

## Appendix 6

### SASNET Status Report

24 January 2004, Staffan Lindberg

**Dear Board members,**

Lars Eklund and I travelled to Pakistan and Kabul during the second half of November and first week of December. Meanwhile Jan Magnusson took care of some of the E-mails requiring attention, but all web work was suspended. In mid-December we published a short Newsletter and made a few changes on the Internet Gateway. Lars was on holidays with his family in India until first week of January. On his return he fell ill in pneumonia, from which he is now recovering. He will resume work on 26 January, from which date the web work will be resumed.

#### **Some important reflections about SASNET work during the fall and winter of 2003-2004**

1. **The contact trip to Pakistan and Kabul** was fruitful. We have made many new contacts. We can see the effects among other things in the fact that a number of scholars from Pakistan have announced their participation in the 18<sup>th</sup> EASAS conference in Lund, 6-9 July this summer. There is also a proposal to organise a programme for Pakistan PhD students in Sweden. It will be financed by the Pakistani government.

Based on this we suggest more priority to work in Afghanistan, provided that the peace process is sustained. Also Pakistan along with Nepal and Bangladesh should be given more priority in SASNET work in the coming years.

We were extremely well and warmly received by our various partners in Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, and Kabul. The local hospitality made the whole journey inexpensive, total cost being around SEK 60 000 for two persons, including all travelling, board and lodging.

We are also very happy about the new spirit of reconciliation between India and Pakistan. If sustained it will also greatly help in our SASNET work in various ways.

2. **The Öresund Network of Asian Studies** has now come into a very constructive phase of co-operation around various courses that can be taken by students on both sides of the Sound. We hope to make both a general agreement and a number of course related agreements during this spring, which can then be put into operation during the fall.

In Lund, the chair professorship on Indian religions have been announced and the closing date for applications have been passed. There are four applicants. Once this is decided it will mean a great strengthening of South Asian studies at Lund University.

3. **The Masters programme in South Asian Studies** at Lund University started on 1 September 2003. It has 15 students and the courses during the fall have been successful. Jan Magnusson is the Director of studies of the programme, which is based in the Centre for East- and South-East Asian Studies (ACE).

The Masters programme at Uppsala is continuing, but with less students than in Lund. The profile is more of languages compared to Lund. The commitment to develop this programme is very strong among the teachers.

4. A number of our **planning grants have lead to larger research grants** or course grants from VR and Sida.

4. In September we made **contact trips to Karlstad and Göteborg**, which we found extremely fruitful. We met several of our partners, including researchers with planning grants from SASNET. Together with the contact trips that we made in May to Stockholm and Uppsala, this makes us feel that we are in good touch with the various nodes of the SASNET network.

5. In November, **SASNET moved its secretariat to the Centre for East- and South-East Asian Studies (ACE)**. It is still attached to the International Office, from where the economy administration is handled. We pay rent to ACE for the office space and for fax, copying and common premises. We have been very warmly received by the personnel at ACE!

6. Work with the **18<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies** have entered a very active phase with the decision on 49 panels. We have worked hard to secure finance for it, and the situation now looks much brighter than during the summer. We have received 150 tkr from Riksbanken, and expect the same amount from Vetenskapsrådet. An additional application will be given to Sida SAREC for a grant of 200 000.

We have received quite a few applications for travel grants from younger scholars in South Asia.

You can follow our work on the web site: <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/EASAS18.html>

7. The **financial situation of SASNET** is good. We now have an accumulated surplus of about 350 tkr,<sup>3</sup> of which 100 tr is earmarked for further development of the Masters programme (funded by Lund University). Thus, 250 tkr can be spent in 2004 in addition to this years grants from Sida and Lund University. It is a welcome addition to SASNET's rather modest budget. The surplus has arisen because Lund University did not charge any administrative fee for the year 2000 (125 tkr) and because we have been careful in our spending during all the years that SASNET has been in operation, that is from June 2000 to December 2003, giving a surplus of about 123 tkr. The principle of travelling by rail and staying in youth hostels or simple hotels has saved us a great deal of money over this period. **(See enclosed Utfallsrapport för jan – dec 2003, and a revised budget for 2004)**

We propose that the surplus of 250 tkr is spent to enhance the number of participants among young researchers from South Asia at the EASAS conference. This can, of course, only be done, if we get an additional grant from Lund University of about 210 tkr (which is equal to foregoing their claim of an administrative fee for the expenses for the conference) and from Sida of about 200 000. **(See enclosed revised budget for the conference)**

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<sup>3</sup> The surplus appearing in the 'Utfallsrapport' is about 440 tkr, but from this should be deducted 20 000 which are the expenses for travelling to Pakistan and Kabul, and 70 000, which is a planning grant during 2003 not yet paid.

## Important tasks ahead

1. **EASAS conference work.** Just now we give priority to the reception of applications for travel grants (advising on the Internet, etc.) and the organisation of the various panels. Since Lars has been ill for three weeks, we have employed Ms. Elna Andersson to help us with this work. Then we will work with:

- Registration
- Applications for additional grants
- Evaluation of papers for travel grants
- Ticketing for travel grants recipients and key-note speakers
- Web site for the conference, programme, panels, abstracts and papers
- Practical organisation of the conference, etc.

## 2. Web work:

- Announcing that we have been somewhat delayed in answering to those who have registered for the EASAS conference
- Announcing import events with the near future
- Newsletter for January, urging people to register for the conference, etc.

3. Making a **Working report for the year 2003**, which should be finished before 15 February

4. Work with the **European Commission in Brussels** to hold a workshop on 25 February on Indian Developments (democracy, international relations, security)

5. **ÖRNAST**: continued work to reach agreements on courses for the fall of 2004

## 6. Co-operation with ACE:

- China-India research programme
- Series of guest lectures, spring and fall

7. A **guest lecture by Lasse Berg** on 28 May on 'Comparison of Development in Asia and Africa'. Lasse Berg will become honorary doctor at Lund University on 29 May 2004. In this we cooperate with the Social Science and Economics Faculties at Lund University.

8. Inviting researchers and teachers to apply for **planning grants on 15 June 2004**. We can distribute about 900 tkr if the financing of the EASAS conference goes according to plan

9. Work to develop **new courses**, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral, anywhere in Sweden and the Nordic countries.