

Call for Papers **Mohon dikikrim Abstrak dan full Papernya ke email: indicbelt@gmail.com**



The Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asia, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, in Collaboration with The Association of Leaders of Indonesian Law Higher Educational Institutions (APPTHI) of Indonesia in Collaboration with IGNCA (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts), ICSSR (Indian Council for Social Science Research), ICPR (Indian Council of Philosophical Research), ICCR (Indian Council of Cultural Relations), ICWA (Indian Council of World Affairs), ICHR (Indian Council for the Historical Relations) and the Indic Belt Society, India.

is organizing a three-day International Conference on

“India & Southeast Asia: One Indic-Belt”

at the 4th Interdisciplinary Conference on Contemporary Socio-Cultural and Political Development,

Convention Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

May 05-07, 2023

Patrons:

Dr. Sacchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNCA
Prof. Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit. Vice Chancellor. JNU

Concept Note

Indic-Belt, a neologism coined by Dr Gautam Kumar Jha, the coordinator of this conference signifies an explicitly non-political, geographically defined region east of the River Indus, which can be considered as a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, civilizational fraternity based on the shared common philosophies, ethics and thought distinct from Western influence which are indigenous to the various peoples of the modern sovereign states of India and the Southeast Asian countries. The region of Southeast Asia is etched in the conscience of philosophers and is an eminent preoccupation of diplomats, cartographers, political geographers, and maritime defense & security experts. However, it continues to be an obscure region comparatively for the common Indians, particularly in the era when India aspires to be the World *guru*. For Indian academia, especially Indian scholars of Southeast Asia, it's a great paradox that their research into this strategically important neighbourhood which also shares a common civilizational connection with India, has to be brought into visibility and its scope delineated. The reason is obvious, Southeast Asia (SEA) has been a relatively conflict-free region, with no inter-state wars, even though most of the nations in the region share either land or maritime borders.

Common Philosophy, Ethics and Cultural Foundation

Southeast Asia is an integral part of Indic civilization, and until the late 1400 AD, this region was under the direct influence of Bharat. "Bharat" is called as 'Barat' in Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia which means "West", denoting the western expanse for the entire region. The countries of Southeast Asia, especially Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor, Brunei and the Philippines were part of Greater Bharat where Indic civilization thrived and later metamorphosed into new localized forms. Historical facts, existing common folklores and the social ethos speak volumes on the shared culture of Greater Bharat Fraternity. The two great epics, namely the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and related classical texts, emphasizing the Dharma of mankind which became major sources for their ethical conscience at both individual and collective levels. This civilizational heritage present in these countries in the form of temples and stupas stands as a witness of the social harmony in the region, and it also endeavours for peace the World over. The historical interaction between Bharat and Southeast Asia commenced in the late Bronze Age during the Vedic period, which culminated in the formation of *Janapadas* and *Mahajanapadas* throughout Southeast Asia, starting from 1500 BC to 600 BC. The region was peaceful in ancient times due to the influence of Indic philosophical and ethical culture. The *janapadas* were modelled on the prescriptions of the Indian knowledge tradition, and the philosophy of karma, raj dharma and yuddha dharma governed the statecraft and preserved national unity, social order, and social security even during interstate and intrastate conflicts.

The Philippines had deeply imbibed Hindu-Buddhist culture as evidenced by a 9th century Laguna Copperplate inscription found in 1989, written in the Pallava script with Sanskrit words. The Golden Agusan statue found in 1917, golden jewellery, rings with the image of Nandi, and Hindu deities bear witness to Hinduism's strong existence in the region. Indian epics and other classical texts greatly reflect in the common folklore of Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Similarly, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, exhibit similar traits drawn from classical Indian epics and Buddhism. Indic culture's characteristics that were extensively responsible for influencing the Southeast Asian region were its robust and active trade systems, land proximity, maritime connectivity, religion, shared knowledge traditions, and robust statecraft. The process of integration of Bharat's knowledge traditions into the Southeast Asian region was not in the form of aggrandizement by the contemporaneous rulers of Bharat with their might; instead, it was an organic process wherein the assimilation happened as a result of a common culture. Though Bharat is considered a source of philosophical and cultural foundation, the majority of Southeast Asian peoples consider Indic elements not as borrowed, but their own home-grown product, primarily because there was a lack of systematic historical texts and other details till the last phase of the decline of the Majapahit Empire during the 14th and, Angkor in the 15th century. However, the region, including Bharat, was subjected to enforced cultural changes emanating from waves of invasions, and attacks from colonizers. These changes brought about disjointed political consolidation, which left the cultural, philosophical, and civilizational continuum throughout the region fragmented, and the people were rendered oblivious to their past. There have been times when some of these regions such as Malaya, Aceh, Sumatra, Java, and Brunei, were infused with Islam before they got colonized by the western powers. All these changes led to the waning, if not undermining, of the strong base of Indic culture in the region.

