity for civil organisations and the general public in the southern regions of Sweden to participate in an event that is located in Lund. Participants include *Khushi Kabir*, leader for the civil society organisation *Nijera Kori* in Bangladesh; *P.V Satheesh*, internationally well-known founding member of *Deccan Development Society (DDS)* in Hyderabad and the national convener of the *Millet Network of India*; and *Shobha Raghuram*, development writer working extensively with civil society organisations, founding member of the *South Asia Alliance for the Eradication of Poverty (SAAPE)* in Kathmandu, and visiting fellow at the *Centre for Population and Development Studies at Harvard University, USA*. Full information about the [2015 Glocal Development Talks!](#)

#### • Stockholm University conference on Political Participation in Asia

The Forum for Asian Studies at Stockholm University, and University at Albany, State University of New York, USA, co-organize an international conference entitled "*Political Participation in Asia: Defining and deploying political space*" on 22–24 November 2015. This conference aims to deconstruct and disentangle political space across interactive subnational, national and transnational scales; across categories of individuals and groups, including those with greater or lesser access to decision-making power; and across modes and media, from street protests and rallies, to documentary film and graffiti, to petitions and press conferences. Papers from across disciplines, in the context of East, Southeast, and South Asia, are invited. Abstracts should be submitted by 1 June 2015. See attached [Call for Papers](#) for more information.



#### • Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/lectures-in-scandinavia>

### Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

#### • 20th International Euro-Asia Research Conference to be held in Bochum



Following a number of conferences held in Italy, France, Ireland, Norway, Japan, China, Spain, Indonesia and India since 1994, the Twentieth International Euro-Asia Research Conference will take place in Bochum (Germany) during 27 – 29 May 2015. Research contributions addressing any aspect of "Asian Development, Institutional Change and Business Strategy in an unstable World Economy" will be presented. The Conference, hosted by Ruhr Universität Bochum (RUB), is intended to bring together researchers engaged in Management/Economics, Politics, Cultural Studies and related fields from Europe, Asia and other parts of the World. Doctoral students are also strongly encouraged to submit papers for consideration. The Scientific Committee behind the conference includes Professor emeritus Bengt Sandkull, Linköping University, Sweden; and Associate Professor Ajay Singh, Indian Institute of Management (IIM)

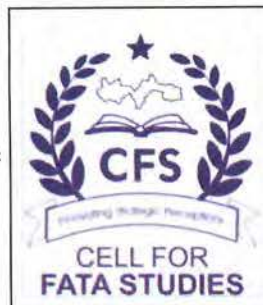


Lucknow, India. [Full information.](#)

• **Peshawar conference on the Federally Administered Tribal Areas**

The Cell for FATA Studies (CFS) at University of Peshawar in Pakistan announces the first national conference on *"Socio-Economic and Political Currents in FATA: A Way Forward"*, to be held 10–11 June 2015. Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) is well known as the region that has consistently grown terrorism, extremism and political instability at a fast pace over the last decade and a half while being home to the largest concentration of Pakistan's poor. Interrogating the extent of and reasons for endemic poverty, coexisting with sustained economic growth, and disturbances in social engineering with the arrival of foreigners as terrorists and extremists is the basic *raison d'être* for the proposed two-day conference. Evaluating 'what has worked', 'what has not' and, therefore, 'how precisely do we go forward' will form the core scientific content of the proposed conference.

Being part of a unique university with a mandate of inculcating regional consciousness among the citizens of the region (India, Afghanistan and Pakistan), the Cell for FATA Studies considers it an obligation to contribute to the understanding of the challenges and opportunities for inclusive development in the FATA, especially in its social, economic and political dimensions. Through this conference, we hope to provide a platform for sharing both broad visions of the FATA's collective future, as well as results of detailed research focusing on specific themes relevant for the region. Papers presented at the conference will be published in a book form bearing an ISBN number. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 12 May 2015. [More information.](#)



