

Appendix 1

SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

SASNET workshop 2006 on The role of South Asia in the internationalisation of higher education in Sweden

- [Workshop Report](#)
NEW
- [Useful background reading material](#)

The workshop was jointly organised by SASNET, Karolinska Institutet Medical University and the Swedish Institute

Time: Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 November 2006

Location: Nobel Forum, Karolinska Institutet, Nobels väg 1, Stockholm/Solna

Aim of the seminar: To discuss the context, conditions and suitable directions for an increased interaction with South Asia in higher education. What forms should it take? How can it be financed?

Organisational Committee:

- Staffan Lindberg, Lars Eklund and Boel Billgren, SASNET;
- Bo Lindblad, Karolinska Institutet Medical University
- Ulla Rylander, Swedish Institute

Background: South Asia has one fourth of the world population and more than half of the poorest 1/5. It has all the major development problems of the contemporary world, including the most serious environmental problems (water, soil, vegetation and air) and health challenges.

At the same time South Asia, especially India is now fast emerging as one of the major economical and intellectual centres of the globe. Its magnitude will soon be felt worldwide not just in the IT sphere but also in the field of production of services and goods in the international markets and in intellectual, scientific and cultural spheres. The creativity stems from the meeting of people from the many different cultures and castes in new flat institutions and business organisations and the return of white-collar migrants who worked in the West.

Sweden has a long history of interaction with South Asia in cultural, economic and educational fields but its presence is still rather limited compared to parts of East Asia and Africa. There is also a long experience of development cooperation but much less of public resources are today earmarked for academic and other exchange with South Asia.

At present there is a growing interest on part of Swedish industry to increase its presence in South Asia and collaboration with Indian/South Asian companies. We can also foresee a steady increase of interest to interact in all other spheres, not least in research and education. Thus, there is both a strong development motive and a strong self-interest motive to increase Swedish interaction with South Asia. When it comes to student exchange, the number of South Asian students coming to Swedish universities have increased dramatically in the last few years. One reason is the changed relation to USA on part of Muslims in South Asia after 11 September 2001.

Another reason is the focussed recruitment of South Asian students to Swedish University Colleges when they could not fill their courses with Swedish and European students. But is this really a healthy solution to financial problems at Swedish universities? And, more importantly, what should be the aim of such recruitment?



Rubhana Raqib from icddr, Dhaka, with Zarina Kabir and Gunilla Mellin from Karolinska Institutet.

Programme

Please note that after the workshop, several presentations are now available as pdf-files. NEW

Tuesday 28 November

9.30 – 11.30.

Introductory Session

- Welcome by Professor Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson, President of Karolinska Institutet
- Address by Mr. Lars Leijonborg, Minister of Education, Government of Sweden (photo to the

right)

- Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Director of SASNET
- Associate Professor Elias Arnér, Dean of Post graduate education, Karolinska Institutet. [Read Dr. Arnér's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Mr. Niklas Tranaeus, Swedish Institute, on the importance of student exchange. [Read Mr. Tranaeus' presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Dr. Rubhana Raqib, Scientist, Immunology Unit, Laboratory Sciences Division, ICDDR,B: Centre for Health and Population Research, Dhaka, Bangladesh. [Read Dr. Raqib's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Mr. Sunandan Roy Chowdhury, Editor-Publisher, *Sampark Journal of Global Understanding*, Kolkata, India. [Read Mr. Chowdhury's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Questions, discussion

11.30 – 13 & 14 – 15.30.

Session 1. Recruitment of South Asian students in hard sciences in Sweden,
Chairperson: Prof. Bo Lindblad, IHCAR, Karolinska Institutet

