# Nordic newsletter 3 - 1 February 2017



Submitted by admin on Tue, 2017-01-31 22:19

## NORDIC SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

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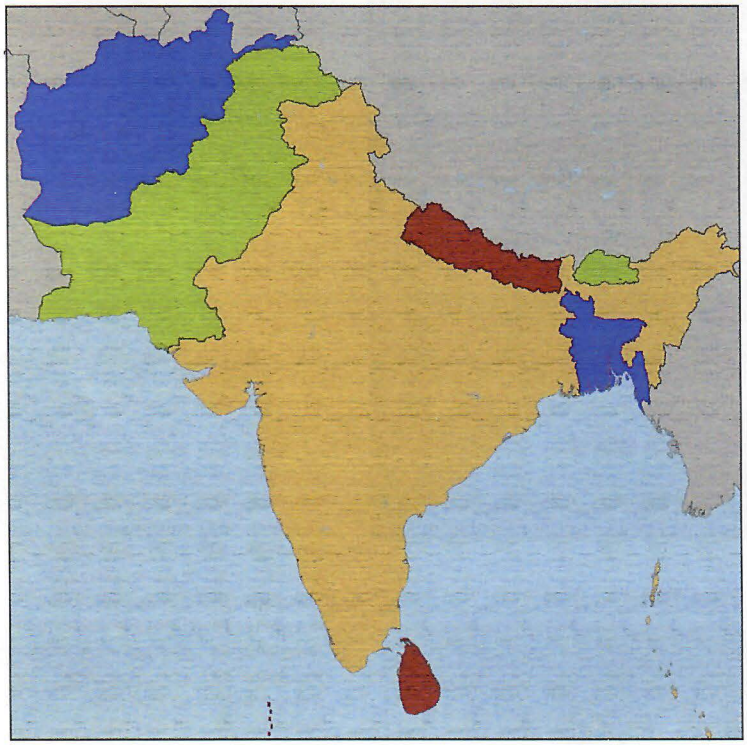

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## Research Community News

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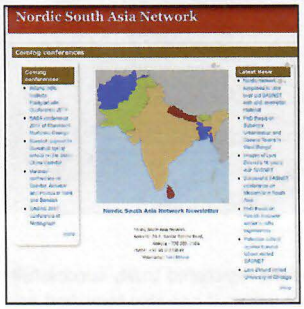


The Nordic South Asia Network was launched by 1 January 2017 with a web site presenting news about South Asia related research in the Nordic countries, and South Asia related conferences worldwide. The site is still under construction and will get added information on South Asia related research institutions in the Nordic countries, business news, and cultural events, but already monthly newsletters are offered.
Are you interested in getting this information on a regular basis, send me an e-mail to sydasien@sydasien.se

Lars Eklund

Nordic South Asia Network

### Rewarding visit to Presidency University in Kolkata

On Wednesday 25 January 2017, Lars Eklund representing the Nordic South Asia Network visited for the first time the prestigeous Presidency University in Kolkata - Amartya Sen's and many other famous academics alma mater, along with the ethnomusicologist Dr. Johan Westman, currently working at Samtse College of Education in Samtse, Bhutan. Lars was invited to Presidency University by Prof. Navras Aafreedi at the Dept. of History, after assisting him with finding Scandinavian researchers interested in attwending a February conference (see information).

Presidency University celebrates its 200 years anniversary during January 2017, counting from the establishment of Hindu College in 1817, later transformed into Presidency College, becoming part of Calcutta University, and finally in 2010 upgraded to the status of a full university.


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Johan Westman had arrived the same morning by train from Bhutan to visit Lars Eklund in Kolkata, and that was fortunate since he also could establish useful links to researchers at Presidency University, facilitated by the extremely gracious three hours visiting programme by Prof. Aafreedi, introducing Lars and Johan not only to the colleagues and students at he Dept. of History, but also to the departments of Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, Economics, English, Hindi and Bengali. Read more...



