

# **SASNET HISTORY 2000-2016**

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# SASNET

– a unique national Swedish  
research and information network

– BY LARS EKLUND

In May 2000, the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) was created through a grant from Sida/SAREC and Lund University with the aim to create an institutional base in Sweden for academic competence building and thematic work on present day South Asia. The long-term goal was to strengthen the relatively weak academic competence in Sweden in the field of South Asia. SASNET soon became a successful network, funded by Sida for 10 years and after that by continued Lund University funding.

Till December 2016, SASNET was a unique feature – a national all-Swedish research and information network, not found elsewhere in the World. However, from January 2017 SASNET was transformed into a local Lund University research centre. It still keeps the network name but in reality it is a completely different institution than the "old" SASNET.

This is the story of old SASNET, 2000-2016, the SASNET that was built up by **Staffan Lindberg** and myself in 2001, and within a few years became an internationally highly recognised network connecting all Swedish and Nordic researchers in the field of South Asian studies.

## SASNET highlights

So many highlights to remember during the 16 years I was working for SASNET. The 2004 European conference on modern South South Asian Studies, was the largest gathering of researchers in the field ever on Swedish soil, and it definitely put SASNET and Lund University on the map. The four summer conferences SASNET organised for young scholars including mas-



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ters students and PhD candidates in Falsterbo 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 was an equally extremely successful initiative and contributed to the formation of a South Asian students association. Out of the several hundred visitors to SASNET over the years, coming to hold lectures or just do networking, nothing can beat the spectacular December 2009 visit by Bangladeshi Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina Wajed**. Under strict security a large delegation of 22 Bangladeshi MPs and ministers came to Lund along with newspaper and TV teams for a seminar and lunch with Vice-Chancellor **Per Eriksson** (during which I had the opportunity to sing a Rabindranath Tagore song for her). Of course, I am even more proud that my work with developing the SASNET Internet Gateway became a success story, not the least the detailed information pages on more than 300 Swedish university departments working with South Asia related project in all fields – from Theatre Studies to Mining and Public Health. Before I started to collect and compile this information nobody really knew the size and variety of this knowhow, apart from such obvious departments such as of Indology, language studies and Social Anthropology. Finally, I am so proud of the monthly SASNET Newsletters, that I compiled from January 2001 till April 2016, All together 286 Newsletters, and something between 2 000 and 3 000 pages of providing news about South Asia related research and education, as well as info about conferences worldwide and lots of other useful information. The recipients were in the final year 2016 circa 3 500, and out of these the largest country group consisted of Indians, the second were Americans and on third place came Swedes.

### Swedish research lacked behind

The background to the creation of SASNET was a new Swedish strategy formulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998 on Swedish relations with Asia based on a report entitled "Framtid med Asien. Förslag till en svensk Asienstrategi".

This report stated that Sweden must develop and increase research and higher education in regard to South Asia, since it was felt that academic competence in the field of South Asia was relatively weak in Sweden compared to the study of East and Southeast Asia, and was far behind other European countries. Though several Swedish universities did carry out research on South Asia, Sweden lacked a critical mass of scholars and expertise in the field.

The government therefore decided to set aside funds through Sida and its research department SAREC for the creation of a centre or network to be co-ordinated at one of the Swedish universities.

## Competition between three universities

In June 1999 the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) invited the universities of Gothenburg, Lund and Uppsala to send in declarations of interest how to best co-operate in building this competence about South Asia. In the directives a number of conditions were given, among them that the university in order to qualify should also make its own funds available for the project, and a second condition was that the project should work on a national basis.

In May 2000, Sida decided to give the responsibility to Lund University to develop a South Asia Centre according to the plan it had submitted. The Lund University application was selected for the task because its proposal was more national in character than the others. It was based on a plan prepared by a working group led by Professor Staffan Lindberg, eminent sociologist with a long-standing focus on South Asian Studies.

Contrary to the applications from Uppsala and Gothenburg, the Lund application envisioned that the network should not primarily consist of a physical centre formation at one university, but instead the network should build upon and develop the overall South Asian competence already existing at the Swedish universities. This vision won the government's hearing, and Swedish South Asian Studies Network was created.

## 2000 Planning conference

Moreover, the plan was based on an idea that the network would have a very limited amount of staff, and instead let up to half of its yearly budget go to finance planning grants for new South Asia-related education and research projects at all Swedish universities, thus no priority for just Lund University. It turned out to be a successful idea, which Sida a few years later expanded into more similar academic networks.

Lindberg was appointed acting co-ordinator and **Jan Magnusson** from the School of Social Work acting programme secretary, and the first strategy was to organise a two-day conference in October 2000 inviting scholars from all Swedish universities (and most important the key persons behind the two competing applications) to discuss SASNET's coming organisation and activities.

70 Swedish South Asia researchers came to Lund and the conference became fruitful. It resulted in a modified plan for the building of the network that was submitted to Sida, and in November 2000 Sida decided to fund the activities for the first two years. Read more.

A nationwide & Nordic reference group was also formed to monitor the work being done in Lund. The group consisted of senior professors and South Asia specialists from Royal Institute of Technology (KTH); Karolinska Institutet Medical University; Uppsala University; University of Gothenburg; Karlstad University; University of Oslo, and two Sida representatives.

## SASNET staff 2000-2009

- **Staffan Lindberg** worked as SASNET director on a 50 % basis till June 2007 when he retired. Staffan passed away in January 2019.
- **Anna Lindberg** took over charge as SASNET director on July 1, 2007, but on a 100 % basis. She retired on November 1, 2016.
- **Lars Eklund** worked as byrådirektör/webmaster/programme secretary from 21 January 2001, initially on a 50 % basis but from August 2001 on a 100% basis. His title was changed into deputy director from 2004. He retired on December 31, 2016.



*Rajni Hatti Kaul, Boel Billgren and Staffan Lindberg at the 2000 conference.*



*Lars Eklund, Staffan Lindberg and Lisbeth Andersson in SASNETs office in central Lund*

- **Jan Magnusson** worked part-time as programme secretary during the planning process in the fall 2000, In 2003, Jan worked 50% part-time as Programme Co-ordinator for the new Masters Programme in Asian Studies during January – March. This work was funded by a special grant from Lund University, and administered by SASNET until the programme had found an institutional base. After that Jan became the Director of Studies at the Centre for East- and South Asian Studies.
- **Lisbeth Andersson** worked part time as acting programme secretary during the first six months 2001, being main organiser of the workshop on Global networking; and collected the data for the individual register of Swedish researchers, which became available on the gateway.
- **Sidsel Hansson** worked as Acting Director during the period April-December 2008 when Anna Lindberg was on sick leave.
- **Stig Toft Madsen** was employed on a 25 % basis as Assistant director during December 2008
- **Maria Tonini** worked on a voluntary basis as an Assistant updating the web site during the September-October 2008.
- **Nihat Ulusoy** worked as an unpaid intern during September-December 2009.

### **Mix of academic and journalistic competences**

Staffan Lindberg was the natural choice to become the first Director of the network, but since realizing a national web-based network required a combination of academic and journalistic competence, efforts were launched to find a suitable person to fill in this combination. The choice fell on the journalist Lars Eklund, Editor-in-chief for the SYDASIEN magazine since 1982, with a high degree of experiences from all South Asia and a vast network of Swedish and Nordic researchers and journalists.

In January 2001, Lars was enrolled as a webmaster on a half-time assignment to build up the SASNET Internet Gateway, and to produce monthly newsletters. After six months it was however felt that the work to fill the Gateway with content required more intense work, and Lars was from then given a full-time employment as SASNET webmaster/deputy director, whereas Staffan Lindberg continued to work half-time as SASNET coordinator/director (carrying out research at the Department of Sociology on the other half-time assignment) till he retired in 2007.

### **The driving forces building up SASNET 2001-2007**

SASNET got its first office at Gamla Kirurgen in the campus area in central Lund, where it was connected to the Lund University International Office – that provided SASNET with administrative support, and during the coming years, Staffan and Lars built up a strong South Asia research and education environment at Lund University with local activities and organising conferences. They worked closely together and acted as a radar team with full trust in each other's competences, always writing and signing common travel reports and jointly signing the newsletters. They also both held transparency to be a most important concept, which meant that every single activity and every meeting were duly registered and posted on the website.

Being an autonomous unit belonging to Lund University's Special Activities ("10:e området"), SASNET was independent from any single faculty and could therefore act in a truly interdisciplinary manner, and being close to the central administration and even have a chance to meet the Vice Chancellor once in a while. In November 2003, SASNET however moved location to Ideon Research Park, and hired two rooms from the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE) – *photo*.



*Two Indian students received their degrees from the Master's of Science Programme in Environmental Management and Policy, at Lund University, on Friday 4 October, 2002. The course was run by the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics, IIIIEE. The Indian ambassador to Sweden, Ms Chitra Narayanan, was the chief guest at the graduation ceremony*



The reason for this move was the successful launch of a Masters Programme in Asian Studies that was started on 1 September 2003. This programme had been jointly planned for by SASNET and ACE, and had

two tracks, one for East and Southeast Asian studies and one for South Asian studies. Jan Magnusson became the coordinator for this programme, and Staffan was partly engaged in teaching, whereas Lars had seminars providing information about sources for South Asia Studies.

In the new premises, Lars put much effort in building up a SASNET library of books and magazines. Because of his knowledge of all PhD candidates working on South Asia related research in all fields in the Nordic countries, he was able to get a complete collection of all doctoral dissertations without cost.

### **The Internet Gateway that was SASNET**

Besides all seminars and local activities at Lund University, Staffan and Lars took the national and international mission seriously, and during their 7,5 years together at SASNET they also travelled frequently in Sweden, the other Nordic countries and made the so-called lengthy and intense contact journeys to all parts of South Asia (more about these below).

At every university visited, whether it was KTH or Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, or the universities in Gothenburg, Uppsala, Umeå, Luleå, Växjö, Kalmar, Jönköping, Skövde, Västerås, Örebro, Falun, Stockholm, Linköping, Norrköping, Kristianstad, Karlskrona, or the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala and Umeå, meetings were organised with researchers and administrators. Thereby building up an impressive database of in-depth information on South Asia-related research in all disciplines from medicine and technology to the humanities and social sciences at all Swedish universities and research institutes.



*Participants in 2007 SASNET workshop on "Community Management of Openwater Inland Fisheries in Bangladesh and India". More information in SASNET Newsletter 72.*

Material to build up the Internet Gateway, that for most people outside the inner circles, along with the newsletters was seen as THE SASNET.

### Popular institution throughout the country

Within a few years, the web site was loaded with information, and contained more than 2 000 pages. Besides extensive information about ongoing Swedish research, about South Asia related conferences all over the world, and of course all SASNET activities, the Gateway also offered useful information to the researchers themselves and other interested people – such as facts about the South Asian countries, links to 500 South Asian studies departments worldwide, links to interesting reading, etc.

Add to this, the possibility to apply for planning grants meant that SASNET became a popular institution throughout the country. For researchers within Humanities and Social Sciences the web site probably meant quite a lot, creating a feeling of togetherness in a network, especially for somebody working in a department or even university where he/she might be the single person working on South Asia related project. But researchers working in the fields of Technology and Medicine are mostly already knit together in professional networks. To reach out to them and get information about their research, the planning grants made it interesting for them to connect to SASNET.

The Internet Gateway front page with a wheel, a flag and many blocks filled with headlines, reminding of South Asian symbols, was actually based on a sketch by **Paul Klee** in 1922 in connection with the inauguration of the Bauhaus school in Germany. Jan Magnusson came up with the idea to use it as a template for SASNET.

### SASNET Planning Grants

When SASNET was launched in 2000, it was considered that in order to succeed with the ambition to create a true all-Swedish network, this had to rest upon two pillars: The Internet Gateway being one; and the second was the planning grants since these reflected SASNET's ambition to distribute seed money to researchers and educationists for projects at all Swedish universities, and as equally important support research in all academic fields, not only Social Sciences and Humanities but also Medicine, Technology and educational sciences. During the first years, half of SASNET's budget was devoted to planning grants, in later years they covered a third of the yearly budget.