- The Karolinska Institutet experience, PhD sandwich programme with Pakistan. Associate Professor Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg and PhD Candidate Mohsin Saeed Khan, Division of International Health (IHCAR), Department of Public Health Sciences, KI. [Read Dr. Stålsby Lundborg's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- The Uppsala University experiences in International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), Prof. Lars-Åke Persson, and Dr. Rubhana Raqib, ICDDR,B, Dhaka (photo to the left). [Read Prof. Persson's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Chalmers experience with students from Bangladesh, Raihan Rafique, representative for the Association of Bangladeshi Students in Sweden. [Read Mr. Rafique's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Chalmers experience with students from India, Associate Professor Devdatt Dubhashi, Department of Computing Science. [Read Dr. Dubhashi's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Biotechnology, Lund University, Prof. Olle Holst. [Read Prof. Holst's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Swedish Institute supported exchanges with South Asia and cooperation with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Ulla Rylander. [Read Ulla Rylander's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Blekinge Institute of Technology, experiences of recruiting masters students from South Asia, Dr. Jan-Olof Gustavsson, <http://www.bth.se/eng/>

- Skövde – Linköping collaboration with India, Associate Professor Kjell Ove Holmström, School of Life Sciences, Skövde University. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/healthskovde.html>
- International Science Programme, Uppsala University, Associate Professor Peter Sundin. [Read Dr. Sundin's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

16.00 – 18.

Session 2. South Asian students in soft sciences in Sweden
Chairperson: Per Hilding, Director of Studies for International Relations, Department of Economic History, Stockholm University

- Lund University Masters Programme in South Asian Studies. Dr. Jan Magnusson, School of Social Work. [Read Dr. Magnusson's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Uppsala University's multidisciplinary education in a South Asia Studies master's programme (2002-04), and exchange collaboration programme with University of Calcutta (from 2004), Associate Professor Gunnel Cederlöf, Department of History. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/antroupp.html#kolkata>
- Göteborg School of Global Studies: PhD students from Sri Lanka, Associate Professor Mikael Schultz and PhD Candidate Dhammika Herath. [Read Dr. Schultz' presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- SPIDER, Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions, split PhD programme for Sri Lankan doctoral students 1999–2004. Mr. Rodolfo Candia, Department of Computer and Systems Sciences (DSV), Stockholm University and Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Kista. [Read Mr. Candia's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Borås University College, Michael Tittus, Head of the School of Engineering. [Read Michael Tittus' presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**
- Uppsala University, collaboration with Hyderabad, India. Associate professor Hans Blomkvist, Department of Government. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/polsciupp.html#hyderabad>
- Kalmar University College, Prof. William Hogland, Department of Technology. [Read Prof. Hogland's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

Wednesday 29 November

9.00 – 13.00

Session 3. Sending students to South Asia.

Chairperson: Associate Professor Gunnel Cederlöf, Department of History, Uppsala University

- Nordic Centre in India, summer and semester courses in Hyderabad. Dr. Mirja



Kjell-Ove Holmström, Skövde University, Jessica Voggenberger, Embassy of India, and Ingibjörg Stefánsdóttir, Lund University

Juntunen. http://www.nci.uu.se/study_in_india.php

- Peace and conflict studies in Pondicherry, India – a Norwegian Programme, Rune Tjelland, Styreformann i Kulturstudier, Oslo. <http://kulturstudier.com/>
- Karlstad University Teachers training and other educational activities in Banaras and Dharamsala, Associate Professor Marc Katz, Department of Religious Studies and Theology. <http://www.sam.kau.se/religion/indien/eng/>
- Örebro University's India Programme, Dr. Anders Jonsson, Department of Sociology, and Assistant Professor Pell Uno Larsson, Department of Clinical Medicine.

<http://www.swedenindia.org/>

[Read Dr. Anders Jonsson's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

- Lund Masters Programme in South Asian Studies, Dr. Jan Magnusson. [Read Dr. Magnusson's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

- Student's experiences from NCI course in Hyderabad and Lund Masters programme fieldwork in India. Ingibjorg Stefansdottir. [Read Ingibjorg Stefansdottir's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

- KTH: building a new Technical university in Pakistan, Dr. Ramon Wyss, Department of Nuclear Physics, Vice President of International Affairs at KTH. http://www.sweden.se/templates/cs/News_13415.aspx

- KTH: strong interaction with Indian universities, Prof. K.V.Rao, Division of Engineering Material Physics. [Read Prof. Rao's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

- Swedish technology students studying at IIT Mumbai, Markus Kirsten. [Read Markus Kirsten's presentation at the workshop](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

14.00 – 16.30

Session 4. Best strategies for marketing Higher Swedish Education in South Asia, and for sending students to Higher Education in South Asia?