## Lars Eklund joins INLANSO language study centre based in Varanasi




On 1 February 2017, former SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund takes up a position as Executive Director, Communications, for the Varanasi-based Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society (INLANSO). Lars retired from SASNET on 31 December 2016. He will now develop the INLANSO web site but also represent the organisation at international conferences and events. The work will be carried out both from Sweden and India. INLANSO is currently expanding its activities, teaching more languages, and attracting new groups of students.

Since 2012 INLASNSO, which is an independent registered trust, successfully run Hindi Study Programmes for Nordic and European students in Varanasi. In recent years, it has also launched an Urdu programme in Lucknow, a Tamil programme in Pondicherry, and in 2017 a Bengali programme will be set up in Kolkata. The language programme was developed by Dr. Mirja Juntunen, former Director for the Nordic Centre in India university consortium (NCI) and being a Senior Lecturer in Hindi at the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala and Aarhus. She is now the Academic Director at INLANSO, in charge of its activities along with Dr. Dipak Malik, INLANSO Managing Director. More information in the INLANSO folder.

Lars Eklund visited the Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society in 2012 and met teachers and students, learning about the background of the Hindi Studies Centre in Varanasi. Read his report.

(On photo, a group of 4th semester advanced Hindi students from Uppsala University who spent four months studying Hindi at INLANSO in 2014)

## Siri Hettige Sri Lanka chair professor at SAI in Heidelberg


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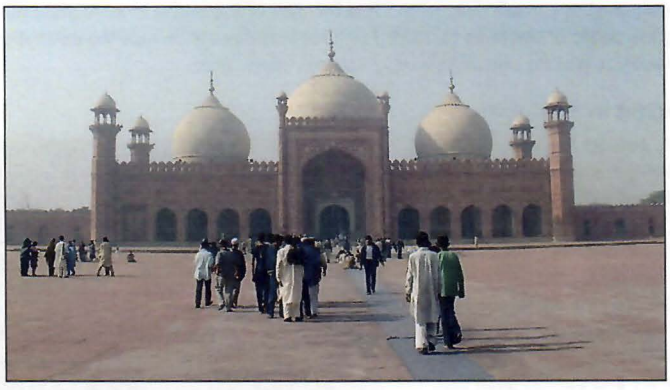
The South Asia Institute (SAI) at University of Heidelberg, Germany, now inaugurates its first Sri Lanka Chair professorship. Siri Hettige, well-known researcher and Emeritus Professor of Sociology at University of Colombo, will be the holder of the chair. He will be installed on Thursday 9 February 2017 at the South Asia Institute, Library, Heinrich Zimmer Reading Room.

At the beginnning, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bernhard Eitel, President of Heidelberg University, His Excellency Karunatilaka Amunugama, Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Norbert H. Quack, Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka and Prof. Dr. William Sax, head of department of Anthropology, South Asia Institute will give welcome addresses. Afterwards, Prof. Hettige will give a talk entitled „Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka: Prospects and Challenges". Read more.

SAI also has two other chair professorships: The Heinrich Zimmer Chair for Indian Philosophy and Intellectual History, since 2014 held by Prof. Amiya Sen: and the Allama Iqbal Professorial Fellowship, which however is vacant since 2014.

## Honolulu summer institute on Islam in Asia: Traditions and Transformation



The Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP), a joint initiative of the East-West Center and the University of Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, organises a four-weeks summer institute programme entitled "*Islam in Asia: Traditions and Transformation*" from 12 June to 7 July 2017 . It has been made possible in part by a major grant from the US National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This multidisciplinary summer institute will offer context-rich and critical engagement with Islamic traditions, examining their origins and how they have shaped and been shaped by the cultures and societies of South and Southeast Asia. The first three weeks of the program will consider how Islam historically addressed both personal and social needs in ways that were inseparable from the dynamics of intellectual exchange, artistic production, social organization and politics. The final week will examine the complex interplay of Islam and globalization in the context of contemporary Asia. Application deadline is 1 March 2017. More information.