During the period 2001–2009, SASNET distributed planning grants to new research and educational projects. A total number of 119 networking grants were distributed. The researchers who benefited from the grants belonged to 20 different Swedish universities and university colleges. Out of the 119 grants awarded, 72 referred to networking grants to plan for new research projects/programmes; 20 to grants in order to develop new educational projects/programmes; 10 to organise interdisciplinary workshops; and 17 to the guest lecture programme.

In the evaluation of SASNET that was carried out in 2005, it was shown that 70 p.c. of the projects that had been given SASNET planning grants till 2004 had later been given substantial funding from other sources, such as Sida/SAREC, Swedish Research Council, Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Fund, and the European Commission. Also thereafter, SASNET's networking grants continued to play an important role setting new South Asia related projects/programmes in motion.



*Reference group deciding upon the planning grants, Neil Wester, Pamela Price and Malin Åkerblom along with SASNET's Staffan and Lars*

The applications were screened and selected by a reference group of senior Scandinavian professors working on South Asia related research. During the first years, the group members were **Pamela Price**, University of Oslo; **Neil Webster**, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS); and **Malin Åkerblom**, Uppsala University. They were later succeeded by a new trio consisting of **Jytte Agergaard**, University of Copenhagen; **Ewa Wäckelgård**, Uppsala University; and **Arild Engelsen Ruud**, Oslo University.

Go for the complete list of SASNET planning grants distributed 2001–2009.

The distribution of planning grants was discontinued after 2009, when SASNET no more received funding from Sida. Lund University did not accept to finance projects at other Swedish universities.

In 2015 SASNET introduced a programme designed for researchers at Lund University to apply for funding to support a one month position ("ansökningsmånad"). A total number of five applications were granted, two in 2015, two in 2016 and one in 2017.

### Internationally recognized newsletters

The ambition to let the network reflect the country's overall South Asia-related research and in the monthly SASNET newsletters informing about interesting research news at all Swedish universities was a unique feature. In other countries, universities rarely publish news from competing universities, but in Sweden this was exactly what happened. The newsletters became internationally recognized and researchers outside Sweden sometimes got the illusion of believing that Lund University housing SASNET must be a leading European South Asia research centre. Go for a page with links to all newsletters

This false image – Lund actually had comparatively very few researchers working with South Asia compared to the major centres in Europe such as Heidelberg, Leiden, Paris and London – however, put Lund on the map and led to Lund University being accepted as a partner with the major universities in organizing research seminars over the years.

### Organised the 2004 European South Asian Studies Conference

The highly recognized reputation of SASNET was very much strengthened in 2004 when SASNET/

Lund University was given the prestigious assignment to organize the 18th European Conference of South Asian Studies (ECSAS) with 360 participants from all over the world. It was the largest gathering ever on Swedish soil of South Asia oriented researchers, covering all fields from the humanities and social sciences to technology, natural sciences and medicine. Staffan



Lindberg was of course the conference general.

With a budget of SEK 1.6 Million, the Lund four-day conference attracted a great interest from researchers from all over the World, out of whom a large number came from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. During four days, 6-9 July, 45 panels were organised, covering a wide scope of research fields. The keynote address was held by Professor **Dipankar Gupta**, on *Democratic Potentials in Cultural Politics: Caste Based Reservations and the Issues of Citizenship*, and besides the 45 panels a joint session was held on Poverty and Human Development in South Asia with Dr. **Zulfiqar Bhutta**, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan; Dr. **Ghanshyam Shah**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Dr. **Meera Nanda**, Hartford, Massachusetts, USA. Full report on the 2004 conference

The decision that SASNET should host the 2004 conference was taken by the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) two years earlier, at the previous 17th European conference held in Heidelberg, that was attended by Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund.

## Other major conferences and workshops 2001-2006

From its inception, SASNET had an ambition to organise at least one major conference a year on South Asia in Sweden, and that ambition was almost fulfilled. Here are some of the highlights, besides the 2004 one:

– In August 2001, SASNET organised an **International workshop on Global Networking**. About 40 persons attended the workshop and gave a good start for SASNET's coming work. The idea behind the workshop was to place SASNET's work in a broader discussion about patterns and mechanisms in the current global changes brought about by information technology, the growth of global "network societies" and the implications of this for researchers and teachers networking between the West (including Sweden) and South Asia globally. Read more.

– In October 2002, a **SASNET Symposium for PhD candidates and post-docs** was organised in Marstrand (*photo*). The symposium was tailor-made for young Swedish researchers engaged in research related to South Asia. The sessions were



devoted to discuss common issues such as recruitment, fieldwork, supervision, finishing, and post-doc situation. A number of senior resource persons were involved in the discussions: **Jon Sigurdson**, who was in charge of the Swedish School of Advanced Asia Pacific studies (SSAAPS); **Björn Hettne** from PADRIGU, Göteborg University; **Pamela Price**, from the Department of History, University of Oslo; Bo Lindblad, from Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm; and **Gunnel Cederlöf**, Dept of History and Dept of Cultural Anthropology, Uppsala University. Go for the conference report.

– In November 2006, SASNET successfully co-organised a workshop on the "*Role of South Asia in the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Sweden*" at Nobel Forum, Karolinska Institutet (KI) in Stockholm (*photo*). It was jointly organised with KI and the Swedish Institute, and involved sessions with representatives from 20 Swedish universities, and from the International Programme Office for



Education and Training; the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education; STINT; the Government ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs; and the South Asian embassies in Stockholm.

The focus was on experiences from masters and PhD programmes in Sweden as well as in South Asia, with an aim to promote increased academic exchange with South Asia. Two invited guests from South Asia gave inspiring and critical talks, the scientist **Rubhana Raqib** from ICDDR,B in Dhaka, Bangladesh; and the journalist/researcher in Didactics, **Sunandan Roy Chowdhury** from Kolkata, India. Among the prominent participants was **Erland Ringborg** from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and former Head of the Swedish Institute). Read more.

## SASNET conferences 2008-2012

– In August 2008, SASNET was the main funding agency behind an international research conference on “*Nature, Knowledge, Power*” that was held in Uppsala. The conference, hosted by the Department of Urban and Rural Development at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), and chaired by Dr. **Gunnel Cederlöf**, Department of History (and the then chairperson of SASNET’s board) brought together researchers from different academic fields, concerned with questions of environment and society under present and historical conditions.

– In February 2009, SASNET co-organised an international workshop on “*Women and migration in South Asia. Health and Social Consequences*” that was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The workshop was organised in collaboration with the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP) in Colombo, and the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at Uppsala University. Researchers in the field were invited from all over the South Asia region and from Swedish institutions. SASNET’s director Anna Lindberg and deputy director Lars Eklund both participated in the workshop. The focus was on the consequences of migration for women, their children and families in South Asia. Read more.



*Tek Nath Dhakal, Mirja Juntunen, Anna Lindberg and another participant at the Colombo 2009 workshop*



2011 group

– For four years in a row – 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 – SASNET organised **Nordic Conferences on South Asian Studies for Young Scholars**, extremely successful and popular conferences being held at Falsterbo Kursgård in Höllviken (south of Malmö). The aim of the conferences was to gather Masters students, PhD candidates, and young post-docs in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway who focus on South Asia in their research studies, plus a number of senior professors. The 2011 and 2012 conferences were co-organised by the Copenhagen based Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), and a number of students from other European countries were also invited. Read report from 2009 workshop,

– On 14 April 2011, SASNET organised a full-day **seminar on *Managing Diversity: The Indian Experience***, in collaboration with the Embassy of India in Stockholm. The academic speakers included Professor **Sushil Khanna**, ICCR guest Professor at the Asia Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School, Dr. **Stig Toft Madsen**, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Copenhagen, Dr. **Christina Nygren**, Visiting Research Fellow, Department of Oriental Languages, Stockholm University, and Professor Staffan Lindberg, Department of Sociology, Lund University. The event included an Indian classical music programme – a typical feature of many SASNET events over the years. Read more.



*Bird watching 2010 at Falsterbo. Stig Toft Madsen with Bo Lindblad.*

## SASNET conferences 2013-2016

– In March 2013, SASNET organised a conference in Bangalore, India, in cooperation with the Nordic Centre in India and the Institute for Economic and Social Change, Bangalore. The topic of the conference was “**Urbanization and Migration in Transnational India: Work and Family Life from a Welfare Perspective**”. Ten participants from Lund University and four from Gothenburg University participated, along with 15 scholars from India, and the SASNET staff – Anna, Lars and **Jonathan Stoltz**. The keynote speaker was Prof. **Surinder Jodhka** who spoke about “*Beyond the Binaries of Bharat and India: Reimagining the Rural-urban in Contemporary Times*”.



Read the extensive conference report.

– In April 2013, SASNET organised a high-profile **South Asia Symposium entitled “The Wonder that is South Asia”** at Lund University. The symposium featured several eminent well-known international scholars, South Asia specialists, holding lectures on topics related to Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The invited speakers were Professor **Dina Siddiqui**, BRAC University, Dhaka; Professor **Surinder Jodhka**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India & ICCR Guest Professor 2012/13 at Lund University; Professor **Michael Hutt**, Chair, SOAS, University of London; Dr. **Ayesha Siddiqa**,



*Michael Hutt, Jonathan Spencer, Dina Siddiqui, Ayesha Siddiqa and Surinder Jodhka*  
The ambassadors of these countries to Sweden (photo to the left) were also invited and participated in a roundtable discussion. Read more.



**esha Siddiqa**, Civilian Military Analyst and Political Commentator, Islamabad & previously Visiting Scholar at Johns Hopkins University, USA; and Professor **Jonathan Spencer**, University of Edinburgh. The ambassadors of these countries to Sweden (photo to the left) were also invited and participated in a roundtable discussion. Read more.

– In June 2014, the greater focus on younger scholars resulted in SASNET organising a conference entitled “**South Asia: Culture, Technology, and Development**”. The conference, attracting 40 graduate students, was held in Falsterbo and in cooperation with the Nordic Centre in India and the Nordic Institute for Asian Studies. Three eminent South Asia scholars gave keynote presentations, namely Prof. **Kirin Narayan** and Dr. **Assa Doron**, both from the Australian National University; and Prof. **Ursula Rao**, Director of the Institute of Anthropology at University of Leipzig, Germany. Read more.





Inauguration speech by Acting Director Lars Eklund and Lund University Board Chairperson Jonas Hafström

– In May 2015 SASNET held an international conference at Lund University entitled, “**South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, Labour, and Family changes in a Dynamic region**”. Nine panels were accepted and four keynote speakers, from India and Europe, invited. They were Prof. **Gita Sen** from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India (and Harvard 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 was inaugurated by **Jonas Hafström**, newly appointed Chair of the Board of Lund University. SASNET provided board and lodging for 20 doctoral students. Read more

– In December 2015, SASNET organised a **South Asia Media Project workshop** at the India Habitat Centre in Delhi. This was preceded by a successfully organised explorative workshop at Lund University two months earlier. A large crowd of Indian media researchers, journalists and students attended the three-day Delhi conference. SASNET was represented by Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund and **Andreas Mattsson**. Read the conference report.



– In September 2016, SASNET organised a conference entitled **Modern Matters: Negotiating the Future in Everyday Life in South Asia** at Lund University. The conference, with eight panels, explored what it means to consider oneself modern or outside the limits of modernity, in an extremely diverse region. The three keynote speakers were **Faisal Devji**, University of Oxford, UK; **Dipesh Chakrabarty**, University of Chicago, USA; and **Sumi Madhok**, London School of Economics, UK. Read more.



### SASNET root node lectures

From the start in 2001, SASNET organised not only conferences but also an impressive number, several hundred, lectures, seminars, workshops, and even cultural events. This was considered to

be a core activity at the Lund University root node. As much as possible the seminars were organised in collaboration with other departments and units at the university in order to draw more audience. Among collaborative partners should be mentioned a long-standing relation with the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund.

A statistics was made of the total number of events organised during the three years 2012, 2013 and 2014. They showed the following:

- Seminars organised by SASNET itself: 35
- Collaborative seminars: 25
- Collaborative seminars with the students organisation SASA: 8
- Conferences organised by SASNET itself: 2
- Collaborative conferences: 2
- Cultural events organised by SASNET itself: 3
- Collaborative cultural events: 3

Full information.