– Panel discussion

Chairperson: Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Department of Sociology, Lund University & Director, SASNET

Key persons:

- Beppe Karlsson, Nordic Centre in India. <http://www.nci.uu.se/>
- Marc Katz, Department of Religious Studies and Theology, Karlstad University
- Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg, IHCAR, Karolinska Institutet
- K.V.S. Prasad, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Chalmers University of Technology. <http://www.cs.chalmers.se/~prasad>
- Erland Ringborg, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Former Head of the Swedish Institute. Wrote an official report on the issue of university fees for foreign students, presented in January 2006. <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/6293/a/57100>
- Niklas Traneus, Swedish Institute. [Read Mr. Traneus' presentation](#) (as a pdf-file) **NEW**

Workshop participants:

Stockholm-Uppsala area:

International Programme Office for Education and Training

- Eva Ehdwall

Karolinska Institutet Medical University

- Harriet Wallberg Henriksson
- Elias Arnér
- Bo Lindblad
- Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg
- Vinod Diwan
- Anna Persson
- Göran Tomson
- Zarina Kabir
- Sanjeevi Carani
- Helen Conte
- Björn Klinge
- Gunilla Norhagen
- Gunilla Mellin
- Mohsin Saeed Khan



Marc Katz, Karlstad University and Mirja Juntunen, Uppsala University.



Staffan Lindberg, SASNET, with Erland Ringborg, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Koyal Institute of Technology, K.I.T

- Ramon Wyss
- K.V. Rao
- Mannan Mridha
- Rodolfo Candia
- Markus Kirsten

Ministry of Education

- Lars Leijonborg

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Erland Ringborg
- Johanna Sommansson

South Asian embassies in Stockholm

- Muhammad Aamar Aftab, First Secretary, Embassy of Pakistan
- Mr. Premadasa, Embassy of Sri Lanka
- Jessica Voggenberger, Embassy of India
- Shahnaz Gazi, Embassy of Bangladesh

STINT

- Katarina Wiberg

Stockholm University

- Per Hilding
- Åke Nagrellius
- Christer Norström
- Henrik Berglund

Swedish Institute

- Ulla Rylander
- Niklas Tranaeus
- Kurt Bratteby

Swedish National Agency for Higher Education

- Cecilia George

Swedish University for Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala

- Wijnand Boonstra
- Sadhna Alström
- Seema Arora-Jonsson

Södertörn University College

- Per Ståhlberg

Uppsala University

- Gunnel Cederlöf
- Lars-Åke Persson
- Anju Saxena
- Beppe Karlsson
- Mirja Juntunen
- Hans Blomkvist
- Peter Sundin

"Mofussil areas"

("Mofussil areas" is Anglo-Indian terminology for rural localities as opposed to chief station)

Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona

- Jan-Olof Gustavsson

Borås University College

- Michael Tittus

Chalmers University of Technology

- Devdatt Dubhashi
- K.V.S. Prasad
- Raihan Rafique
- Md. Mafijul Islam



Vinod Diwan and Gunilla Norhagen, Karolinska Institutet.



Per Hilding, Stockholm University and Anna Lindberg, Lund University.



Seema Arora-Jonsson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala, Gunnel Cederlöf, Uppsala University, Sadhna Alström, SLU, and Sunandan Roy Chowdhury, Samparkworld, Kolkata, India.

Goteborg University

- Mikael Schultz
- Dhammika Herath
- Kerstin Andersson

Kalmar University College

- William Hogland

Karlstad University

- Marc Katz

Luleå University of Technology

- Hanumantha Rao

Lund University

- Anna Lindberg
- Olle Holst
- Boel Billgren
- Jan Magnusson
- Lars Eklund
- Per Hagander
- Staffan Lindberg
- Baboo Nair
- Ingibjorg Stefansdottir
- Torkel Wadström

Skövde University

- Kjell Ove Holmström

Umeå University

- Md. Showkat Gani

Växjö University

- Om Prakash
- Anver Siddiqui

Örebro University

- Pell-Uno Larsson
- Anders Jonsson

Participants from abroad

- Rune T Jelland, Kulturstudier, Oslo, Norway
- Rubhana Raqib, icddr, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Sunandan Roy Chowdhury, Sampark, Kolkata, India



Hanumantha Rao, Luleå University of Technology, Per Hagander, Lund University, Olle Holst, Lund University, and K.V. Rao, KTH.