• **First African-Asian Studies conference to be held in Ghana**

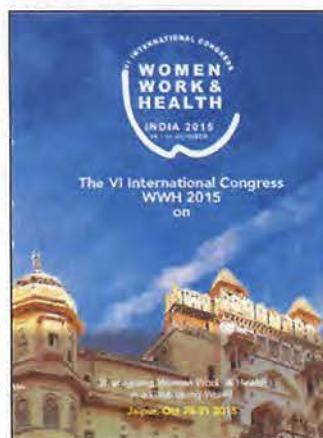
On 24–26 September 2015, the Association of Asian Studies in Africa (A-Asia) organises its inaugural conference in Accra, Ghana. The conference will be held in cooperation with the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS), and the theme will be *"Asian Studies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects of a New Axis of Intellectual Interactions"*. It will be the first conference held in Africa that will bring together a multidisciplinary ensemble of scholars and institutions from the continent and the rest of the world with a shared focus on Asia and Asia-Africa intellectual interactions. Through panels and roundtables, the conference will seek to assess the prospects for Asian studies in Africa in a global context by addressing a number of theoretical and empirical questions that such enterprise will raise: How should Asian studies be framed in Africa? Is Asian studies relevant for Africa? What is the current state of capacity (institutional, intellectual, personnel, and so on) for Asian studies in Africa and can this be improved and how? How does (and must it?) Asian studies dovetail into the broader field of 'Area studies' as it has been developed, mainly in Western institutions? Are new narratives required for understanding the very visible contemporary presence of Asia in Africa and Africa in Asia? What is the current state of research on Africa-Asia (transnational) linkages? Deadline for submitting abstracts has unfortunately already passed (15 February 2015). Venue: University of Ghana at Legon, Accra. [More information about the conference.](#)



• **Sixth International Congress on Women Work & Health to be held in Jaipur**

The Sixth International Congress on Women Work & Health (WWH) will be held in Jaipur, India, 28 – 31 October 2015. The theme for the conference is *"Strategizing Women Work & Health in a Globalizing World"*. This focus is timely and in consonance with the concerns of the Beijing +20 Conference. Now more than ever, it has become imperative to bring these concerns into the public discourse, with the different stakeholders: academics, practitioners, policy makers, civil society and the public, coming together on a common platform. It is hosted by an internationally networked team of experts, spearheaded by Women Work & Health Initiative (WWHI), and is supported by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India; the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai; and Manana Devabhuti Damodar Library. The first WWH conference was also organised by WWHI in 2005, and has been followed by conferences in Barcelona, Rio, Stockholm, Delhi and Zacatecas. The congresses have explored and deliberated on the realities that define the world of women work & health. Their aim is to create awareness about vital issues related to work and health, affecting women in different occupations. In this sixth Congress, the forum goes further to present new research and path breaking practices, success stories, collaborations and policies, possible solutions and linkages with policy decisions that provide new insights into contemporary concerns for women and gender.

Congress venue: Digi Palace in Jaipur. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 May 2015. After the Congress, a special volume in English with selected contributions from the Congress will be published. [Full information about the Jaipur Congress.](#)



• **Mumbai conference reviewing research in science, technology and mathematics education**

The sixth international conference to review research on Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (epiSTEME) will be held 15 – 18 December 2015 in Mumbai, India. epiSTEME is a biannual conference reviewing research in science, technology and mathematics education. It is organized by the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE), and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai. The 2015 conference will be held at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB), Mumbai, and will therefore be jointly organised by the Educational Technology program at IITB. [More information.](#)





- **Leiden conference on Language, Power and Identity in Asia**



The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden hosts an international conference to explore the interrelations between language, power and identity in Asia. The conference entitled "*Language, Power and Identity in Asia: Creating and Crossing Language Boundaries*" will be held 14–16 March 2016. Venue: National Museum of Antiquities, Rapenburg 28, Leiden, the Netherlands. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 May 2015. Participants are invited to submit a paper to address aspects of this topic, with a particular emphasis on Asia, but papers that illustrate the subject from other parts of the world are also welcome. The conference explores how linguistic differences, practices, texts and performances are of critical importance to political, social and intellectual power structures among communities in the past and in the present, especially through processes of identity formation. How do (and how did) languages shape borders - social, ethnic, religious, or "national"? Likewise, how do languages and linguistic communities move across these limits? In what ways do processes of hybridisation and multilingualism affect the formation of transnational or translocal identities, and how have they done so in the past? How have policies of language standardisation impacted on the political and intellectual spheres? What is the power of orality and performance vis-à-vis a variety of textual productions, through manuscript culture, epigraphical practices, print media, and the Internet? Participants in this interdisciplinary conference are invited to address these and other subjects pertaining to the interrelations between language, power, and identity in pre-modern and contemporary Western, Central, South, Southeast and East Asia. Academics working from a wide range of disciplines, including philology and literary studies, linguistics, cultural and media studies, history, anthropology, archaeology, epigraphy, and sociology are encouraged to submit abstracts. The organising team includes Prof. Mark Turin, now based at the First Nations and Endangered Languages Program, University of British Columbia, Canada. [More information about the conference.](#)