## 2002 SASNET Contact journey to Maldives, Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh



In the Spring 2002, Staffan Lindberg, and Lars Eklund made their first joint contact journey to South Asia in order to link up the SASNET activities with universities and research institutions in different countries of the re-



*Students at Vishwa Bharati University in Shantiniketan-*

gion. The two visited the Maldives (College for Higher Education in Male) 26–27 February, Sri Lanka (National Science Foundation; University of Sri Jayewardenapura; Kelaniya and Peradeniya universities) 28 February–5 March, India/New Delhi (Jawaharlal Nehru University and Indian Council of Cultural Relations; Varanasi; Hyderabad; Kolkata (Indian Institute of Management and Centre for Studies in Social Sciences); Shantiniketan (Viswa Bharati University) 6–19 March; and finally Bangladesh (Dhaka University and Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies) 20–22 March. Full information with detailed reports from the tour.

## 2003 Contact journey to Pakistan and Afghanistan



In November-December 2003, Staffan and Lars made a second SASNET contact journey, this time to Pakistan and Afghanistan during the period 20 November – 7 December. The aim of the tour was to link up the SASNET activities with uni-



*Kabul University students*

versities and research institutions in the two countries. They visited universities and research institutions in Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore in Pakistan; and Kabul in Afghanistan. It turned out to be an extremely fruitful journey, both building on the already existing academic links between a few researchers/institutions in Sweden and Pakistan, and promoting new forms of cooperation there as well as in Afghanistan. Full information with detailed reports from the tour,

## 2005 Contact journey to North-East India, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal



Meeting Gopal Gandhi, West Bengal Governor

From 18 November till 19 December 2005, Staffan and Lars made their third SASNET contact journey, this time to the North-Eastern part of South Asia. They visited a great number of universities and research institutes in East and North-East India (Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Siliguri, Guwahati and Shillong); Bangladesh (Dhaka, Savar, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Sylhet); Bhutan (Thimphu); and Nepal (Kathmandu). Full information with detailed reports from the tour,



Meeting at Ministry of Education in Thimphu, Bhutan



## 2007 Contact journey to North, West and South-West India

An extremely ambitious India tour during the period 1–30 November 2007, in detail planned for by Lars. This fourth SASNET contact journey was carried out together with the new SASNET director Anna Lindberg (who took over from Staffan Lindberg on July 1, 2007). They only visited India, focusing on the Northern and Western/Southwestern parts of the country. Totally, they visited more than 30 important universities and research institutions, with an ambition to promote Indo-Swedish research cooperation and student exchange in all fields, from medicine/natural sciences to social sciences/humanities. A large number of fruitful meetings were held in all the places visited, including Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Mumbai, Loni, Pune, Bangalore and Mysore. In New Delhi, the Swedish Embassy also organised a reception/dinner for the academic world in honour of the visiting SASNET delegation. Full information with detailed reports from the tour, linking to 34 special reports from each and every institution

### SASNET's South Asian Reference group

As part of the 2007 contact journey, a seminar meeting was organised on 3 November in New Delhi for SASNET's South Asian Reference group, consisting of a number of senior researchers from the region, who closely observed SASNET's activities and gave constructive suggestions to the root node. Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund met and discussed with Dr. **Rita Afsar**, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh; Dr. **Tek Nath Dhakal**, Campus Chief of Public Administration Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal; Professor **Kumudu Wijewardena**, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP),



Colombo, Sri Lanka; Dr. **Dipak Malik**, Institute of Gandhian Studies, Varanasi, India; and Dr. **J. Devika**, Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India. The only missing member was Professor **Zulfiqar Bhutta**, Dept. of Paediatrics, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan. (More information about the group). The meeting was held at the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, and was organized informally as a “think tank” session. The atmosphere was conducive to an open and relaxed discussion, and the results were very fruitful. Read the report from the SASNET’s South Asian Reference Group meeting.

### **The 2005 External evaluation**

Before an extension for SASNET after 2005, it had been decided that an evaluation of the network should be made. A thorough audit was therefore carried out by Professor **Carla Risseuw**, University of Leiden, Netherlands; Professor **Ghanshyam Shah**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Director **Lennart Wohlgemuth**, The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala. The three highly respected academics spent two weeks on site, interviewing lots of people from Lund University as well as from the universities in Stockholm, Uppsala, Gothenburg, Karlstad and Oslo, besides representatives of Sida/SAREC and the Swedish government.

Their evaluation resulted in a highly positive report, pointing out that in addition to its main networking activities SASNET had also acted as an advocacy agent for South Asia and South Asian Studies in Sweden. Among tangible results at Lund University were mentioned a new Masters programme in Asian Studies and the appointment of a professorship in Indian Religions, and contributions had also been made to similar developments at other Swedish universities.

What was stated by almost all those interviewed was that SASNET had contributed to making South Asian studies more visible. First and foremost the Internet Gateway, but also conferences and seminars held for different stakeholders as well as personal interventions by SASNET staff had contributed to this. Besides, SASNET had increased the contacts between the Swedish and the South Asian research communities, implemented by contact journeys to the region by Staffan and Lars, by inviting scholars from South Asia to Sweden, and the creation of an advisory group consisting of six senior Asian scholars from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. In the summary it was concluded that SASNET without doubt had made a major contribution to the creation of interest and capacity in the field of research in and about South Asia in Sweden at a low cost. SASNET had managed to acquire national recognition, involving all Swedish universities and institutions interested in South Asia, though quite understandably with more benefits accruing to Lund University than the others.



### **Strong support for Gateway and newsletters**

Special attention was given the Internet Gateway that successfully had linked up and connected Swedish scholars of all academic disciplines working full or part time on/in South Asia. Through the monthly e-mailed newsletters, all subscribers were informed on seminars, conferences, concerts, meetings and other activities in relation to South Asia organised in Sweden or abroad. All scholars interviewed were highly in favour of the SASNET gateway and its newsletter.

Besides the university community, the evaluators found that the monthly newsletters were received in wider circles in Sweden, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, staff members of Sida/SAREC, non-governmental organisations on an (inter)national level, South Asian students, scholars etc. It was further used internationally and provided Sweden with a successful and professional profile of activities in relation to South Asia. The website played for example a role in attracting foreign students to Sweden. Several students selected Sweden for their Master Studies as they learnt about Swedish academia – scholars/institutions and their impressive work in relation to South Asia on the SASNET website.

Finally it was mentioned that the website also provided a wide range of information on South Asia, with valuable collections of data and further access to other websites such as academic journals, local newspapers

and resource bases. The evaluation team was duly impressed with the gateway and sincerely complimented Lars Eklund for the hard work and vision he had put in so successfully. "The energy and time put into this activity is exceptional and has led to substantial results. This is the first and so far only one of this kind of a Gateway providing comprehensive information on all South Asian Studies in one country. All other websites on "South Asian Studies" are mainly confined to the programmes of a respective organisation or a particular theme.

### Recommended increased funding

The evaluation team in the end recommended the Swedish government to increase the budget for SASNET for a new four-year period, with funds to be utilized to consolidate SASNET as an all-Swedish network. They also concluded that the tremendous input of the root node staff during the initial years must be met with support from all the stakeholders at each university involved in the network. SASNET did receive continued funding from Sida and Lund University, but on the same level as before. The success of the SASNET network had inspired Sida to create other similar networks, and then all these networks should be treated equally, so no extra funding could be set aside specifically for SASNET. Link to the 2005 evaluation,

**Departments in Sweden engaged in research on South Asia:**

**Acreeo FiberLab, Hudiksvall**

**Beijer International Institute of Ecological Economics**  
Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm

**Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona/Ronneby**

- [School of Computing](#)

**Borås University College**

- [School of Engineering](#)

**Chalmers University of Technology, Göteborg**

- [Department of Applied Physics](#)
- [Department of Computer Science and Engineering](#), IT University (in collaboration with Göteborg University)
- [Division of Electric Power Engineering](#), Department of Energy and Environment
- [Department of Energy Conversion](#)
- [Division of Environmental Inorganic Chemistry](#), Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering
- [Department of Mathematical Sciences](#) (also connected to University of Gothenburg)
- [Department of Microtechnology and Nanoscience, MC2](#)
- [Department of Signals and Systems](#)

**Dalarna University, Campus Falun**



### SASNET Board 2001–2003

During the period 2001 till 2010, SASNET was governed by a board, reflecting the national character of the network. It included senior professors representing Lund University as well as other Swedish and even Nordic universities, plus a number of delegates representing Swedish PhD candidates, the funding agency Sida and a representative of a Swedish NGO engaged in South Asia. The first board for the period 2001-03 was constituted at a meeting in Lund on 29 August 2001.

**Björn Hettne** from the Department of Peace and Development Research (PADRIGU) at University of Gothenburg was elected to become the first chairperson, and **Rajni Hatti Kaul** from the Department of Biotechnology, Lund University Vice Chairperson of the board.

The other Lund University members of the first board were **Boel Billgren**, deputy Head of the International Office, and **Alia Ahmad**, Department of Economics, with two deputies: **Catarina Kinnvall**, Department of Political Science, and **Olle Qvarnström**, Department of History of Religions.

Two representatives for other Swedish universities and university colleges were elected: **Bo Lindblad** from the Division of International Health (IHCAR) at Karolinska Institutet, and **Eva Hellman**, Department of History of Religions, Uppsala University, with two deputy members: **Kjell Härenstam**, Department of Science of Religions, Karlstad University, and **Gunnar Jacks**, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH).

**Pamela Gwynne Price**, Department of History, Oslo University, Norway, was elected to be the representative for other Nordic universities; and **Christer Norström**, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University, was elected to represent Swedish PhD candidates, with **Martin Gansten**, Department of History of Religion, Lund University, as deputy member.

To be the Sida representative **Tomas Kjellqvist**, Head of Division for the Sida Development Research Council and ICT in developing countries, was elected, with Jan Essner, deputy head of the Asia Division, as deputy member, and finally **Birgitta Göranson**, former co-ordinator of the Swallows India-Bangladesh Section, Lund, was elected as a representative of NGOs.

### SASNET Board 2004-2006

The SASNET board was renewed for the next three-year period, that was 2004-2006, with few changes. Björn Hettne remained to be the chairperson, but **Jan Magnusson**, School of Social Work replaced Alia Ahmad as a Lund University representative, and **Gunnel Cederlöf** from the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University, became a new representative for other Swedish universities (replacing Eva Hellman), and **Eva-Maria Hardtmann**, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University replaced Gunnar Jacks as deputy member. **Camilla Orjuela**, PADRIGU, University of Gothenburg,, replaced Christer Norström as PhD candidates representative, with **Jan Nilsson**, Division of Geriatric Epidemiology, Department of NEUROTEC (Clinical Neuroscience, Occupational Therapy and Elderly Care Research), Karolinska Institutet, being a deputy member.



29 August 2006, final meeting of SASNET's 2004-06 board.

### SASNET final national board 2007-2010

The SASNET board was again renewed for the period 2006-2009. These were the members of the final national SASNET board:

Chairperson:

– **Gunnel Cederlöf**, Dept. of History, Uppsala University.

Representatives for Lund University:

– **Pernille Gooch**, Division of Human Ecology, Department of European Ethnology.

– **Catarina Kinnvall**, Department of Political Science.

– **Jan Magnusson**, School of Social Work

Deputy Lund University members:

– **Staffan Lindberg**, Department of Sociology.

– **Kristina Myrvold**, Dept. of History and Anthropology of Religion.

Representatives for other Swedish universities:

– **Prosun Bhattacharya**, Department of Land and Water Resources Engineering, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm.

– **Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg**, Division of Global Health (IHCAR), Karolinska Institutet Medical University, Stockholm. (Also deputy chairperson of SASNET's board)

– **Ferdinando Sardella**, Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion, University of Gothenburg.

Other Swedish university deputy members:

– **Per Hilding**, Dept. of Economic History, Stockholm University.

– Camilla Orjuela, Division of Peace and Development Research (PADRIGU), School of Global Studies, Göteborg University.

– **Per Drougge**, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University.