Cecilia George, Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, and Anver Siddiqui, Växjö University.

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Last updated 2007-01-09

SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

The Role of South Asia in the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Sweden

SASNET Workshop 2006

Nobel Forum, Stockholm, 28 – 29 November

Report by Jan Magnusson (assisted by Lars Eklund and Staffan Lindberg)

Dramatic but uneven increase in contacts and cooperation

Contacts and interaction between researchers, teachers and students in Sweden and South Asia has seen a dramatic but uneven increase during the past decade. Already existing research cooperation between researchers at established Swedish universities like Karolinska Institutet, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Chalmers, Uppsala, Lund, Karlstad universities, etc. has been growing steadily and is now spreading to other universities and colleges all over Sweden. Most of this is documented on SASNET's Internet Gateway ([see the page documenting 200 Swedish departments where South Asia related research and/or education is taking place](#)). Many of these activities were presented at the workshop in Stockholm, 28-29 November, jointly organised by SASNET, Karolinska Institutet and the Swedish Institute.



The idea behind the workshop was to learn from each other.

Several financial opportunities exist for interaction between Sweden and South Asia, from planning grants from Sida SAREC and SASNET, to project funding from Sida SAREC, the Swedish Research Council, the Asia Link programme, etc. Regarding scholarships for foreign students, such are awarded by the Swedish Institute.

But it is really India that is favoured. Within Sida's country strategy for India, a joint Indian-Swedish Research Council for Applied Environmental and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) research is about to be set up by the [Swedish Institute for Growth Policy Studies](#) (ITPS) in Stockholm. The [Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems](#) (Vinnova) is also involved in the development of joint projects. In both these cases, Indian and Swedish business firms are going to be involved in the development and application of applied research.

It seems Swedish research interaction is growing fairly rapidly with this new Indian "tiger cum elephant". What about the other countries in South Asia? Through Sida development assistance Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have some elements of research cooperation. Karolinska Institutet has a well-developed programme of cooperation with [Aga Khan University](#) in Karachi and [Punjab University](#) in Lahore, Pakistan.

Another example of a big and well funded programme is the research cooperation between Karolinska Institutet, Uppsala University and some other universities with the [International Centre for Diarrhoeal Research](#) in Dhaka (ICDDR,B), which has involved the training of doctoral students in sandwich programmes and Masters students exchange. The programme was commented on at the workshop by our invited guest, Dr. [Rubhana Raqib](#) ([read her presentation](#)). Further examples include the [SPIDER](#) programme on ICT, which involves Sri Lanka in a major way. For the rest of the countries of South Asia, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives, there is practically nothing going on.

Increasing contacts with India is of course motivated by the fact that India is

Introductory Session:

- [Full programme for the workshop](#)
- [Useful background reading material](#)

emerging as one of the major economical and intellectual centres of the world. Its magnitude will soon be felt worldwide not just in the IT sector but also in the field of production of services and goods in the international markets, and in the intellectual, scientific and cultural sectors. In his inauguration speech at the workshop the Swedish Minister of Higher Education, Mr. Lars Leijonborg, confessed that when he worked in Tamil Nadu in the early 1970s he could hardly imagine that this could happen in India. He is now promoting increased contacts with India in education and research.

However, our other invited guest from South Asia, Mr. Sunandan Roy Chowdhury, a journalist and researcher in didactics, warned that the intellectual culture in India may not be as advanced as Swedes and other westerners often imagine. The elite standard of, for example, Indian Institutes of Technology or Managements is not a common phenomenon. There is a myth that scientists trained in the US and Britain return with great potential for new research and innovation (the so called reversed brain-drain), but his impression was that many returned when they had made enough money to live a good life back at home. Indian institutions and companies do not get much added value out of these returnees.

Much research about education in India is still relying on reproduction of western text books and is unrelated to specific Indian issues, he said. Where are 'corruption studies' within the discipline of economics? Mr Chowdhury said. Where is the appropriate technology to develop intermediate and practically useful solutions relevant to South Asian conditions?