- **Call for papers on Economic Transformation and Urbanisation in India**

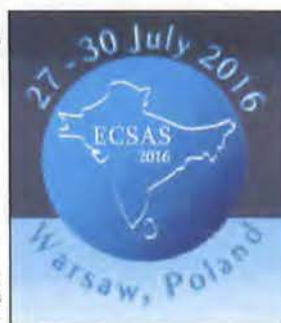
A Call for papers has been announced for a panel on "*Economic Transformation and Urbanisation: The future of pluriactive small farmers and rural workers in South Asia?*" to be held at the International Sociological Association (ISA) Third Forum of Sociology in Vienna, Austria, 10 – 14 July 2016 ([more information about the ISA Vienna Forum](#)).



The panel will be chaired by Prof. [Staffan Lindberg](#), Lund University, and Prof. [Surinder Jodhka](#), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi, India. Abstracts of papers are welcome to this regular session in the Working Group 05, Famine and Society, at the ISA Forum. The panel will deal with how fast the rate of urbanisation and migration from villages to towns go? What does it mean for poor rural peoples' entitlements? Papers are invited which analyse available data and/or own empirical findings on social transformation under the impact of a growing urban industry and service sector. Up till recently, rural poor have been able to stay in their original villages and engage in multifarious work as small farmers, agricultural labourers and workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors. But recent Census data for India indicate that urbanisation is now growing at a higher rate. Abstracts must be submitted on the ISA Forum page before 30 September 2015. [More information.](#)

- **Call for panels to 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies in Warsaw**

The European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) now invites panel proposals for the 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS), to be held in Warsaw, Poland, 27 – 30 July 2016. The call for panels is now open and will close on 1 June 2015. The conference is hosted by the Faculty of Oriental Studies at University of Warsaw. The chief convener is Prof. Danuta Stasik. [Full information on the conference website.](#)



EASAS appreciates a well-balanced composition of convenors and panellists within a panel (by gender, with an international mix of participants, and senior and junior scholars) but the main criterion will be the high academic quality of your panel. One convenor per panel must be based in a European institution. The conference organizers will also seek to ensure that the wide range of disciplines usually represented at the conference finds adequate coverage, both separately and in interdisciplinary panels. Panel convenors and paper presenters at the 24th ECSAS must be members of EASAS through 2015 & 2016 or 2016 & 2017. Non-members cannot attend the conference.

The ECSAS has met regularly since 1968, and has provided an important opportunity to discuss current research and scholarship on topics relating to South Asia within the humanities and social sciences. The 2004 conference was organised by SASNET in Lund, [see the 2004 conference page.](#) The most recent ECSAS conference was held in Zurich, Switzerland, in July 2014. SASNET was represented at this conference by Lars Eklund and Hawwa Lubna. [Read their reports.](#)

- **Other conferences connected to South Asian studies all over the World**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/conferences/conferences>

### Business and Politics

- **Information about South Asia related business and politics in Sweden**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/news-sources/swedish-politics-and-business-related-south-asia>

### South Asia related culture in Scandinavia

- **Ancient Kalidasa poem to be performed at Teater Slava in Huddinge**

A grand theatre performance of Kalidasa's ancient lyrical poem Meghadootam will be performed in Stockholm on Saturday 9 May 2015, at 19.00. It is presented as a modern dance opera with Indian dance and music, with artists from Sweden, UK and India. The story deals with a half-god, yaksha, who is living in exile from his home in north India, wandering through south India, feeling desolate and writing love messages to his wife through a wandering cloud.





The performance has been choreographed and produced by Usha Balasundaram in collaboration with Anusha Subramaniam & Saraswathy Kalakendra Dance Academy. The solo dancers are, besides Usha and Anusha themselves, also Petra Howard, Sampurna Basu Dutta, Eliza Anam, Irena Mihalkovich. Swati Ravi and Santanu Pyne are singing, Prathap Ramachandra plays Mridangam; Birgitta Liljemark plays Saxofone and Clarinet; Nazim Onay plays Flute; and Marina Maria Granlund is the story teller.