Student Representative, especially PhD candidates:

– **Elenor Lissel**, Faculty of Law, Lund University

Representative for Nordic Universities:

– **Neil Webster**, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Copenhagen, Denmark.

Deputy Nordic university member:

– **Arild Engelsen Ruud**, PhD, Dept. of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, Norway.

Representative for Swedish NGOs:

– **Bengt Kristiansson**, former General Secretary, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan.

Deputy NGO member:

– **Eva Hägerstrand**, Coordinator, Swallows India-Bangladesh Section, Lund.

More information about the 2007-10 board,

All members of the board, except the representatives for students, were originally appointed by the Vice Chancellor, Lund University, for a period up till 31 December 2009. The students representatives were appointed by Lund university student unions association, for a period of one year at a time.

Since the future of SASNET at that time was uncertain the Lund University Vice Chancellor **Per Eriksson** in September 2009 decided to give a one-year extension period for the current board till September 30, 2010, when the board was dissolved.



### **Change of Guard – Anna Lindberg new Director**

On 1 July 2007, The historian Dr. **Anna Lindberg** took over charge for SASNET, becoming the new Director/coordinator, succeeding Staffan Lindberg, the driving force behind the creation of SASNET in the year 2000 and its Director since the formal launch of SASNET in 2001. Anna initially worked on a 50 % basis while continuing with an ongoing research project on *"Marriage traditions in South India from 1930 to the present"* on the remaining 50 %. She was till recently Assistant Professor at Penn State University in USA. When the position was announced during the spring 2007, Anna and a second candidate were selected for screening, the other candidate was Dr. **Anju Saxena** from the Department of Linguistics and Philology, Uppsala University.

Anna fell severely ill a year and a half later, and was on 50 % sick leave during the period January-March 2009, on 100 % sick leave during April–November (when Dr. **Sidsel Hansson** worked as her substitute), and on 25 % sick leave during December 2009.

### **South Asia Erasmus Mundus Programmes**

SASNET was instrumental from the beginning in facilitating the successful application for a large 2008 European Commission-funded Indo-European exchange programme, the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) mobility programme lot 15. The application was planned for and written by Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund at SASNET, and was based on the extensive network among European and Indian universities developed by SASNET. A majority of the Indian consortium universities, and their Vice Chancellors, had in fact been visited by Anna and Lars during the November 2007 SASNET contact journey to North, West and South-West India, just before the announcement for the Erasmus Mundus programme was issued in December 2007. Anna and Lars convinced Lund University to make an application, and in the end the entire application was written by Anna.

The proposal was successful, the consortium consisting of 12 universities in Europe and 8 universities in India was selected for funding by EACEA, and Lund University became the coordinating partner. The programme got a mobility flow of 400 fully funded students, researchers and academic staff, 75 p.c. from India to Europe, and 25 p.c. from EU to India. Through EMECW 15, successful applicants (undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and post-doctoral students and academic staff) will be awarded a scholarship which will cover travel, insurance, possible tuition, living expenses and housing, for a period from one to 34 months, depending on the type of position applied for.



*2010 kickoff meeting in Lund for one of the Erasmus Mundus exchange programmes that SASNET was involved in.*

## Lost control over the mobility programme

Unfortunately just after completing the application, Anna Lindberg fell severely ill and had to go through medical operations. For nine months, from April till December 2008, she was on sick leave from her position as SASNET director. During this time Dr. **Sidsel Hansson** was appointed acting director to work along with deputy director Lars Eklund.

A most curious development then happened. Just before Anna was to return back to SASNET in December, Sidsel unexpectedly and without further notice abruptly quit SASNET and joined the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies at Lund University, grabbing the administration for the Erasmus Mundus project, and succeeded to become project coordinator. With a separate office, she came to administer the programme that SASNET had initiated, and **Maria Tonini** joining her to be the webmaster for the project.

The large India lot coordinated by Lund University was again selected in 2009 for a new period, but the India lot was now renamed as Lot 13. Furthermore, it was divided into four separate programmes out of which Lund University coordinated one.



## 2009 Evaluation report



Dr. **Stig Toft Madsen** from Copenhagen carried out a smaller evaluation of SASNET activities in 2009. It was at this point clear that Sida – true to its policies – would not give prolonged funding for more than 10 years, that was till the end of 2010.

Stig also happened to work part-time at SASNET during a period in late 2008, lending a hand to the Director Anna Lindberg on her return from sick leave.

In his report summary, Stig states that SASNET had emerged as a prime national South Asian studies network, being a considerable Swedish and Nordic academic utility obtained at a small financial outlay. SASNET had also put its mark outside academia as an interlocutor in a “Triple Helix” context. In both cases, SASNET’s utility had been enhanced by the competence and dedication of its staff.

Stig was also impressed by the SASNET Internet gateway presenting some statistical facts. “On April 9, 2009, the website contained 1.490 pages, with 2.500 photos and 13.300 external links”. He also highlighted the “glorious list”, as he calls the presentation of nearly 300 Swedish university departments engaged in some form of South Asia related research and collaborative projects. “Some years ago, it was common to hear the argument that since South Asia study environments in the Nordic region and in Europe were spread out, some form of coordination was called for. Dispersion would dissipate efforts, it was felt. Until Lars Eklund made what I like to refer to as the glorious list, no one in Sweden knew how many environments there were.”

## Karl Reinhold Haellquist Gandhi books collection

In September 2009, SASNET’s recently catalogued **Mahatma Gandhi** book collection was inaugurated by Indian Ambassador **Balkrishna Shetty**. The collection was part of a donation to SASNET/Lund University after the renowned Swedish historian **Karl Reinhold Haellquist**, who passed away in 2000 after working for many years at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen. The collection consisted of more than 6 000 South Asia related books, journals, videotapes and pamphlets on various aspects





of South Asian studies, including a unique collection of books on Mahatma Gandhi. It was donated by his wife, **Inger Sondén-Haellquist**. With funding from the Crafoord Foundation, and supplementary funding from SASNET, Haellquist's archive was catalogued and digitalized by librarian **Erik Svanström** during the fall 2008, and then the Gandhi material was published in a special section on the SASNET Internet Gateway.



At the formal September launch of the Haellquist Gandhi collection, the Indian Ambassador used the occasion on behalf of the Indian government to donate another 120 volumes of Mahatma Gandhi literature to Lund University and SASNET. These were either works written by Gandhi or books focusing on him. Ambassador Shetty also participated in a SASNET seminar the same day on "*The Role of Mahatma Gandhi in Today's Society*", along with **David Arnold**, Professor of Asian and Global History at the University of Warwick, UK. Read more.

### SASNET at its zenit 2009



*Indian students in Lund 2009, friends of SASNET*

In 2009, SASNET was a well established institution with high international reputation. The economy was still stable with funding from Sida and Lund University, and many new features were added to its activities.

Some turbulence was however in the air due to the fact that the Sida/SAREC funding was going to end by the year 2009, but so many wonderful events were still happening. Here some of the highlights.

In 2009, SASNET distributed networking/planning grants to five new research projects. Financial support was also given to three guest lecture programmes (in which a guest lecturer from South Asia was invited to visit more than one Swedish university), and two South Asia-related interdisciplinary research workshops (to be held in Sweden or South Asia). The total amount distributed was SEK 525 000. Grants were awarded to researchers at the following universities:



*SASNET collaboration partners at Skövde University. Read more*

- Blekinge Institute of Technology (1)
- Gävle University (1)
- Jönköping University (1)
- Karolinska Institutet (1)
- Lund University (2)
- Stockholm University (2)
- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) (2)



The network had grown tremendously in 2009. The Internet Gateway by this time presented more than 250 Swedish university departments where some form of South Asia-related research or educational collaboration projects were going on, and the newsletters reached 2,000 recipients worldwide.

SASNET's searchable database for Swedish and Nordic researchers involved in research on South Asia was updated during the year, and their graphic design was reworked by a Masters student in Asian Studies, **Geoffrey Gardella**, on a voluntary basis.

Furthermore, the interactive SASNET Student Forum – also part of the Gateway content – that was created by PhD student **Malin Gregersen** in 2008, had now become a more effective platform for discussion. It was especially useful in connection with the first SASNET conference for young Nordic scholars working on South Asia-related projects held at Falsterbo in August. *Photo above*. The success of the conference was such that it was followed up not only once but for three consecutive years, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

### Colombo conference

Another successful 2009 conference/ workshop entitled “*Women and Migration in South Asia: Health and Social Consequences*” was organised by SASNET in Colombo, Sri Lanka, at the beginning of February in collaboration with the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP) in Colombo, and the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at Uppsala University. Researchers in the field were invited from all over the South Asian region and from Swedish institutions. Both Anna and Lars both participated, as did members of SASNET's South Asian Reference



Group, traveling from Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. One of its members, Dr. **Kumudu Wijewardena**, chaired the Colombo workshop.



On his way to Colombo, Lars made a stop in the Maldives, where he met the Minister of State for Education, Dr. **Ahmed Ali Maniku** (*photo*). Read more.

Meanwhile, Anna proceeded to Kerala, India, after taking part in the Colombo workshop. She joined in discussions about the development of the new “Sustainable Kerala Network”, a Swedish South Asian network on sustainable development. She also met with representatives of CREST, the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation in Kozhikode, some years later to become a SASNET collaboration partner, and the NGO Kabani, based in Wayanad.

In March, Lars and Stig Toft Madsen, who worked for SASNET in the spring, participated in a brain-storming and awareness-raising workshop on “Contemporary India Study Centres in Europe”. The workshop was organised by Sciences Po/CERI in Paris. Read more.

### Academic and diplomatic networking

SASNET’s networking activities within Sweden in 2009 consisted of visits by Lars to the universities of Jönköping, Växjö, Skövde, and Västerås. In September, he also travelled to the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, in connection with the first consortium meeting for the new Indo-European Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) mobility programme “EURINDIA”, coordinated by KTH.

This EMECW programme was in addition to the much larger Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) mobility programme coordinated by Lund University (with Karolinska Institutet as the second Swedish partner university), a programme awarded by the European Commission in 2008 after hectic groundwork was laid by Anna and Lars.

In May 2009, SASNET organised a visit to Lund and Malmö by the new Ambassador of India to Sweden, His Excellency Mr. Balkrishna Shetty. During the ambassador’s stay he met researchers, teachers, students, and international coordinators involved in India-related projects at Lund University. He was also the key speaker at an India seminar that SASNET co-organised with the Sweden-India Business Council (SIBC) and Ideon Research Park. And as mentioned above, he came back for the inauguration of the Gandhi books collection in September. Read more.

In early September, another high-profile seminar entitled “*Political Transitions Affecting the Peace Process in Nepal*” was organised by SASNET in collaboration with the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF). The distinguished participants included the Nepalese Ambassador to Scandinavia, Mr. **Vijaykant Lal Karna** (photo) and **Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya**, Professor of Political Science and Director, Centre for the Study of Nepal at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi, India. More information.

On visits to Stockholm the same year, Anna and Lars also met the Ambassador of Pakistan, Mr. **Nadeem Riyaz**, and the outgoing Ambassador of Bangladesh, Mr. **Muhammad Azizul Haque**, to discuss the future of SASNET and the possibility of cooperation between South Asian institutions.

These contacts with the diplomatic corps was nothing new. Already in 2002, SASNET organised events and visiting programmes for South Asian ambassadors and diplomats.

A SASNET Open House Seminar was held at Lund University on 4 February 2002 with Mr **Shahid A Kamal**, Pakistan’s ambassador to Sweden (photo). Mr Kamal led a seminar on “*Possible themes for Pakistan–Sweden co-operation in the fields of research and education*”. An introduction about higher education and research in Sweden that might be of relevance to future research cooperation, was given by SASNET’s director Staffan Lindberg. A public lecture by Mr Shahid A Kamal on “*The conflict in Afghanistan, and the Pakistan–India relations*” was also arranged in Lund the same day in collaboration with the Lund Association of Foreign Affairs.



Lars visit to Jönköping University. Read more



Lars visit to Royal Institute of Technology (KTH). Read more.