Mr Chowdhury also suggested that Swedish cooperation with South Asia could be geared towards the development of research and education cooperation with "mofussil" areas in the sub-continent (mofussil is an Anglo-Indian term for rural localities as opposed to chief stations), that is, with institutions and researchers in need of new knowledge and solutions to develop higher education in backward regions.

[Read Mr. Sunandan Roy Chowdhury's full presentation](#), titled "The Mofussil and the Metropolitan – Higher Education's Meandering Paths" (as a pdf-file).

Focused exchange

Sweden's government policy for international exchange in higher education and research is changing. The Swedish Institute, a government agency promoting Sweden abroad, is now talking about a global education market where Sweden must attract excellent students and researchers to support its diplomacy, business and tourism. But although Swedish national interests and public diplomacy considerations may be influencing policy making, a large part of the funding for exchange is channelled through development assistance money.

In South Asia Indian academic institutions are the preferred partners. But recently two large-scale projects in cooperation with the government of Pakistan have been put in the works. Both the projects were presented in the workshop. One of them consists of up to 200 scholarships per year (over a period of 7 years) paid for by the Government of Pakistan, coordinated by the Swedish Institute, and aimed at educating Pakistani Masters and PhD students in Sweden. The other is the Royal Institute of Technology's (KTH) commission to organize a technical university with 1 000 students in Sialkot, Pakistan. If both of the projects are carried out successfully, higher education exchange between Sweden and Pakistan may be dramatically increased.

Most of the focused exchange in higher education between Sweden and South Asia has been initiated in the past five years. It is bilateral, and almost exclusively on post graduate level (PhD, Masters). With an eye on government policy it is interesting to note that in practice the majority of exchange is going on within a development assistance framework. Several of the programmes have actually been part of larger development assistance initiatives funded by Sida/SAREC, for instance SPIDER (Swedish Programme for ICT in Developing Regions), which organised a split PhD programme for Sri Lankan PhD students between 1999 and 2004.

There are a couple of established so called sandwich programmes in the area of medical sciences like the one between Karolinska Institutet and Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan and between Uppsala University's International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) and ICDDR,B, where the partners have shared the training of PhD students. The programmes have been funded by Sida/SAREC and include so called *twinning* of two students doing related work. These partnerships have been in the area of public health and research in biotechnology, biomedicine, molecular biology and genetic engineering. IMCH and ICDDR,B are now moving away from the sandwich system to a "smorgasbord" of joint research and education ventures.

Since 2002 a number of new exchange programmes between Sweden and South Asia have been started, and several of them

- Professor Harriet Wallberg-Henriksson (*photo*), President of Karolinska Institutet
- Mr. Lars Leijonborg, Minister of Education, Government of Sweden
- Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Director of SASNET
- Associate Professor Elias Arnér, Dean of Post graduate education, Karolinska Institutet. [Read Dr. Arnér's presentation](#).
- Mr. Niklas Tranaeus, Swedish Institute, on the importance of student exchange. [Read Mr. Tranaeus' presentation](#).
- Dr. Rubhana Raqib, Scientist, Immunology Unit, Laboratory Sciences Division, ICDDR,B. [Read Dr. Raqib's presentation](#).
- Mr. Sunandan Roy Chowdhury. [Read Mr. Chowdhury's presentation](#).



Session 1. Recruitment of South Asian students in hard sciences in Sweden

- The Uppsala University experiences in International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH). [Read Prof. Lars-Åke Persson's \(photo\) presentation](#).
- The Karolinska Institutet experience, PhD sandwich programme with Pakistan. [Read Dr. Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg's presentation](#).
- Chalmers experience with students from Bangladesh. [Read Mr. Raihan Rafique's presentation](#).
- Chalmers experience with students from India. [Read Dr. Devdatt Dubhashi's presentation](#).
- Biotechnology, Lund University. [Read Prof. Olle Holst's presentation](#).
- Swedish Institute supported exchanges with South Asia and cooperation with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. [Read Ulla Rylander's presentation](#).
- Skövde – Linköping collaboration with India. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/healthskovde.html>
- International Science Programme, Uppsala University. [Read Dr. Peter Sundin's presentation](#).



were presented in the workshop. One major programme is the collaboration between Linköping University, the University of Skövde and the [Pravara Institute of Medical Sciences](#) in Maharashtra, India that includes teacher and student exchange as well as joint research projects. In 2004 Uppsala University started an exchange programme about environmental history with [Calcutta University](#) in India and in 2005 Karolinska Institutet got involved with a group of partners in training research students in Lahore. The School of Global Studies at Göteborg University does a PhD sandwich programme with [University of Peradenya](#) in Sri Lanka.