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

See our page, http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/research-community-news

## Educational News

- **Time to apply for Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme 2017**



The call for applications for the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme 2017 is now open. Deadline is 9 February 2017.

Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) is an intercultural leadership programme for young leaders in South Asia. YCF offers personal and professional development to leaders who work for positive social change in the field of democracy, human rights, sustainability and equality. The programme provides the tools necessary to accomplish greater social impact. YCF builds and strengthens individual leadership through group-centric methods such as collaboration, feedback and reflection. Participants will learn in group from merited facilitators and from each other, through workshops, practical exercises and hands-on performance.

The four-week programme is divided into two modules at separate times and places. Application is open to individuals between 22 and 32 years of age from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan or Sri Lanka, who are actively working for social change through the promotion of transparency, democracy or human rights. Applicants must have a proficient command of both written and spoken English. Deadline for the application to be submitted is 9 February 2017. More information.

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

See SASNET's page, http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/education-news

## Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

### Håkan Wahlquist lectures on Pamir and the Wakhan corridor



On Thursday 2 February 2017, at 18.00, Dr. Håkan Wahlquist, keeper of the Sven Hedin Foundation at the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm, holds a public seminar on "Pamir och Wakhan-korridoren - bland bergsfolk vid Amu Daryas mynning" (*Pamir and the Wakhan corridor - among mountain people by the Amu Darya river*) at Brokiga Bengalen Butik in Stockholm, the establishment launched by Dr. Christina Nygren, Stockholm University. Venue: Södermannagatan 50, Stockholm. More information.

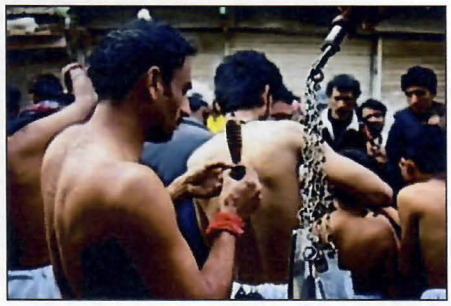
## Lund University seminar on Environmental News Coverage in Kerala

SASA
South Asian Student Association
at Lund University, Sweden

On 2 February 2017, 17.00-19.00, Assistant Professor Maggie Josephine from the Department for Communication and Journalism (DCJ) at University of Kerala, holds a lecture on *"Environmental News Coverage: A Review of Newspapers in Kerala"* at Lund University. The seminar is organised by the South Asian Student Association in collaboration with SASNET. Venue: Lund University External Relations building basement, Stora Algatan 4, Lund.

Environmental news has become a signinificant area of concern to the communicators and any issues related to it acquires immediate media attention globally. The responsibility of media in shaping public opinion and beliefs and mobilising attitudes in favour of protecting environment should be an agenda of the media. Climate change is a global issue and international discussions are being held to face the challenges and minimise the destruction by timely interventions. India is also witnessing drastic climate changes for the past few years. Kerala is the state which is fast succumbing to the phenomenon of climate change and it is the task of the media to constantly monitor the changes and create awareness among the public of the need to adopt remedial measures to reduce the calamities created by human activities and urge humanity to aim for sustainable development. Read more...

## Oslo seminar on Religious Belonging in Pakistan



On Friday 10 February 2017, 10.15-12.00, Adjunct Professor Paul Rollier holds a seminar at University of Oslo on *"Religious Belonging in Pakistan: Ritual, language, and the production of 'minorities'"*. Venue: Eilert Sundts hus, aud.6, Blindern.

Paul Rollier is a social anthropologist, assistant professor in South Asian Studies at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland), and associate professor II at IKOS (UiO). His research focuses on political culture and the anthropology of religion in Pakistan. The seminar is ortganised by the Centre for Islamic and Middle East Studies.