In May 2002, SASNET hosted the Indian ambassador Ms **Chitra Narayanan** – daughter of the President of India, and the Counsellor Mr **Sachdeva** when they visited Lund University. There were lively discussions with the Vice-chancellor **Boel Flodgren** and a lunch hosted by the university. In June 2005, the then Indian Ambassador Ms. **Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa**, along with the First Secretary of the Embassy, Ms. **Vani Rao**, visited Lund University. The programme for the day was prepared by SASNET and included a visit to the Department of Biotechnology, and a meeting with Indian researchers from different departments at Lund University, discussing their projects with the Ambassador.

During the years to come frequent contacts were upheld with the Indian Ambassadors **Ashok Sajjanhar** and **Banashree Bose Harrison**, both of them extremely positive versus SASNET. The same applied to the Ambassadors of Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.



*Banashree Bose Harrison and Ashok Sajjanhar*

The same applied to the Ambassadors of Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

### **Eminent guest lecturers**

During 2009, many seminars with invited international guests were arranged by SASNET, some in collaboration with other organisations. The lecturers included:

- Dr. **Walter Andersen**, Associate Director of the South Asia Studies Program at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., USA
- Prof. **Ravinder Kaur**, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, India
- Dr. **Daya Kishan Thussu** of the University of Westminster, UK
- Prof. **Dipak Malik**, Director of the Gandhian Institute in Varanasi, India
- Dr. **Tabish Khair**, Dept. of English, University of Aarhus, Denmark
- Tabla player **Subrata Manna**; classical singer **Sudokshina Chatterjee Manna**; and Kathak dancer **Sohini Debnath**. All were from Kolkata, India, and took part in a well-attended academic seminar on intercultural education research held in Malmö in addition to performing for SASNET’s audience.
- Prof. **Ishtiaq Ahmed**, at the time Visiting Research Professor at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore (but normally connected to the Dept. of Political Science, Stockholm University).
- Dr. **Rubya Mehdi**, University of Copenhagen
- Dr. **Ruby Sain**, Dept. of Sociology, Jadavpur University, India
- Prof. **Priyanka Upadhyaya**, Benaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, India

### **Spectacular visit by Bangladeshi Prime Minister**

The most remarkable visitor to accept an invitation from SASNET to hold a seminar at Lund University was however Her Excellency **Sheikh Hasina**, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, delivering a speech on the 19th December 2009 on “*Climate Change in Bangladesh – Facing the Challenges*”. The initiative came from Lars and **Mashiur Rahman**, at that time being a PhD candidate at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, but 10 years later becoming Pro-Vice Chancellor for the National University in Bangladesh. Mashiur’s high-level contacts made it possible to invite Sheikh Hasina to come over to Lund from Copenhagen where she attended the COP 15 climate confer-



ence. The seminar, jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF), was held at Palaestra (next door to the main university building), Universitetsplatsen, Lund, and drew a full house, 250 people – Lund University students and researchers, as well as many other interested people and members of the local Bangladeshi community.

The visit had to be planned weeks in advance, the Swedish security police had to inspect

the auditorium and Danish and Swedish security staff followed the car caravan with seven limousines crossing the Öresund Bridge – the prime minister's entourage consisted of a large delegation of ministers and some twenty members of the Bangladeshi parliament (and even the Minister of Foreign Affairs), all of them attending the Copenhagen conference.

Due to bad weather, it was actually a snow storm, Sheikh Hasina was delayed by an hour. In the meantime **Bubu Munshi Eklund** sang rabindrasangheet for the audience, and when finally the Prime Minister arrived she joined Bubu in singing well-known **Rabindranath Tagore** songs.

After the lecture, a large group of Bangladeshi students got a chance to meet their Prime Minister, before a quick sightseeing of the main university building and then lunch offered by Lund University Vice-Chancellor **Per Eriksson**. The event was covered by several Bangladeshi newspapers and TV journalists. But unfortunately not a single Swedish media bothered to report about this spectacular unofficial state visit. Read more



*Lars Eklund, Anna Lindberg, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mashiur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor Per Eriksson and Prime Minister's sister Sheikh Rehana.*

## Nobel quiz winners and other 2009 events

In February 2009, two students from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai visited SASNET and Lund University. They were the winners of a Nobel prize quiz competition organised by the Embassy of Sweden in India in October 2008. The winners received a one week all-expenses paid trip to Sweden and the opportunity to visit Swedish universities and major technology companies in Lund, Gothenburg, Linköping, Sandviken, and Stockholm. SASNET/Lars arranged their visit to Lund University, which included a tour of the Nanoscience laboratory at the Dept. of Physics. Read more SASNET also sponsored a exhibition of photographs by second-year students from Lund University's Masters programme in Development and Management (LUMID) 2007–2009 that ran from 25 May – 4 June 2009 illustrating their fieldwork in Asian and African countries.

Finally, Lars wrote an article entitled "SASNET Builds Up Indo-Swedish Collaborations" about SASNET's achievements over its nine years of existence. It appeared in the 2009 edition of India-Sweden in Focus, published in mid- August. The glossy magazine was produced by Krest Publications in New Delhi, India, on behalf of the Embassy of India in Sweden. The magazine also featured articles on other important Indo-Swedish collaboration initiatives in business, research, and culture. Read the article.



## Searching for alternative funding

In addition to SASNET's regular activities, a great deal of time had to be spent on seeking new funding to replace the subsidy that Sida/SAREC had generously provided for the ten-year period that ended by December 2009. Despite an enormous number of phone calls, meetings, written documents, and e-mails trying to resolve this problem, the mission to find alternative funding failed. However, on the positive side Lund University promised to continue their support, which comprised about one-third of the yearly budget, and LU was open for negotiating for additional funds. This support made it possible for SASNET to keep its doors open after December 2009.

Nevertheless, due to the precarious current situation, with SASNET no longer receiving Swedish government funding, and other Swedish universities unwilling to co-fund SASNET with membership fees (a proposal had been presented that each university should contribute SEK 50,000 a year – equivalent to EUR 5,000), but sorry to say only a few universities were interested.

## Collaboration with Sweden India Business Council (SIBC)

When planning for SASNET it was decided that besides the academic networking, some efforts should also be devoted to promoting business collaboration between Sweden and South Asia. Staffan and Lars were invited by SIBC to arrange joint workshops, and a number of events took place. The most visible of these events happened on 1 April 2008, when SASNET and SIBC organised a half-day business seminar in Lund in collaboration with the Ideon Science Park in Lund. The seminar was entitled "*Operating in India*" (Verksam i Indien), and included presentations focusing on challenges that Swedish companies face when they establish businesses in India. SASNET's former Director Staffan Lindberg was the moderator, and Lars Eklund introduced the seminar. The issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR) was a key concept, and representatives of IKEA, Indiska magasinet, Lufthansa, and the Swedish Export Council discussed their experiences of CSR.

A typical example of SASNET-SIBC collaboration was the April 19, 2010 seminar on "*India's Changing Role in the Global Political Economy*" with **Anthony P. D'Costa**, Professor of Indian Studies at the Asia Research Centre (ARC), Copenhagen Business School, being the main lecturer. The seminar was supported by the Embassy of India in Sweden, and was inaugurated by the Indian Ambassador Mr. **Balkrishna Shetty**. After the seminar, Lund University Vice Chancellor Prof. **Per Eriksson** invited the Indian Ambassador, the First Secretary Mrs. **Madhumita Bhagat** and Prof. D'Costa for an official lunch at the Old Bishop's House, that was also attended by the University Director Dr. **Marianne Granfelt**, Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund from SASNET, and SIBC Senior Advisor Mr. **Stig Victorin**.

## European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS)

SASNET has been closely involved with the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) for a long time, on a personal level even before the launch of SASNET. The main activity of EASAS is to support the organisation of biannual conferences at universities with important South Asia research.

The first European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS) was actually held in 1968 in Sweden, in the small village of Tällberg in province Dalarna. The driving force behind the conferences was the legendary Professor **Dietmar Rothermund** (1933-2018), Chair Professor in South Asian History at the University of Heidelberg from 1968 till 2002. The reason why choosing such a small place is hard to find on the Internet, and even more curious why again Tällberg was chosen for the 8th ECMSAS conference in 1983.

With SASNET organising the 18th conference in 2004 it was therefore the third time in Sweden. It became a great success, an event much talked about years later, not the least about the final evening in the main hall of the Academic Society Building (AF) with a group of folk dancers performing for the 400+ delegates, and how they managed to get every single researcher to step up and dance traditional Swedish folk dances together.

SASNET lecture on  
**India's Changing Role in the Global Political Economy**

Inauguration and Opening Remarks  
by the Ambassador of India to Sweden  
and Latvia, H.E. Mr. Balkrishna Shetty

Presentation by  
**Anthony P. D'Costa**  
Professor of Indian Studies, Asia Research  
Centre, Copenhagen Business School

Anthony P. D'Costa is a Professor in Indian Studies and Research Director at the Asia Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School. Prior to this appointment in 2008 he was with the University of Washington for eighteen years. He has written extensively on the global steel, Indian automobile and IT industries, globalization, development, innovations, and industrial restructuring. He is currently working on globalization and the international mobility of IT workers examining migration pattern, immigration policies, national innovation systems, and tertiary education in India, China, Japan, and the US, co-authoring a photographic essay on Indian modernity and industrialization, and editing volumes on economic nationalism and the development experiences of India and China.

Monday 19 April 2010, 11.15 – 13.00  
Venue: Museum of Cultural History/Auditorium  
(Kulturens hörsal), Tegnérplatsen, Lund

Register your participation to Mr. Lars Eklund, lars.eklund@sasnet.lu.se, before April 15, 2010

The seminar is organised by  
Swedish South Asian Studies Network  
(SASNET)  
in collaboration with  
Sweden India Business Council (SIBC)  
and kind support from  
Embassy of India, Stockholm



EASAS



**Well-documented European conferences**

Lars and Staffan participated in the 2002 conference in Heidelberg, and after the Lund conference followed the 2006 conference in Leiden, Netherlands, again with both Lars and Staffan participating, doing a good del of networking.

The 2008 conference was held in Manchester, UK, and the 2010 conference in Bonn, Germany. Lars was singlehandedly representing SASNET at these two gatherings. The conference convener in Bonn was **Heinz Werner Wessler**, who soon after got a position at Uppsala University's Indology and Hindi department, and became a great networking partner in SASNET and a good friend of Lars.

The 2012 conference was organised in Lisbon, Portugal, and this time Lars and Anna Lindberg represented SASNET. Anna was elected to become a board member of the European Association for a 2-year period. The 2014 conference was held in Zurich, Switzerland. Lars attended, this time along with **Lubna Hawwa**, assistant web master (and SASA student organisation representative). *Photo to the right.*



Now it was his time to be elected to the EASAS board for a 4-year period as Treasurer which is one of the three executive board members, to work along with the President Prof. **Martin Gaenzle** and the Vice-President Prof. **Alessandra Consolaro**, University of Torino, Italy.

The 2016 conference was held in Warsaw, Poland. Lars alone represented SASNET, and played a key role during the conference as being part of the executive board.

The 2018 conference was held in Paris, France. Lars was there of course because him being the treasurer who must deliver the economic report. However, since no longer working at SASNET/Lund University his status was a bit unclear. He left over the treasury work to **Peter B Andersen** in Copenhagen, well-known SASNET networking partner and before that a SYDASIEN magazine co-worker. It should also be noted that Prof. **Gunnel Cederlöf** from Uppsala University is also a current member of the EASAS board. She was the chairperson of SASNET's board during the period 2006-2010.

Every ECSAS conference from Heidelberg 2002 till Warsaw 2016 were extensively documented and reported in the SASNET Gateway by Lars (and Lubna in the case of Zurich 2014).