Several institutions have received planning grants and are ready to move on to regular exchange programmes but it remains to be seen if they are successful in securing funding for this. An issue here is the time frame where funding agencies, like the Linnaeus Palme programme have a comparatively short perspective on their involvement (up to 8 years maximum) while a programme normally takes 5-7 years just to get established.

The South Asia linked Masters programmes that have been started in Sweden since 2003 have not yet led to any regular exchange of students or faculty. An exception is the Department of Government at Uppsala University that has a Linnaeus Palme funded, small exchange programme with [Hyderabad University](#) in India.

Apart from the generic coordination problems and concerns about differences in administrative systems and cultural misunderstanding, a major issue in the exchange between South Asian and Swedish academic institutions that is often brought up is what happens afterwards. A general feeling among programme organizers seems to be that students that come to Sweden to study through focused exchange programmes should have a job to return to after they have received their degree. The [scholarship programme Master for Key Personnel](#), or MKP, run by the Swedish Institute and financed by Sida, could here serve as a model. The MKP programme is open to university graduates, who are citizens of a developing country and have several years of relevant work experience. Priority is given to applicants who can secure a leave of absence from their jobs which allow them to return upon completion of the studies.

Free mover students to Swedish universities

There is a number of scholarships for foreign Masters students available at the Swedish Institute. In principle, they are faculty neutral. However, since the usefulness of a particular education to developing countries has bearing on the selection of the students for scholarships, the majority of the scholarship holders are to be found in the technical, natural and medical sciences. The impression of emphasis on technology, etc. is related to the well-funded research programmes mentioned above which involve post-graduate exchange programmes of various kinds. During the last 10 years 97 students/researchers from South Asia spent a period in Sweden as guest scholarship holder. Mostly the scholarship had duration of one academic year or more. Of these 39 were from India, 16 from Pakistan, 15 from Nepal, 15 from Bangladesh, and 12 from Sri Lanka. 29 of the grantees were women. 35 studied Medicine, 26 Natural sciences, 19 Technology and 2 Agriculture.

Sweden has just recently started to attract larger groups of non-European students to its Masters programmes, one reason being the absence of tuition fees, which makes Sweden a cheap alternative for the growing numbers of students from South Asia (especially in technology). Another reason is the rather harsh treatment of Muslim students in some countries after 9/11. Chalmers and the Royal Institute of Technology, for example, recruit students from Bangladesh and Pakistan. A fair number of the students continue their studies as PhD candidates promising a strengthening of the research capacity of these institutions in the near future.

New entrants are, for example, [Blekinge Institute of Technology](#), that has managed to recruit more than a thousand such students to its various Masters programmes. [Borås University College](#) is another example, but with a much smaller number of students. A problem in the recruitment is the students' slim chances of getting admitted to post-graduate studies as well as a lack of job opportunities in Sweden after they have received their degree.

The overall number of South Asian masters students is still small, below 1 000, but makes up a substantial part of the ca 1 600 non-European students currently in Sweden.

Still, outside technology, natural sciences and possibly medicine, South Asian students at Swedish universities and colleges are few and scattered around various institutes. Their numbers will depend on the future development of internationally competitive Masters programmes in the humanities and social sciences.

In the discussion at the workshop several speakers pointed out the many problems facing foreign masters students, such as difficulties in getting accommodation and getting along culturally in a strange environment. Another major problem is the difficulty in getting a visa for studies in Sweden.