Common Social Issues

Once known for its harmonious and composite culture, and strong social structures, societies in these countries are now being increasingly influenced by fissiparous forces. The reasons can be attributed to the rapid pace of globalization during the last three decades that has prompted a mass exodus of people from rural areas to cities, increased consumerism, nuclearization of

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families, and decoupling with identity. At the same time, revanchist, fundamentalist, and reactionary forces threaten the diversity and heterogeneity of society. The shift from the traditional way of living into the urban concrete jungles has affected society's development, continuation, and preservation of traditional wisdom and ethos. This development has led to the dilution of the culture of respect for nature as a spiritual resource leading to problems associated with environmental degradation and anthropogenic disasters. In recent years, there has been renewed interest in reviving cultural identities in India and the Indic belt countries in Southeast Asia. The governments of these countries are paying particular attention to the revival of languages, culture, and local wisdom. This development has created a need for a renaissance in civil society, particularly those who view the cultural heritage of their countries as the most significant part of their self-identity.

Security and International Relations

Southeast Asia is an essential region from a security and International relations perspective, as India shares land and maritime borders with many Southeast Asian countries. The geopolitical location of the region makes it imperative for India's maritime trade, security, and defense. While India has had cordial and friendly relations with the South East Asian countries, there is a growing awareness of the strategic and economic importance of the region for India. Security developments in the region are essential for India, whether internal or international. The Act East Policy formulated by the BJP-led Government of India, to revitalize the shared culture with Southeast Asia has recently gained a renewed interest among scholars who view that time has come for India to be an active and engaged partner in the region. In order to do so, India has to consolidate and streamline its strategic interests, and promote trade and maritime activities. This is necessary because of this region's substantial economic and strategic potential. This is expected to infuse new zeal into the Act East policy.

Indian products have, over time, gained trust for their quality and, accordingly, have never been subjected to any anti-dumping legislation, which places it in an advantageous position compared to other powers in the region. There is a greater need to reinvigorate the image of India as a source of their cultural and religious legacies, and through which India and Southeast Asia can rebuild their lost heritage. This will be not only in the interest of India, but for the ASEAN countries as well. Leaders in previous Indian Governments had failed to explore and forge the ancient cultural and civilizational heritage of Bharat and Southeast Asia and, therefore failed to use India's soft power. This failure represents a missed opportunity, and was reflected in its subdued response to the region's development in the past. However, with the implementation of the Act East Policy, changes in bilateral and multilateral relations are visible, necessitating scholars' engagement.

Traditional Medicine

India and Southeast Asia share a unique precedent of having people-centric cost effective, and decentralized systems of sustainable, nature based, traditional medicine that were acceptable and accessible to the people they served. And both regions share a dubious distinction of seeing their traditional biomedical systems getting slowly corroded, pushed out of the mainstream, and replaced by expensive industrial pharma products. The premise of European colonization was built around the subjugation of natives and their knowledge systems, including traditional systems of medicine by imposition of European pharmaceuticals, replacing native health systems. This was a method of colonising the native body, but also to distinguish what they believed to be native beliefs, from their own supposedly superior rationality. Despite sharing similar contextual tropes of this subjugation juxtaposed with astounding cultural and geographic diversity, India and Southeast Asia, in recent times have approached mainstreaming of traditional medicine.

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Hence there is much value in a mutual exchange of information on how traditional medicine has been looked at vis-à-vis the state and society in the Indic belt region.

Law and Governance

The role of customary law considered authoritative in society, religious law, local communitarian legalistic practises/ conventions and formal statutory law made by legislatures are all based upon the jurisprudential philosophy derived from the historical experiences of the Southeast Asian countries. The influence of the Indic philosophy of law which conceives of Niti dharma as egalitarian justice and equity, as well as a restriction on arbitrary exercise of power, to be ensured in the governance of diverse peoples, is clearly discernible in legal thought of Indic-Belt region. Globalisation has brought about new challenges for legal scholars of the region with the emergence of new issues and intersectionalities. Law and governance play a vital role as a tool of social engineering for dealing with social, political and environmental issues. In this regard legal analysis by scholars, from national and international perspectives, can contribute towards development of cogent policy making in the Indic-Belt region.