Venue for the performance: Teater Slava, Tonsalen, Kyrkogårdsvägen 2, Huddinge, south of Stockholm. [More information.](#)



• **Indian film festival in Stockholm within framework of 2015 India Unlimited**

India Unlimited 2015 kicks off with the launch of the second Indian film festival, Cinema Indian/Indian Cinemas, held in collaboration with SF BIO it will take place at SF Sture, Stockholm from the 7th-10th of May with the support of the Indian National Film Development Corporation. Covering



different genres, this is a selection that offers current blockbusters to regional Indian films. Cinema Indien 2015 is set to challenge the popular notion that Indian cinema is nothing more than song-and-dance Bollywood films. It is organised by the Embassy of India in Stockholm, Air India and India Unlimited. The films include *Margarita with a Straw* on a rebellious young woman with cerebral palsy leaves her home in India to study in New York, unexpectedly falls in love, and embarks on an exhilarating journey of self-discovery; *Killa* set in a tropical paradise of a small coastal town in Konkan, the film is intimately interwoven with forests, animals, a lake and the sea; *Open Tee Bioscope* by Riddhi Sen, returning to his north Kolkata home after being expelled from his school hostel for rowdy behaviour, only to make new friends and have the time of his life; and *Tasher Desh*, the story of a prince who escapes his destiny, the prison of his mind. He lands on a fascist island and incites women to revolt. A psychedelic fantasy about destiny and humanity, social control and Utopian revolution. [More information.](#)

• **Embassy of India opened up its residence on Stockholm Culture Night**

On Saturday 25 April 2015 it was again time for the yearly Stockholm Culture Night. It offered over 400 events of the most diverse kind, between 6 PM and 12 PM in the evening. Among the events this year, should be mentioned the Open House at the Indian Ambassador's residence at Villagatan 13 A. This used to be the residence of famous Swedish industrialist Ivar Krueger, and is therefore one of Stockholm's most iconic addresses. On Culture Night, guests experienced Indian hospitality and tasted samples of spices, tea, coffee and cooking. They also danced Bhangra (see photo). [More information about the 2015 Stockholm Culture Night.](#)



• **Bongobondhu Information & Research Center launched in Gothenburg**

A Gothenburg based voluntary organization (NGO) named Bongobondhu Information & Research Center was launched on the 16th December 2014. The main intention behind this step is to gather unpublished and rare documents, photos, audios, videos etc. on the life story of the founding father of Bangladesh – Bongobondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman – and perform research works on those.



In order to make an archive and works available to all, the Bongobondhu Information & Research Center has already launched an excellent website displaying an online archive of rare documents connected to Mujibur Rahman, who became the first President of the republic of Bangladesh in 1971, but was assassinated four years later. His eldest daughter, Sheikh Hasina, is the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh. [Go for the Bongobondhu Information & Research Center.](#)

• **Artists invited to join Nepal Aid Concert to be held in Copenhagen**

A Nepal Aid Concert in support for the victims of the disastrous earth quake in Nepal will be held at Kayak Bar in Copenhagen on 17 May 2015. It is being organized by Ranjan Ohja (*photo*) from the Nepal Music Festival association in Denmark. Ranjan is now looking for performers, bands, musicians to join the show and also, for people to come to the show and donate. Interested people can write to [ranjan@nepalmusicfestival.org](mailto:ranjan@nepalmusicfestival.org)



The Nepal Music Festival, established in 2011, is not only a celebration of music, but of the different cultures and communities in Nepal. The festival unites people both domestically and internationally, highlighting that the Nepalese society can cooperate despite major differences. Attracting international artists, Nepal is slowly becoming known for something else than extreme poverty. Nepalese history demonstrates that music has always been a key element for the population, which has made many exceptionally enthusiastic about the festival. The festival is especially encouraging the younger generations to stay in their country and make a difference and fight poverty. [More information.](#)

• **Zac O'Yeah promotes Mr Majestic with video**

Swedish writer Zac O'Yeah, native to Bangalore in south India since many years,





has published altogether thirteen books in Swedish, some good ones on Indian culture and religion, and also including the excellent Gandhi-biography *Mahatma!* which was short-listed for the August Prize 2008 for best non-fiction book of the year. Besides, he writes comic thrillers such as *Mr. Majestic! The Tout of Bengaluru* (2012 in English; 2013 in Swedish as *Operation Sandalwood*). Now it is time again for such a volume, with the 2015 release of the second Mr. Majestic novel, entitled *Hari, a Hero for Hire*. [More information](#).

To promote the book, Zac has also posted a video on the Internet, with his characteristic form of humour. [Go for it](#).