Sending Swedish students to South Asia

Session 2. South Asian students in soft sciences in Sweden

- Göteborg School of Global Studies: PhD students from Sri Lanka. [Read Dr. Michael Schultz' \(photo\) presentation.](#)
- Lund University Masters Programme in South Asian Studies. [Read Dr. Jan Magnusson's presentation.](#)
- Uppsala University's multidisciplinary education in a South Asia Studies master's programme (2002-04), and exchange collaboration programme with University of Calcutta (from 2004). <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/antroupp.html#kolkata>
- SPIDER, Swedish Program for ICT in Developing Regions, split PhD programme for Sri Lankan doctoral students 1999-2004. [Read Mr. Rodolfo Candia's presentation.](#)
- Blekinge Institute of Technology, experiences of recruiting masters students from South Asia, Dr. Jan-Olof Gustavsson, <http://www.bth.se/eng/>
- Borås University College. [Read Michael Tittus' presentation.](#)
- Uppsala University, collaboration with Hyderabad, India. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/polsciupp.html#hyderabad>
- Kalmar University College. [Read Prof. William Hoiland's presentation.](#)



Sending Swedish students to South Asia in a more organized way most often includes forming partnerships with South Asian academic institutions. Ideally this should be a two-way process where both partners are in it for the academic benefit, and with a high level of reciprocity.

There are still comparatively few such programmes at Swedish universities. On the other hand a couple of these programmes – [Karlstad University's India Programme](#) and [Örebro University's Sweden-India Project](#) – are well-established, long-running and have been sending students to South Asia for years. They have set up their own structures in India, including employees and housing facilities for the students.

Some more recent programmes include the South Asian studies track of the Masters Programme in Asian Studies at [Lund University](#), [Uppsala University's](#) exchange programmes with Hyderabad University and Calcutta University, and the [Nordic Centre in India's](#) (NCI) summer programme at Hyderabad University. Some of the programmes are small-scale like Uppsala University Department of Government's two students/semester frequency while others, like NCI's summer programme include up to around 20 students/year. Still, the number of Swedish students involved is very small, especially if we compare with Denmark and Norway. In Norway, for example, [Kulturstudier](#) runs a Programme in peace and conflict and religious studies, where students go to Pondicherry in India for a full semester. The programme was presented at the workshop. It is based on a different model and does not involve any exchange. More than 800 students have participated in the programme.

So far all of these programmes seem to have been successful although a few of them have experienced problems commonly associated with cooperating across cultures and academic systems. However, in the discussion it was pointed out that there has been too little emphasis on learning South Asian languages.

A couple of other basic issues are at hand. They are, not surprisingly perhaps, connected to differences in funding conditions. Swedish academic institutions are comparatively well funded in their outgoing activities while their South Asian partners often lack matching funding. This creates a reciprocity problem where South Asian partners may find it hard to benefit on the programme except for financially. They simply do not have the means to reciprocate.

In a few cases Swedish institutions have experienced that South Asian partners have been mainly interested in the economic benefit of receiving students and less interested in the academic benefit. This means, for instance, that it has been hard to motivate the South Asian partner to share the work in writing applications for student exchange programme such as the Linnaeus Palme grant. Planning grants are used for initial meetings between the partners but one of the problems is to get people to remain involved after these grants have been exhausted.

A third issue is that almost all Swedish students that go to South Asia as part of their studies go to India. This pattern reflects student interest, regional security issues as well as the perceived quality of academic institutions in other South Asian countries. So when we are speaking about sending students to South Asia we are still speaking about sending them to India.

Looking at the experiences of Swedish students who have spent some time at a South Asian institution there are a couple of prevalent perspectives. Students who have shared their experience from the smaller programmes in India emphasize the value of living on campus and socializing with Indian students. But they also report some issues in student-teacher relations, which is probably a result of academic cultural differences. Finally, an issue that was raised at the workshop is that of "academic tourism" where the Swedish students stay together as a group and mix academic projects with conventional tourist activities, outside an established academic institutional framework and with limited contacts with Indian students. Reciprocity is then reduced to a minimum. Academic tourism, however, seems to be predominantly connected with programmes where students pay a full fee covering all of the expenses involved.