Abstract: Sectarian attacks, Islamist militancy and the marginalization of Pakistan's religious minorities are often understood as proceeding from an undue emphasis on Sunni Islam at the heart of Pakistani nationalism. Mainstream analyses tend to privilege a top-down, security-orientated view of religious formations that conceal much of the everyday processes and reasoning through which ordinary Pakistanis come to think about and perform religious belonging. Drawing on recent ethnographic fieldwork, I will focus on Pakistan's two largest 'minorities', Shias and Christians, to illustrate how religious identity articulates with ideas of the nation and the region. My analysis foregrounds the ways in which issues of language, such as blasphemy accusations, and public rituals —from Muharram processions to Catholic pilgrimages—have become prominent sites for the negotiation of what it means to be Pakistani. More information.

## Oslo seminar on Political Tolerance in India, Pakistan and Uganda



Professor Sten Widmalm from the Department of Government, Uppsala University, holds a Morgenstierne Seminar on *"Political Tolerance in India, Pakistan and Uganda"* at University of Oslo on Thursday 16 February 2017, 16.15-18.00. Venue: Blindern, PA Munchs hus seminar room 9, Oslo. What makes people agree to the extension of political rights to those they clearly dislike? Sten Widmalm presents the main findings from his book Political Tolerance in the Global South: Images from India, Pakistan and Uganda (Routledge 2016). The presentation offers an account of the factors that shape the foundations of a society and its capacity to be democratic, but where the need for the protection of human rights is great and where the state is either weak or even constitutes a counter-force against the rights of individuals and groups. More information.

## Swedish support to Guwahati spring school on the India-China Corridor



The India-China Corridor Spring School will be held in Guwahati, Assam, India, on 25-26 March 2017. The theme for the pring school will be *"Modern Empires, Flows, Environments and Livelihoods"*, and it is jointly organised by Prof. Gunnel Cederlöf, Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, the Linnaeus University, Sweden (lead faculty member); Prof. Arupjyoti Saikia, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati; Dr. Mandy Sadan, Department of History, SOAS, University of London, UK; Prof. Em. Willem van Schendel, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands; Prof. Dan Smyer Yu, Director, Center for Trans-Himalayan Studies, Yunnan Minzu University, China; and Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan, Ashoka University, India. The Spring school is sponsored by IIT Guwahati, and the Swedish Research Council.

For the first time in three hundred years, India and China are rapidly emerging as global powers in a world economy gravitating from the Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific. Deep histories of interconnection have materialized via enormously varied ecologies and eco-zones, and a broad spectrum of polities across times of interaction, alliances, and warfare. Borders and boundaries have variably hardened, softened and moved, from the times of imperial Mughal, Manchu and British domination until the formation of the nation-states we know today. The transregional effects have not only cartographically reshaped the interconnected territories of the Himalayas, Northeast India, and the highlands of

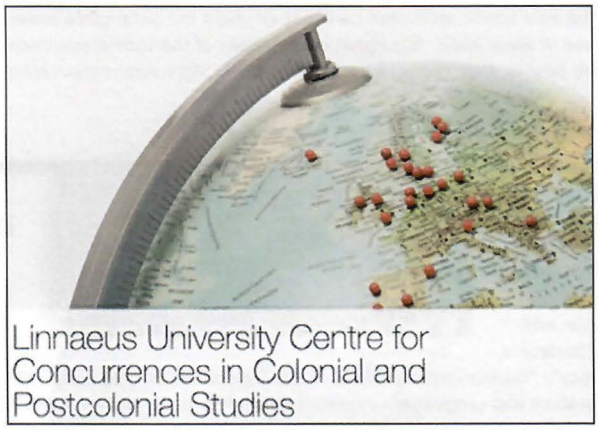
Southeast Asia. They have also engendered geopolitical perceptions of the eco-geological contiguities, and geo-economic alterations of traditional trade and religious networks between multiple nations and multi-centred ethnolinguistic societies. Deadline for the submission of applications is 10 November 2016. Full information.