*EASAS board members at the 2016 Warsaw conference: Danuta Stasik, Martin Gaenzle, Alessandra Consolaro and Martin Fuchs.*

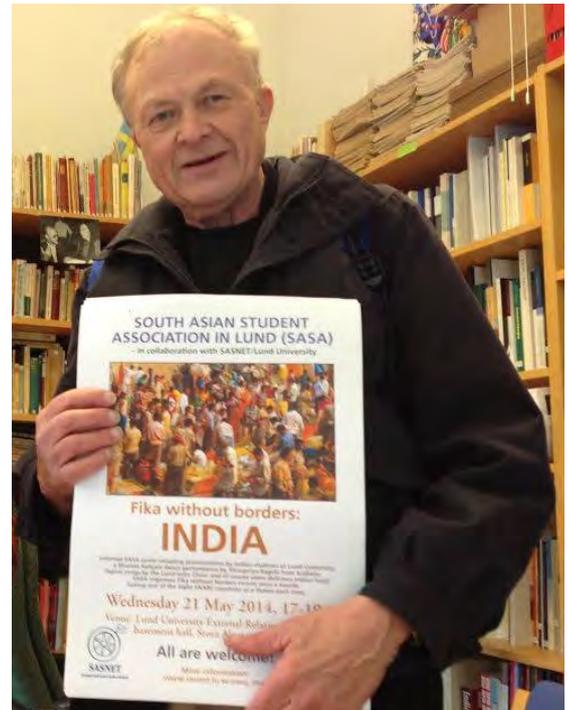


The most well-attended brownbag lunch seminar, Neelambar Hatti on sex determination in India, February 2012

### Brown Bag seminars:

Based on the extensive SASNET catalogue of South Asia related research at Lund University prepared by Lars Eklund, with a list of more than 50 departments, SASNET in January 2011 introduced a series of Inter-disciplinary South Asia Brown Bag lunch seminars. During three full years, 2011-13, Lund University researchers lectured once a month outside the university premises, mostly at Lunds konsthall. The aim was to present and disseminate eminent South Asia related research carried out in so many departments at the university. The series was organised in collaboration with Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund (ABF) Lund, and Lunds konsthall, being part of SASNET's Third-Mission. This refers to an additional function of the universities in the context of knowledge society. The university is not only responsible for qualifying the human capital (Education – the first mission) and for producing new knowledge (Research – the second mission). Universities must also engage with societal needs and market demands by linking the university's activity with its own socio-economic context, and bring out information about its research to the general audience. More information, . . . Lund University departments engaged in South Asia related research 2015,

It should also be mentioned that for every single SASNET seminar held, whether it was a brownbag seminar or a sole event, or for a concert or a major conference for that matter, Lars Eklund produced nice posters that were put up all over town (Lund). We made it a habit to always place a poster on the notice-board in the main university building, just outside the vice-chancellor's office. Much credit for this effective distribution of posters goes to Mr. **Peter Korlen**, a warm admirer of SASNET and friend of Lars, who carried out this work for many years on a voluntary basis. *Photo.*



### South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University



The South Asian Students Association (SASA) at Lund University was formed in early 2013 as the student body of SASNET in order to promote students interest for South Asia and provide a platform for educational and cultural exchange between South Asian students in Lund and other international students. SASA was officially launched on 24 April 2013 at the high level South Asia Symposium organised by SASNET.

The initiative to create SASA came from **Hawwa Lubna**, Maldivian Bachelors student in Development Studies Programme – and at the time working as assistant communications officer for SASNET, and SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. Lubna was elected SASA President, and **Sharmin Rashid** from Bangladesh, a Masters student in Gender Studies, was elected as the Vice President, and **Swati Shukla**, Indian post-doc researcher in Biomedicine, was elected treasurer.

SASA initially organised monthly student gatherings, movie nights, debates and academic discussions relevant to South Asia, but from 2014 the so-called Fika without borders seminars were introduced, see below.

## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University & The Swedisch Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)



### Fika without borders: AFGHANISTAN

Informal SASA event including presentations by Fawad Sultani, deputy programme director for the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) based in Kabul. Fawad is engaged in a successful democracy project in Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan, and he will talk about the future of country. Anders Flänge, Former Manager of SCA will also participate, and of course some delicious Afghan food will be served. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Friday 10 October 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_october](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_october)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: BANGLADESH

Informal SASA event including presentations by Lund University researchers and students Sanchai Dey, S M Shahriar Shakil and Rubhana Musbarat. Shakil will also sing Baul songs by legendary Lalon Fakir. Besides some delicious Bangladeshi food will be served. This is the final 2014 SASA Fika without borders event that has had the eight SAARC countries in focus.



Thursday 20 November 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_bangla](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_bangla)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: BHUTAN

Informal SASA event including presentations by political scientist Winnie Bothe, Lund University ethnomusicologist Johan Westman, Thimphu and Bhutanese musicians via Skype. Besides some delicious Bhutanese-style food. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Tuesday 30 October 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_bhutan](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_bhutan)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: INDIA

Informal SASA event including presentations by Indian students at Lund University, a Bharata Natyam dance performance by Shivapriya Bagchi from Kolkata; Tagore songs by the Lund India Choir; and of course some delicious Indian food. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Wednesday 21 May 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_may](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_may)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: MALDIVES

Informal SASA event including presentations by Mohammed Ushau, Hawwa Lubna and Nils Finn Munch Petersen; and of course some delicious Maldivian food. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Tuesday 26 August 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_august](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_august)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND



- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: NEPAL

Informal SASA event including a presentation by Kathmandu University Professor Uddhab Pyakurel, talking about "Politics of Education & Marginalised Community". Introduction by Ireshan Bhatnari, Nepalese student at Lund University, and as usual, some delicious South Asian food will be served. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Thursday 5 February 2015, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_feb15](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_feb15)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND



- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: PAKISTAN

Informal SASA event with presentations 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

Thursday 7 May 2015, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_april15](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_april15)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND



- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: SRI LANKA

Informal SASA event with presentations by Swedish journalist Johan Mikaelsson - who just published a book on the critical media situation in Sri Lanka with many journalists being killed, and PhD candidate Andreas Johansson, Linnaeus University in Växjö, doing research on Muslim and Buddhist political organizations in Sri Lanka. In particular Andreas has studied the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and the Bodu Bala Sena. Delicious South Asian soup will be served at the function.

Thursday 28 May 2015, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_may15](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_may15)



## SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION IN LUND (SASA)

- in collaboration with SASNET/Lund University



### Fika without borders: PAKISTAN

Informal SASA event including presentations by Pakistani students at Lund University; and of course some delicious Pakistani food. SASA organises Fika without borders events once a month, having one of the eight SAARC countries as a theme each time.

Thursday 5 June 2014, 17-19

Venue: Lund University External Relations building, basement hall, Stora Algatan 4, Lund



All are welcome!

More information:  
[www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa\\_june](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasa_june)



## Fika without borders seminars

In 2014 SASA organised a series of very special seminars entitled Fika without borders seminars in collaboration with SASNET. Each seminar focused on one of the 8 South Asian countries, with a lecture by a researcher, from Lund University or coming from outside on invitations. Moreover the seminars also included food or snacks with a connection to the country selected, and a cultural programme of various kinds. For a Bhutan seminar, Bhutanese musicians participated via Skype, and an India seminar featured a dance performance by a Kolkata Bharata Natyam dancer on Sweden tour. During 2014, eight seminars were organised, during 2015 another seven, and in 2016 another three, that means more than two full rounds of country based seminars.

## Cultural programmes

It may surprise people that SASNET from the beginning in 2001 not only focused strongly on research and education, but also promoted South Asian culture in the form of music, dance and visual art. It was to a large part due to a personal interest from Staffan and Lars, both of them being involved in South Asia related activities for decades – Staffan first came as a young student to Tamil Nadu in south India in 1966, and Lars travelling extensively in all parts of South Asia since 1972, besides being married to a Bengali wife since 1982, and working as editor-in-chief of the magazine SYDASIEN for 25 years (1982-2007) – a magazine that actually Staffan launched in 1976.

Among the highlights of SASNET's tryst with culture should be mentioned the 2006 visit by Srilankan poet **Pireeni Sundaralingam** and her Irish composer/violinist husband **Colm O'Riain**, residing in San Francisco, USA. When SASNET was informed that the couple was invited to Uppsala for a performance, with a programme entitled "Word and Violin", we invited them to come to Lund as well, and it became a well-attended performance.



In March 2011, SASNET/Lars Eklund initiated a full week of academic and cultural programmes in Lund at

the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Indian/Bengali poet and freedom fighter Rabindranath Tagore

In mid-September the same year, a series of anniversary celebrations was held with seminars in Sweden and Denmark, largely

thanks to efforts by SASNET and with kind support from the embassies of India in Stockholm and Copenhagen, and the Indian Council for Cultural



Relations (ICCR) in Delhi. Thereby, three eminent international Tagore scholars – Professor **William Radice**, SOAS, University of London, UK; Dr. **Reba Som**, ICCR Rabindranath Tagore Centre in Kolkata, India; and Professor **Asoke Bhattacharya**, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India – could be invited to do a Scandinavian tour. During the period 19–23 September 2011, academic seminars were



held at Copenhagen University (19th), Lund University (21st), Stockholm University (22nd) and Uppsala University (23rd). More information.

In April 2012, SASNET organised a one-day Indian Mela (festival) in Lund, in collaboration with Lund School of Culture and Lunds konsthall, and with kind support from the Embassy of India, with a programme combining lectures by researchers with Bollywood dance and singing by Lund International Tagore Choir (in which Lars is a member). More information.

Finally, as noted earlier, the Fika without borders seminars launched in 2012, always included a cultural part, could be a Bharata Natyam dance performance, Bhutanese musicians playing via skype connection, or a Bangladeshi Baul singer residing in Lund entertaining.

### INDIAN MELA

at Lunds konsthall, Saturday 14 April 2012  
Cultural programme in connection with Social Fabric exhibition



Lund Concert program: "Social Fabric" - 4 April - 21 July 2012, an art exhibition including paintings, Indian art and textiles from the Indian subcontinent, and from India. Curators: Staffan Eklund, Lars Eklund, and Pireeni Sundaralingam. Other artists: Anwar Chaudhry, Chitra Choudhury and Anshu Lakshmi. Special thanks to the organizers: the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Asoke Bhattacharya, ICAR, Stockholm, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Delhi. The exhibition has been produced by the ICAR, Social Institute of International Visual Arts (SIVA), and has been made possible by the support of the Swedish Cultural Foundation, the Swedish Council for Cultural Cooperation, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

**Saturday 14th April, Programme**

<p>13:30-14:00 <b>Bollywood Dance</b> by <b>Madhavi Devi Kulkarni</b></p> <p>14:00-14:15 <b>Introduction by Lars Eklund</b> <b>Director, Lunds konsthall</b></p> <p>14:20-14:40 <b>Speech by A. S. Asoke Bhattacharya</b> <b>President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations</b></p> <p>14:45-15:30 <b>"Tillbaka till de gamla tiderna"</b> <b>Lecture by Lars Eklund</b> <b>Director of the Lund School of Culture and Heritage</b></p>	<p>15:30-15:45 <b>Indian songs performed by the Lund International Tagore Choir</b> <b>Directed by Lars Eklund</b></p> <p>15:45-15:55 <b>"Tillbaka till de gamla tiderna"</b> <b>Lecture by Lars Eklund</b> <b>Director of the Lund School of Culture and Heritage</b></p> <p>15:55-17:00 <b>More Bollywood Dance</b> <b>Directed by Madhavi Devi Kulkarni</b></p>
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**Lundskonsthall**

SASNET    Kulkarni    AIBP

## SASNET STAFF 2010-2016

- **Anna Lindberg**, Director (July 1, 2007 – October 31, 2016).
- **Lars Eklund**, Deputy Director/Research Communication Officer (January 21, 2001 – December 31, 2016).
- **Olle Frödin**, Deputy Director, August 1, 2013 – May, 31, 2015
- **Julia Velkova**, Assistant Web Master, July 1, 2011 – August 30, 2012
- **Jonathan Stoltz**, Assistant Web Master, September 2012 – June 2013
- **Hawwa Lubna**, Intern with responsibility for student activities, November 2013 – October 2014
- **Linda Hiltmann**, Research Coordinator, January 2014 – March 2015
- **Andreas Johansson**, Research Coordinator. April, 1, 2015 – October, 31, 2016  
From November 1, 2016, new SASNET director.
- **Andreas Mattsson**, Project Coordinator. September 2015 – December 2016
- **Jacco Visser**, Assistant Communications Officer, September–December 2015
- **Elina Vidarsson**, Assistant Communications Officer, March – December 2016

## SASNET–NIAS collaboration

A March 2010 Copenhagen visit by Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund resulted in two important developments. First a meeting with Dr. **Geir Helgesen**, Director for the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), led up to a formalised collaboration agreement between SASNET and NIAS that in the coming years materialised in successfully organising joint conferences and of equal importance a decision to share information from SASNET's databases on South Asia related research in Sweden and assist SASNET in modernizing the technical structure of the Internet Gateway. This work was successfully carried out in 2011 by **Julia Velkova** from SASNET and **Bernd Wunch** from NIAS. They transferred the SASNET web site, that had been developed by Lars Eklund with Dreamweaver programme, into a CMS solution – with the use of Drupal programme. The shift was done smoothly. The old site till 2011 is still available at Lars Eklund's Nordic South Asia Net web site, go for it



They transferred the SASNET web site, that had been developed by Lars Eklund with Dreamweaver programme, into a CMS solution – with the use of Drupal programme. The shift was done smoothly. The old site till 2011 is still available at Lars Eklund's Nordic South Asia Net web site, go for it

## SASNET initiative behind ICCR Visiting Professorship programme

The second important development on the same day was a meeting with Prof. **Anthony D'Costa** at the Asia Research Centre (ARC) within Copenhagen Business School. Here, Anna and Lars learnt about a visiting professorship scheme administered by the Government of India through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, ICCR. At that time, ICCR had such agreements with around 30 prestigious universities all over the world, such as Sorbonne University in Paris, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA, and University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa. In Scandinavia, CBS was so far the only partner in this programme. The position as ICCR Professor of Indian Studies at CBS was held by Anthony D'Costa since the fall 2009.