Final discussion

The discussion of the role of South Asia in the internationalization of higher education can be approached as a national project that brings the question of what is good for Sweden to the fore. But higher education can also be seen as an institutional project and a question about what is good for a single university. Perhaps it is the choice of perspective that is at the root of the current debate over the recruitment of foreign students to some of the Swedish universities as a business objective. In the present system a Swedish university can increase government funding by admitting large numbers of foreign students. Critics argue that this approach deflates the quality of education and students and is a misuse of tax money that could have been put to better use. Others might object that picking only the *good* and the *right* students from the sub-continent to study in Sweden is a tricky issue since it may have a colonial

Session 3. Sending students to South Asia

- Peace and conflict studies in Pondicherry, India – a Norwegian Programme, Rune Tjelland (*photo*). <http://kulturstudier.com/>
- Nordic Centre in India, summer and semester courses in Hyderabad. http://www.nci.uu.se/study_in_india.php
- Karlstad University Teachers training and other educational activities in Banaras and Dharamsala. <http://www.sam.kau.se/religion/indien/eng/>
- Örebro University's India Programme. [Read Dr. Anders Jonsson's presentation.](#)
- Lund Masters Programme in South Asian Studies. [Read Dr. Jan Magnusson's presentation.](#)
- Student's experiences from NCI course in Hyderabad and Lund Masters programme fieldwork in India. [Read Inghjorg Stefansdottir's presentation.](#)
- KTH: building a new Technical university in Pakistan, Ramon Wyss. http://www.sweden.se/templates/cs/News_13415.aspx
- KTH: strong interaction with Indian universities. [Read Prof. K.V. Rao's presentation.](#)
- Swedish technology students studying at IIT Mumbai. [Read Markus Kirsten's presentation.](#)



Key speakers:

- Erland Ringborg, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Former Head of the Swedish Institute. Wrote an [official report on the issue of university fees for foreign students](#), presented in January 2006.
- Beppe Karlsson, Nordic Centre in India. <http://www.nci.uu.se/>
- Marc Katz, Department of Religious Studies



ring to it, and can offset the fairness of the system.

Why should taxpayers fund the education of, for instance, Indian engineers that will not enter the Swedish job market after their graduation? From a government point of view educating foreign students in Sweden has fallen back on the rationale that internationalization of higher education is an issue of strategic importance in the promotion of Sweden abroad. For the individual university foreign students and international exchange enrich the academic environment by providing multicultural and multinational perspectives on campus. What seems important at the end of the day is to have the competence to evaluate applications correctly and to have good support systems for foreign students in Sweden in place.

and Theology, Karlstad University
 • Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg, IHCAR, Karolinska Institutet
 • K.V.S. Prasad, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Chalmers University of Technology.
<http://www.cs.chalmers.se/~prasad>
 • Niklas Traneus, Swedish Institute. [Read Mr. Traneus' presentation](#)

The introduction of fees from foreign students from outside the European Union may change all of this. This was clear from Erland Ringborg's presentation. Fees will relieve taxpayers from the cost and open up for business. But will it increase quality? Will it decrease the number of students? The idea of fees seems to have been accepted by most actors in the higher education sector. Technically, the bill can be introduced in the Swedish parliament in spring 2007 and implemented 2008/2009. Most indications point to a "soft" introduction through a transition period when the universities are allowed keep some of the money.

It seems, of course, paradoxical to try and increase the number of students by starting to charge for something that used to be free. Critics fear that the number and quality of students will drop drastically. But a positive view on the consequences is that fees will allow Swedish institutions to increase the quality of education to compete better in the global education market and that the students who decide to study in Sweden will be more committed. A major issue when it comes to South Asia is that fees will make Swedish education too expensive for many students. A fee system must thus be combined with an extensive system of scholarships.

In the discussion K.V.S. Prasad from Chalmers stressed the need to solve real problems in international Masters programmes, like housing and cultural expectations, before marketing the programmes.

As a final note one can ask how ready Sweden is to follow the route outlined above. The introduction of two year Masters Programmes along the lines of the Bologna model, which are fully recognised and accepted internationally, has just come about in Sweden and might still need some time to become established.

When it comes to academic interaction with South Asia we are also still faced with the challenge to make the region relevant to our own society.

**by Jan Magnusson,
 (assisted by Lars Eklund and Staffan Lindberg)**

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