The Conference will widely cover the below sub-themes

Day One: (05 May) Philosophy, Culture Architecture, Indigenous Medicine, and Language

1. Common Ethics, Philosophy, Folklore, Mythology, and local wisdom
2. Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the process of integration
3. Philosophies of sustainable development
4. *Vastu* in Architecture of India and Southeast Asia
5. Convergences in Indigenous medicine and healing systems

Day Two: (06 May) International Relations and Soft-power; Art, Tourism, and Diaspora

1. Formation of Indic Belt Community and Beyond, and the Act East Policy and Road Ahead
2. Indo-Pacific Security, Groupings, International Relations, and Prospects: India-Southeast Asia and the World
3. Indian Cinema, Art, Theatre, and its localization in Southeast Asia
4. Indian Diaspora and its possible role in Southeast Asian Affairs
5. Sexuality, Gender, and Status of Women in Ancient and Contemporary Indic Belt

Day Three: (07 May) Legal System, Governance, and Human Rights

1. Relevance of Customary Law system in the Legal System and Governance
2. Strengthening of Rule-based society and the role of national and international law
3. Migration, Maritime Proximity, Trade, Environment and Connectivity
4. Common issues in resiliency and mitigation in Disaster management
5. Migration and human /drug trafficking, piracy, security, and its control

Accordingly, we call upon academicians, scholars, professionals and experts on the region and subjects to present their views and research on various issues pertaining to Southeast Asia and India. This 3-day seminar will focus on various themes, and through expert panels and presenter panels and bring together a galaxy of scholars to cogitate and converse on the common social, cultural, and political perspectives within India and Southeast Asia, to explore new opportunities and overcome existing challenges.

DATES

The Last Date for Receiving the Abstract is **30 March 2023**, and the Full paper is **20 April 2023**. The coordinators will inform the contributors about the acceptance of their abstract. The proceedings of the selected papers will be published in a reputed journal from India, subject to quality and relevance of paper, and plagiarism check by Turnitin software. Please send abstract to indicbelt@gmail.com. In case of any queries/ suggestions, kindly contact by Whatsapp on +91 8269720209.

Guidelines for submission of abstract and paper

The word Limit for Abstracts is 350 words (with the title of the paper and affiliation)

Word limit for articles: 5000 to 6000 words (max.)

British spelling should be used throughout.

Institutional affiliation and designation with complete contact address, including email address must be provided along with the soft copies of the submission.

Notes should be numbered serially and presented at the end of the article but before the bibliography. Use double inverted commas and single inverted commas for quotations within quotations. Indent quotations of more than four lines without quotation marks. Abbreviations, acronyms, etc., may please be expanded at first use.

References should be cited within the text in parenthesis by giving the author's last name, the year of publication, and page number, e.g. (Easton 1999: 37). Literature cited must be in the following format:

Books: Surname, initials/first name (year of publication), title of the book, place of publication, publisher, page number/s, E.g. *Mahbubani, Kishore (2013), The Great Convergence: Asia, the West and the Logic of One World, New York, Public Affairs, p.123.*

Book Chapters in Edited Books: Surname, initials/first name (year of publication), "title of the article," editor's name, title of the book, place of publication, publisher, page number/s. Eg. *Haider, Ejaz (2014,) "Counterinsurgency: The Myth of Sisyphus", Yusuf, Moeed (Ed.), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Challenge, Foundation Books, Washington, p.63.*

Journals: Surname, initials/first name (year of publication) "title of the article," journal name, year, volume. number: page number/s. Eg. *Choudhury, Soumyabrata(2012), "Caste and Debt: The Case of Ancient Greek Liturgies," Journal of Polity and Society, IV. 2: p.7.*

Article in a periodical/newspaper: Surname, initials/first name (day, month year), "title of the article," title of the source: page number/s. Eg. *Lakshman, Narayan (19 July 2014), "Parsing America's Modi Baggage," The Hindu, p. 8.*

Websites: Surname, initials/first name (date of posting/revision), "title of the article," name of the website, name of institution/organization affiliated with the site, date of access <electronic address>. Eg. *Cook, William A. (18 July 2014), "The Dementedness Destroying Israel," countercurrents.org., 19 July 2014, <http://www.nhpcindia.com/home.aspx#>*

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