#### • Sarod and Tabla concert at Frölunda Kulturhus

Somabanti Basu, upcoming female Sarod player from Kolkata, India, will perform in Gothenburg on Sunday 17 May, at 15.00. She will be accompanied by her husband Suman Sarkar on Tabla. Venue: Frölunda Kulturhus. [More information](#). Somabanti has been trained under the tutelage of Ustad Ashish Khan and Anima Parera of Maihar Gharana. She did her master degree in instrumental music from Rabindra Bharati Univesity and stood first in several prestigious music competitions including Dover Lane Young Talent Music Festival, All India Radio Music Competition, and Ravi Kichlulu Talent Search Competition.



#### • Rabindranath Tagore concert with dance in Lund

The International Tagore Choir in Lund performs with a concert at Teater Sagohuset in Lund on Saturday 9 May 2015, at 6 PM. This to celebrate the Nobel Laureate's 154th birthday. Lund based Indian dancer Keya Kar will also participate. [More information](#).

#### • Nordic introduction of Hindi poet Shri Krishna Kumar Vidhyarthi

The Centre of Global South Asian Studies, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen invites to an afternoon of "Poetic Encounters. Hindi Meets Danish" on Wednesday 13 May 2015, 16.00-18.00. Through a series of



poetic translations to the Danish, the students of Modern South Asian Studies will present the work of renowned Hindi poet Shri Krishna Kumar Vidhyarthi. Born in Ghazipur district in 1927, Krishna Kumar Vidhyarthi is a prolific poet and author who also gained distinction as an officer of the Indian Revenue Services and later as CEO of Tata Steel and Hindustan Copper. His well-known works include *Uchvas* (1949), *Khulte Kaante*, *Jharte Ful* (1962), *Maan ke deep Jale* (1981), *Ga ga kar bah rani Nirjhari* (1985), *Ghas par chalna manha hai* (1995). It is from his collection of poetry 'Maan ke deep Jale' (1981), the students will present a selection in the Danish.

The event will be opened by HE Ambassador of India to Denmark Shri Niraj Shrivastava and Mrs Chetna Srivastava. Venue: [Asia House](#), India Kaj 16, Copenhagen. Pre-registration is required. Contact: [Marie Yoshida](#) for this.

#### • Information about South Asia related culture in Sweden/ Scandinavia

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/cultural-events>

#### New and updated items on SASNET web site

#### • Swedish departments where research on South Asia is going on

Constantly added to the list of research environments at Swedish universities, presented by SASNET. The full list now includes more than 300 departments, with detailed descriptions of the South Asia related research and education taking place! See the full list of departments here: <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/institutions/research-environments>

#### • Useful travelling information

Look at our [Travel Advice](#) page. Updated travel advises from the The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office about safety aspects on travelling to the countries of South Asia.

### Best regards

Lars Eklund

Acting Director

SASNET/Swedish South Asian Studies Network

SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia and is based at Lund University. Its aim is to promote a dynamic networking process in which Swedish researchers cooperate with their counterparts in South Asia and around the globe.

The SASNET network is open to all branches of the natural and social sciences. Priority is given to interdisciplinary cooperation across faculties, and more particularly to institutions in the Nordic countries and South Asia. SASNET believes that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued as a cooperative endeavour among researchers in different institutions who have a solid base in their mother disciplines.

The network is financed by Lund University.

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# SASNET

## Swedish South Asian Studies Network

### Welcome to attend SASNET keynote lectures at May conference

SASNET's three-day international conference entitled "South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, labour, and family changes in a dynamic region" is held Wednesday–Friday this week. More than 70 papers will be presented. The conference has seven panels, each one led by eminent researchers. Full information about the conference. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/2015conference>

The four keynote lectures during the conference are all open to the public. They will be held in Nya Festsalen at the Academic Union Building (AF) in central Lund. Here is the programme for these keynotes:

- Prof. Gita Sen from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India (and Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard University); "Social inequality as a barrier to growth and poverty reduction: South Asian dilemmas". Wednesday 20 May, 10.45–11.45.
- Prof. Rajni Palriwala, University of Delhi: "Trajectories of desire: Reflections on marriage, social change and the state in India". Wednesday 20 May, 16.00–17.00.
- Prof. Abram de Swaan, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands: "Are poor people enough of a nuisance? Changing elite perceptions of the poor on the national and the global scale". Thursday 21st May, 09.00 – 10.00.
- Prof. Ruth Kattumuri, London School of Economics, UK: "Two dollars-a-day Population and Love's Labour's Gained". Friday 22 May, 10.15–11.15.