## Varanasi conference on Gender, Activism and Politics in India and Sweden



A joint Indo-Swedish conferennce entitled *"Gender, Activism and Politics in India and Sweden"* will be held at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi on 2-4 April 2017. The Swedish organizing partner is Karlstad University.
While both India and Sweden acknowledge the need for enhancing women participation and empowerment; their immediate concerns and priorities have been diverse. In Sweden there is growing concern about the declining participation of women in electoral politics and how it relates to the growing sway of neo-liberalism. Also there are anxieties about the proportionately low participation of women from the community of immigrants, diasporas and the minorities.
On the other hand, India pins great importance to empowerment of women in the context of feminization of poverty, illiteracy, hunger and gender based violence. In parallel we observe a re-masculinisation of politics in both countries with a steadily growing populism that are following an authoritarian sentiment sweeping over the world. More information.

## Indo-Swedish workshop on Global Social Theory in Växjö and Delhi




A workshop entitled "*Towards Global Social Theory? Possibilities and Tensions*" will be held at Linnaus University in Växjö, Sweden, 18-20 April 2017. It is organized by Henrik Chetan Aspengren, with logistical assistance by the Nordic Centre in India (Umeå and Delhi). The workshop is funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and LNU Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies.
This workshop is addressing current debates regarding the dominance of Northern thought in social theory. The role of modern European Empire and European modernity, as well as the structure of current knowledge systems in marginalising theory from the South has been discussed in this connection. Although the liveliest debate on these issues has been coming out of the discipline of sociology, scholars from other parts of the social sciences have also contributed.
The workshop format is unconventional in the sense that there will be no open call for papers; instead ten scholars active within the field have been invited to submit previously unpublished papers. Invited participants include Gurminder K Bhambra, Professor of Sociology, University of Warwick; Ananta Kumar Giri, Madras Institute of Development Studies; Stefan Jonsson Professor of Ethnic studies, Linköping University; Sujata Patel, Professor of Sociology, University of Hyderabad; Aakash Singh Rathore, Visiting professor Centre for Philosophy, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Sanjay Seth Professor of Politics, Goldsmith, University of London.
The participants have been asked to relate their contribution to one of three specific questions, ensuring a tighter fit between each paper and the general aim of the workshop:
• How can the work of contemporary social theory, generally produced in Northern/Western universities, be useful to social movements around the global south?
• How can Southern and decolonial theories connect over disciplinary and geographical boundaries and what is the role [place] of the university in this process?
• How can concepts developed in the South effectively be introduced to studies of social processes also in the North?
During the third day of the workshop, two separate panels will take place at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi and the Observer Research Foundation, respectively.
More information.

## Asian Century in focus for 2017 ADI conference in Copenhagen

Asian Dynamics Initiative

The Asian Dynamics Initiative at University of Copenhagen organizes its 9th annual international ADI conference on 26-28 June 2017. The focus for the 2017 annual ADI conference will be the question of 'the Asian century' that is yet to be fully examined. The ways in which new connected histories, flows and connections both within, and beyond, territoriality are taking shape will be discussed. What kind of circulatory worlds are produced through these multiple connections forged across temporalities via commodity trade, investments, human migration, technology, tourism, religion, art, literature and other forms of cultural consumption? How has Asia historically circulated beyond its territorial boundaries? And how do these circulations shape the contemporary world?
The conference organzers invite abstracts for paper presentations addressing Asian circulations and dynamics in a global context, but especially welcome perspectives relating to one of the panels listed below.

There is a panel with a direct South Asia focus, entitled "(En)countering sexual violence in the South Asian city", convened by Atreyee Sen and Emilija Zabiliute, University of Copenhagen; Raminder Kaur, University of Sussex. The deadline for submitting paper proposals is 1 March 2017. More information.

- **Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars**

See SASNET's page, http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/lectures-in-scandinavia

## Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

### Kolkata conference on South Asia: Past, Present and Future



On Wednesday 15 February 2017, the Department of History at Presidency University in Kolkata organises an international multidisciplinary onference entitled *"South Asia: Past, Present and Future"*. The convener is Dr. Navras Aafreedi.