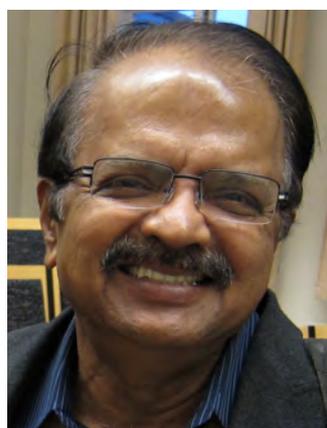
Back from Copenhagen Anna and Lars contacted the relevant people at Lund University and informed about this interesting ICCR programme, and contacts were immediately made with The Embassy of India in Stockholm to discuss the possibility of having an ICCR scheme also for Lund, that would be the first in Sweden.

The then Indian Ambassador Mr. **Balkrishna Shetty**, a warm friend of SASNET, acted without hesitation and provided strong support for the initiative. A process was quickly started, and a month later, in April 2010, Anna participated in an official Lund University delegation to Delhi where final negotiations were held with representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, regarding a proposed Indian visiting guest professorship at Lund University.

## MoU between ICCR and Lund University

A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ICCR and Lund University was signed on 22 June 2010 by Balkrishna Shetty and the Lund University Vice-Chancellor, Professor **Per Eriksson**.

The agreement was valid for four years, and from 1 November 2010, Lund University hosted its first Visiting Professor, **Lipi Ghosh** from University of Calcutta to have her workplace at the university's Centre for Gender Studies.



*Lipi Ghosh, BGopal Karanth, Surinder Jodhka and Kalyan Mandal*

The second ICCR Visiting Professor at Lund University became Professor **Gopal Karanth** from The Institute of Economic and Social Change in Bangalore. He spent the academic year 2011-12 in Lund, being hosted by the Department of Sociology.

Next came Professor **Surinder Jodhka** from Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. He spent the academic year 2012-13 being hosted by the Department of Political Science.

The fourth and final ICCR Visiting Professor was Professor **Kalyan Mandal** from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Kolkata. He spent the academic year 2013-14 in Lund being hosted the Department of Sociology.

### Continued support by Lund University



For 2,5 years, from September 2010 till February 2013, SASNET functioned without any board. During this time, SASNET was working directly under supervision of the Vice Chancellor. SASNET continued to be a national Swedish research and information network even after the SIDA funding ended in 2010 and Lund University became the only source of funding. Except the fact that no more planning grants were allowed to be distributed, SASNET continued to develop and upkeep the the extensive website and support its national and international networking all up till 2014 with active support from **Per Eriksson**, VC from 2009 till 2014, thereby following in the footsteps of the previous Vice Chancellors Boel Flodgren (1992-2003) and Göran Bexell (2003-08). With Per Eriksson's support several new initiatives were introduced during the years after 2010 – including the ICCR Indian Professor scheme.

On December 13, 2012, Lund University announced it would allocate resources in support of the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) for the period 2013–2015. This decision allowed SASNET to maintain its activities and add an assistant webmaster to help in its widening network outreach. The decision came as a relief after a couple of years of uncertainty after SASNET's annual subsidy from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) expired at the conclusion of a ten year commitment by that agency in December 2009.

### SASNET board 2013-16

Two months later, in February 2013, Lund University decided to again formalise SASNET's activities, and Pro-Vice Chancellor **Eva Wiberg** appointed members of a new SASNET board for the period up till December 2015. It consisted of six members, with the director Anna Lindberg being the chairperson, and including another three members representing Lund University;

- **Helle Rydström**, Department of Gender Studies (representing the Faculty of Social Sciences);
- **Olle Qvarnström**, Center for Theology and Religious Studies (representing Faculty of Humanities); and
- **Fredrik Tufvesson**, Department of Electric Engineering (representing the Faculty of Technology). Besides SASNET reserved two seats for external interest groups, one for other Swedish universities, and one a Swedish NGO respectively. These posts were filled by:
- **Stefan Jonsson**, Department of Business Studies, Uppsala University; and
- **Anders Fänge**, former director for the Swedish Afghanistan Committee.

Besides, the Students union at the Faculty of Social Sciences elected two student representatives as full members to the board, new persons every year.

## Lund University Strategic Plan for future SASNET

After the loss of funding from Sida, SASNET was given the task to write a Proposal for Strategy for collaboration between Lund University and South Asia 2012 - 2017. Anna Lindberg wrote the report with input from the other SASNET staff, and it was presented to the Vice-chancellor on June 20, 2011. In this strategy report, it was envisioned that Lund University should be one of the leading universities in Europe in terms of knowledge about and collaborations with South Asia. All South Asian countries were included in this vision, but India got a particularly prominent place due to its own special position, but also because the majority of South Asian researchers at Lund University focus on and collaborated with India.

The means mentioned to reach this goal included:

- LU should strengthen its research on South Asia and develop research collaborations with reputable researchers and research institutes in South Asia.
- LU should develop cooperation in the field of education so that LU students have the opportunity to stay at Indian or other South Asian universities to a greater extent than at present. Students from South Asia should to an increased extent be able to study at LU.
- Develop courses in collaboration with various institutions at LU that provide an increased understanding of and in-depth knowledge of South Asia; in collaboration with NCI and Indian universities develop courses in Nordic Studies, and continue efforts to coordinate Erasmus Mundus programmes focusing on South Asia.
- An interdisciplinary Center for South Asian Studies which provides a platform for the coordination of South Asian activities and which stimulates research and education should be established.

## Means initiated during 2013 and 2014

In one line, it is mentioned that "SASNET should retain as part of the Center for South Asian Studies" but besides that, not a single paragraph in the Strategy report mentions the networking aspect of SASNET, the future of the SASNET Gateway and the Newsletters.

In 2014, the Strategy document got complimentary text on the measures that had been already initiated during 2013. It was stated that SASNET had invested in promoting research applications from Lund University with a focus on South Asia. Furthermore, as part of a more indirect strategy, SASNET has contributed to the promotion of several interdisciplinary applications for research funding from the European Research Council (ERC) and the Swedish Research Council (VR). SASNET had also successfully applied for funding from VR and FORTE to arrange an international scientific conference on structural change, urbanization and sustainability in South Asia.

During 2014, Anna wrote that SASNET had been a driving force on several fronts to improve teaching about South Asia. A first measure had been to coordinate the seminars that SASNET supports and arranges with existing teaching programs at Lund University.

SASNET would, according to this plan, use its seminar resources to strengthen teaching in the international bachelor's and master's programs during the autumn in consultation with teachers responsible for the courses in these programs, inviting guests who fit into the programmes' special profiles. The aim should be to invite prominent South Asian experts, from, for example, the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and the London School of Economics and Political Science to give lectures and seminars that might be included and fit into existing courses within the programmes.

## Rejuvenation of the staff

Considering the fact that both Anna Lindberg and Lars Ekund were only a few years away from retirement, SASNET also began to discuss how to prepare for a shift to a younger leadership of SASNET. Since both Anna and Lars reduced their work to 50 % from January 2015, this resulted in a surplus in the budget, and this could be used for employing extra people on various part-time basis.

**Julia Velkova** from Bulgaria was an extremely competent co-worker being both a double MA in Asian Studies and a civil engineer. She started as an assistant to Lars but then became the one person to change the website solution in 2011. She also administered the successful Falsterbo conference 2011 (*photo to the right*).

Finally she got a PhD candidate position at Södertörns högskola and left SASNET. But before that, she brought Lars and his wife Bubu with her for a tour to Sofia to meet the Bulgarian professors in South Asian Studies.



**Lubna Hawwa** was employed on a 20 % basis to work with SASA, the South Asian Students Association, **Linda Hiltmann** was employed on a 50 % basis to be assisting Lars with the website updating, but she had ambitions beyond that and was quickly promoted by Anna to become Research Coordinator. When she went into politics instead, she was replaced by PhD candidate **Andreas Johansson**, who then made an extremely fast career – he defended his dissertation in April 2016, and became the new SASNET director on 1 November 2016.



Lubna Hawwa, Linda Hiltmann and Jacco Visser

Also working for some time, mainly assisting Lars with the routine work at the root node office, updating the web site, planning and organising seminars, etc. were **Jonathan Stoltz** and **Jacco Visser**.

### The story of two deputy directors

One case of bad recruitment happened though and this caused enormous strains on the organization and a lot of trouble. In August 2013 Anna Lindberg hired Dr. **Olle Frödin**, Lecturer at the Department of Sociology Department, to be her partner in the work to integrate SASNET seminars into the regular courses run by Lund University. He was employed on a 40 % basis, and his title became Deputy Director in charge of research.

This was a blow in the face of Lars Eklund, who had held the title of SASNET deputy director since 2004, but not having got the title formalized by the university.

Now Olle Frödin was elevated to be the deputy director with extra pay for this position, whereas the university administration strongly claimed that Lars Eklund was barred from calling himself a deputy director.



This because he did not have a PhD, and no other qualifications counted in the Lund academia. So suddenly, Lars who had been working with SASNET from the start and when meeting senior professors, ambassadors and even ministers in Sweden as well as in South Asia had been regularly treated as Mr. SASNET, became subordinate not only to director Anna but also to a newly hired deputy director with a total lack of South Asian experience and extremely limited knowledge of the region.

In September 2013, Lars was downgraded to receive the title Research Communicator. This done to a person who for many years had the responsibility for a large part of SASNET's operations with seminars and conferences, being passionate about his job, and having a personal relationship with a very large part of the 2,800 people who then formed the network. Lars informed a number of networking partners at other Swedish universities and also the SASNET board, and they reacted saying that the Lund University handling was absurd. Protests were made, and finally the LU management decided that Lars could be a deputy director if the board decided so. Which happened and SASNET therefore had two deputy directors for two years. The discussion led to another strange effect, since it turned out that not only Lars but also Anna had not formalised their positions. Lars had no legal right to make any claims for compensation, but in Anna's case the LU management willingly agreed to pay her the extra pay for being a director, for all the years since she was employed.

Even worse, the relation between Anna and Olle became frosty almost from the beginning, Anna was dissatisfied with Olle's work, and Olle became unfriendly towards Anna. This resulted in Anna going for sick leave for almost two months during the spring 2015. During the period 21 April-11 June, Lars Eklund worked as Acting SASNET director. This coincided with the most intense planning period for the major SASNET conference on "South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, Labour, and Family changes in a Dynamic region", held on 20-22 May, and he therefore also took over charge as main conference convener. For this work, he was assisted by **Andreas Johansson**, Lubna Hawwa and Jacco Visser, besides Olle Frödin (whose employment at SASNET terminated on 31 May).