### SASNET seminar with Vandana Desai on Slum Speculation and Ageing

SASNET, in collaboration with Lund University's Human Geography Department is organising a seminar with renowned development scholar Dr. Vandana Desai on the topic of her recent paper entitled "Slum Speculation and Ageing in India". The lecture will be held on Tuesday 19 May 2015, 16:00 – 18:00 at Geocentrum 1 (room: Världen on the ground floor), Sölvegatan 10. Dr. Desai is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London. Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/vandana>

### SASNET seminar on Adolescent Reading Centres run by BRAC in Afghanistan

Dr. Chona R. Echavez, Deputy Director for the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) in Kabul gives a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Monday 25 May 2015, 15.15–17.00. The seminar, entitled "Life skills education and livelihoods trainings for girls in Afghanistan: What difference do they make in their lives?" is organised in collaboration with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund. Venue: Conference room 4, Dept. of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5 G, Lund. The Adolescent Reading Centres (ARCs) is a program initiated by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) that started in 2007. It is like a home-based rural library, which was aimed to cater to over-aged girls who, due to several constraints, could not continue with their education. It further aimed to enhance the economic opportunities for socially excluded individuals. The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) examined the effectiveness of ARCs among targeted adolescent females in Kabul and Parwan provinces using the social exclusion lens. A combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques was utilised in comparing outcomes for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in the ARC. Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/content/sasnet-seminar-adolescent-reading-centres-run-brac-afghanistan>

### SASNET/SASA Fika Sri Lanka on journalism and political parties

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University organises its fourth 2015 Fika without borders seminar on Thursday 28 May 2015, 17–19, at the usual venue: the basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund.

The May 28th event will be dedicated to Sri Lanka, and two interesting presentations will be given. The first speaker is Swedish journalist Johan Mikaelsson, who recently published a book entitled "När de dödar journalister" (When they kill journalists), on the long civil war in Sri Lanka ending in 2009. The second speaker is a researcher, PhD candidate Andreas Johansson, affiliated to both Lund University and Linnaeus University in Växjö, doing research on Muslim and Buddhist political organizations in Sri Lanka. In particular he has studied the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and the Bodu Bala Sena. Andreas, who will soon defend his doctoral dissertation at the Dept. of History of Religion in Lund, is currently also working part-time for SASNET, being in charge of planning for the EASAS May 2015 workshop in Höllviken. Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/content/sasnetsasa-fika-sri-lanka-journalism-and-political-parties>

### Uppsala workshop on Linguistic Fieldwork in South Asia

An International workshop on Linguistic Fieldwork in South Asia will be held at Uppsala University on 1–2 June 2015. The aim of this workshop is to create a forum to discuss issues related to linguistic fieldwork in South Asia and language description, which



this workshop is to create a forum to discuss issues related to linguistic fieldwork in South Asia and language description, which highlight the challenges as well as contributions of fieldwork to descriptive linguistics. This includes strategies selected to illustrate complex descriptive problems, convey socio-culturally anchored concepts, and empirically test theories. Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/content/upsala-workshop-linguistic-fieldwork-south-asia>

## Paula Kantor victim for bloody attack by Taleban in Kabul

The Taleban in Afghanistan have claimed an attack on Park Palace Hotel in central Kabul on the night of 13 May 2015. Fourteen people were killed, all civilians: five Afghan and nine foreigners. The Taleban say they targeted a high-level meeting of 'occupiers.' Among the dead was a former director of the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Paula Kantor, who happened to be visiting Kabul at the start of a new research project. Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/content/paula-kantor-victim-bloody-attack-taleban-kabul>

## Yoga festival and lectures in Kungsträdgården part of 2015 Sambandh festival

The 2015 Indian festival in Stockholm gets its climax on Saturday 23 May. A gigantic yoga mat will be organised in the centrally located Kungsträdgården. The initiative comes from Indian ambassador to Sweden Banashri Bose Harrison who wants to carry forward prime minister Narendra Modi's plans to popularise the ancient Indian form globally. 23 May has been entitled the Namaste India day.

All Indians living in Sweden are invited to join in either as volunteers through any of the different Indian associations that will set up tents in Kungsträdgården, or as visitors who will help mark this day as the day when India comes to Sweden in full force. In addition to yoga there will also be served food from the different regions of India like Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra/Telangana, UP/Nawabi, and Mughlai. Indian restaurateurs and commercial food caterers are also welcome and would be offered professional tents at a subsidized rate.

Finally, popular lectures on India will be given by journalists and researchers such as Per J Andersson, Olavi Hemmilä, and David Ståhl.

Read more... <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/content/yoga-festival-and-lectures-kungstradgarden-part-2015-sambandh-festival>

Best regards,

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