Home to one quarter of the world's population, one of the most ancient civilizations, with religious, cultural and linguistic diversity unmatched by any other geographical region of the world, South Asia (countries of the SAARC) is yet to realise its full potential. Although widely recognised as one of the world's biggest markets, yet its share in the global trade is meagre. It has not yet managed to exert much influence on the global political stage, in spite of the soft power it has come to enjoy across the world. Senior as well as young scholars from a number of institutions in Austria, Denmark, India, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States gather at this conferenceto explore how South Asia's past informs its present and how its present would shape its future from varied angles of different academic disciplines and scholarly interests.

The architect Dr Flemming Aalund is the only Nordic presenter, he will spek about the Serampore project, that the National Museum of Denmark is involved in since 2012. It is about conservation of the Indo-Danish heritage in Serampore, which was a Danish trading post in West Bengal from 1755 to 1845. More information about the conference.

### Lahore conference on Social Sciences in Service of Humanity

Lahore University Sargodha Campus, Pakistan, organises an International Conference on Social Sciences in Service of Humanity (ICSSSH-2017) on 12-13 April 2017. The conference welcome papers on a large number of research themes, including "Role of Leadership in Promotion of National Cohesion"; "Refugees, Migration and Human Trafficking"; "The Role of Civil Society in Sustaining and Strengthening Democracy"; "Nuclearization of South Asia: Deterrence or Insecurity"; "Microfinance and Human Welfare"; and "Role of Literature and Language/ Linguistics in the Promotion of Peace and Tolerance". Abstracts clearly indicating objectives, methodology, results, and conclusion along with abrief biographical note should be delivered by 8 February. More information.

### BASAS 2017 conference at Nottingham

On 19-21 April 2017, the British Association of South Asian Studies (BASAS) holds its annual conference in Nottingham. The conference is hosted by Nottingham University's Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies (IAPS) and Nottingham Trent University's Postcolonial Studies Centre. The keynote speaker is feminist historian, publisher and writer Urvashi Butalia, sponsored by IAPS.

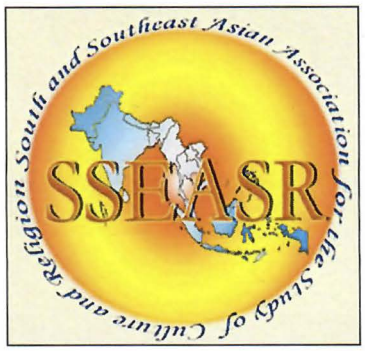


Registration will open in January 2017. Registration deadline: 15 March 2017 Please note that you must be a BASAS member in order to register for the conference. To become a member, visit http://basas.org.uk/become-a-member/.

An award of £250 will be made for the best paper presented at the Annual Conference. Entries should be no longer than 7000 words and submitted no later than 15 March 2017 to the conference organisers at basas2017@nottingham.ac.uk. A panel of judges comprising the conference organisers and council members will make the final decision based on the paper and the presentation. The winning paper may be considered for publication in one of BASAS's associated journals, Contemporary South Asia or South Asian Studies. More information.

### SSEASR conference on Asian Culture and Religion by the end of 21st Century

The 7th International Conference of the South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR) will be held at Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 9-12 July 2017. the Conference is being organized by the Vietnam Buddhist University in collaboration with Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities. The theme for the conference will be *"ASEAN Region's Culture and Religion by the end of 21st Century: A Dialogue of Past with Present?"*. The SSEASR operates under the policies and principles of the parent body International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), which seeks to promote the activities of all scholars and affiliates that contribute to the historical, social, and comparative study of religion. As such, the IAHR is the preeminent international forum for the critical, analytical and cross- cultural study of religion, past and present. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 7 May 2017. Full information.




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

See SASNET's page, http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/conferences/conferences

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***Best regards***

***Lars Eklund***

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