## One-year extension for autonomous SASNET board

In 2015, **Stefan Jonsson** decided to vacate his post in the SASNET board. He was replaced by **Kristina Myrvold**, Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University in Växjö.

The three-year mandate for the board should have lasted only up till 31 December 2015, but again due to the uncertainties regarding what Lund University should do with SASNET, the Lund University management decided to give SASNET a one year extension with the same funding as previous year, and also allow the elected board members, if they wished so, to continue for another year. At a 2016 board meeting, the members were asked about this offer, and of the six members all except one were positive to stay on in the board. Only **Fredrik Tufvesson** announced that he wanted to be replaced. His post was taken over by **Måns Svensson**, Division of Sociology of Law, Lund University.

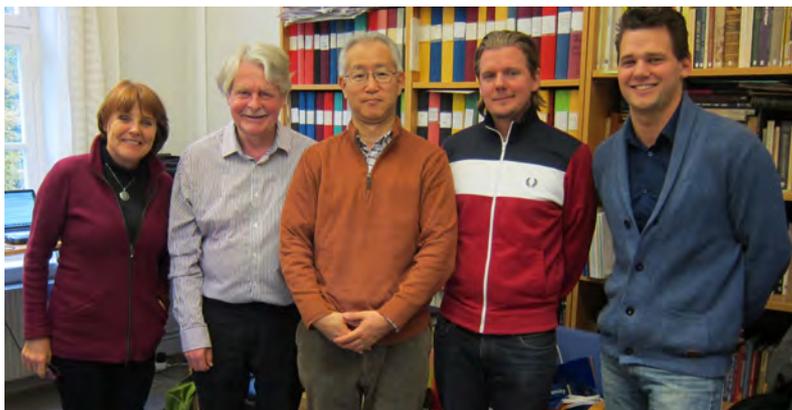
## 2015 evaluation

A new evaluation was made in early 2015, both to reflect the achievements made by SASNET during the period 2013-15, and give suggestions for the future activities of the network after 31 December 2015. The evaluation team consisted by 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. Both of them had previously been members of SASNET's board. During one month, they conducted interviews and thoroughly reviewed the SASNET work reports and other documentation, and submitted a final to the SASNET board and the Lund University Vice Chancellor.

In their report, Neil Webster and Pamela Price gave constructive recommendations on how, according to their views, SASNET should work. They argued that SASNET should get a stronger institutional anchoring within Lund University while maintaining the national and international work that SASNET has become recognised for.



*In one of the many 2015 seminars, Dr. Dibyesh Anand from Westminster University, London, lectured about "Kashmiris caught in India-Pakistan Conflict: Denial of Self-Determination and Human Rights". He was invited to Lund by Talat Bhat, friend of SASNET who used to film most seminars.*



*Professor Minoru Mio, Director for the Center for Contemporary India Area Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan, made a courtesy visit to SASNET in October 2015. Here surrounded by the SASNET staff, Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund, Andreas Johansson and Jacco Visser.*

Regarding the SASNET website, the evaluators suggest that it should continue as a core SASNET activity, seeing itself as a national resource.

*"Not only does it present a strong picture of the position of South Asia in Sweden's academic and cultural milieus, it also provides a range and level of information that are not found on any other South Asian web-site based in Europe. For maintaining a level of knowledge as to conferences, workshops, presentations, programme initiatives, and cultural events in Sweden, Scandinavia, Europe, the USA and not least South Asia, the web-site is excellent. In this, it can be said that SASNET provides very high value for a relatively small amount of money".*

They also stated that SASNET had succeeded admirably in developing strategies to encourage interest in South Asia at Lund University and to support an environment of exchange and learning among both younger and older researchers. With its highly varied programs of lectures, workshops, and conferences, SASNET had brought together people from many parts of Lund University and assisted in Swedish and Nordic communication on South Asia. Further, they mentioned that between 2013 and 2014 a shift had taken place in the orientation of SASNET, to give greater focus to recruiting both undergraduate and graduate students to engage in research on South Asia.

## Highlights during the final SASNET years:

SASNET did not slow down in its activities at all during the final five years from 2012 till 2016 in spite of the uncertainty of the future. Quite the opposite – with more staff, with the presence of the Indian guest professors in Lund and kind support from the Vice-Chancellor it was possible to launch new projects and prepare a number of interesting conferences, described earlier in this report.



For a journalist like myself, the most fascinating new venture was the Media Project, initiated by **Andreas Mattsson**, fellow journalist and lecturer at the Lund University's programme for Journalism. He convinced SASNET to integrate his



plans to connect Swedish and South Asian journalists and researchers within the field of Media Studies in the network's basic work. Andreas was able to organise two conferences with great success in the fall 2015, first one medium-sized one in Lund (*participants on photo above*), and then one bigger, extremely well-planned one in New Delhi with several participants coming from Sweden. In connection with this, the Swedish embassy in Delhi organized a reception in honour of SASNET (just like they did in 2007) to which SASNET was given the responsibility to provide a guest list of Indian researchers for the embassy to invite.



On the home front, SASNET moved location for the second time in 2014. After co-existing with the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studie (ACE) for exactly 10 years at Ideon Research Village, without being able to come closer and eventually merge into an Asia Centre – a dream nurtured for a number of years, SASNET accepted an invitation from the Dept. of Sociology to move back to the city centre. A large room on first floor big enough for 2-3 people's work places and also housing the SASNET library that now had grown into an impressive collection. Closer to the researchers in social sciences and

humanities with whom SASNET worked with frequently, and with more centrally located seminar halls available. A great location, and a perfect place for hosting guests - SASNET's highly recognized reputation made the SASNET root node office at Paradisgatan a compulsory place to visit for all kinds of South Asia related researchers, diplomats and other categories of people happening to come to Lund.

Two years later, in April 2016, at exactly the same time that the old website and the newsletters were closed down, SASNET however moved location once again, this time to Villa Norlind at Biskopsgatan. A few hundred meters away from the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CME). A natural step, as seen in the back mirror, since Lund University was on the way to incorporate SASNET into CME. The "new" SASNET still resides in Villa Norlind.

## International networking

In the final years Lars Eklund was not able to travel to the other Swedish universities and network so frequently as was the case in the earlier years. This work was getting less priority from the director and her superiors, foreboding the 2016 closing down of the website.

However, when traveling in South Asia, he used his contacts to make several well-documented tours to universities and research institutes. In 2012 Lars made a tour to Kathmandu (Tribhuvan Uni.); Kolkata (Calcutta University & Jadavpur University); Varanasi (BHU); Kanpur (IIT); and Delhi (South Asian University).



2013 meeting with Vice-Chancellor and all Faculty heads at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, discussing possible collaboration projects with Lund University

In 2013 he visited universities in Kolkata, Shantiniketan, Kharagpur and Baripada (in Odisha state) in connection with a concert tour by Lund International Tagore Choir – led by Bubu Munshi Eklund and administered by Lars.

The same year, Lars visited and reported from universities in Vilnius, Lithuania, and London, UK, and in India from universities in Karnataka (Bangalore and Mangalore) after attending the 2013 SASNET conference at Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) in Bangalore.

In 2014 Lars attended a board meeting of the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) in Vienna being the organization’s treasurer, and naturally he combined this with visiting the University of Vienna and **Martin Gaenzle**, Professor for the Culture and Intellectual History of Modern South Asia (and EASAS chair person). *Photo.*



Lars then boarded a train to Prague in the Czech Republic and from there a bus onwards to Heidelberg in Germany, and met South Asia specialists in the Charles University, Prague, and the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg. Detailed reports posted on the SASNET Gateway as always.

The present SASNET website does not keep records of any of these travel reports.

However, Lars saved the material, and all his travel reports from 2001 til 2016 are available at

<https://nordicsouthasianet.eu/start-page/lars-journey-reports/>

A few more relevant journeys Lars made in the two final years. In 2015 he visited Bangladesh and the University of Dhaka on invitation from Professor Mas-hiur Rahman – known from his time in Lund. Lars



lectured for the first year students, and after that he met the Vice-Chancellor. In Dhaka Lars also held a meeting with the staff at Swedish Embassy.



A few weeks later, he visited the University of Manipur in Imphal. In Kolkata – his second hometown where he has a residence – visits were as always made to Calcutta University and Jadapur Unver-

sity (and Vishwa Bharati University in Shantiniketan), but this time also visiting the Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata and the prestigious Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS). Finally, in the last months of Lars work at SASNET, he was given a chance to fulfill a dream, to attend the South Asian Studies conference at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the world’s largest conference in the field, His report from Madison is available, and so is also a report from the Center for South Asian Civilizations and Languages, University of Chcgao.

## Network changes character in 2016

With a change of Lund University leadership in 2015, demands for a change became stronger, SASNET should be converted into a research centre with a strong focus on Lund University. The new Vice-Chancellor from 2015, **Torbjörn von Schantz**, seemed to have no interest in South Asia, and he became the first VC since the inception of SASNET in 2000 not allowing the SASNET team to have an audience in order to present the SASNET activities.

Instead, unofficial signals were sent through his subordinate officers-in-charge – Assistant Vice-Chancellor **Bo Åhrén** and the administrator **Moa Lindell** that SASNET must change its character, cut down on the networking, focus its activities entirely on Lund University (LU), and turn SASNET into a LU research centre integrated within Faculty of Social Sciences – no more being an interdisciplinary network. These discussions followed the lines that Anna Lindberg had envisioned in her 2012 Strategy report, which does not at all mention networking, website development and newsletters being part of the future SASNET. Lars Eklund was not at all involved in any discussions with the LU management on the future of SASNET, meetings were always with the director only – a situation a world apart from the early SASNET years when Staffan and Lars worked as a team making all planning jointly.

## SASNET became a subunit to the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies

Lund University finally made a decision regarding the future of SASNET after 2016. At this stage it was clear that director Anna Lindberg was going to retire on 1 November, and deputy director Lars Eklund on 31 December. On the final board meeting of October 10, 2016, the organisational changes under way were discussed. In the new organisation plan, SASNET would cease to be an autonomous unit directly under the Vice Chancellors supervision, but instead be integrated into the Faculty of Social Sciences, and administratively become a subunit to the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES)

SASNET should henceforth focus on South Asia related research and teaching at Lund University. The members of the board approved the new organisation, but added that they hoped that SASNET's internationally recognised brand would continue to be independent, and the board suggested that a reference group should be appointed with representatives from several faculties. The board also emphasized the importance of SASNET's national network function, and that it should somehow may survive. SASNET should also be active in the upcoming new Asia strategy at Lund University.

**Andreas Johansson**, who defended his doctoral dissertation as late as April 2016, was proposed to take over the chair position, and the board agreed to let Andreas become Acting Director already from 1 November. Two young post-doc researchers were also to be employed as of January 1, 2017, on one-year project positions with a focus to seek external funding.

Since SASNET on January 1, 2017, should merge with CMES, the October 10th meeting was also the final one for the board that had been in charge of business since 2013.

## Old web site taken over by pornography

As a result of the change of strategy, the extensive SASNET web site was closed down in April 2016, and only a fraction of its content was converted to a new local Lund University web site. Actually, the decision was not entirely to blame Lund University. At the same time, University of Copenhagen had decided to close down all external websites, and SASNET's Gateway happened to be one of these. Since 2011, SASNET had had a fruitful technical collaboration with the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, sharing the same CMS web solution – Drupal. This agreement however lapsed on 31 December 2015, and SASNET had to integrate into Lund University's (LU) web system, and adjust to the graphic profile that all LU units are obliged to follow.

Lars Eklund then suggested that the entire website could be transferred to Lund University's servers, something that would have been easy since both Copenhagen and Lund used the same Drupal solution. But the persons in charge refused to consider this solution. They did not accept that SASNET's website should look different from all other LU web sites. It had to be a totally new site to be built from scratch, with manually transferring some odd pages of the gigantic archive.

After some time, the work was said to be complete, and the old SASNET web site was transferred to an external web hotel with no working links and with nobody in charge of its upkeep. A year later, the Gateway was hijacked by a pornographic web site, without any reaction from the SASNET staff.

Also a decision was taken to discontinue the popular SASNET newsletters that Lars Eklund had published monthly since 2001, with the same reason – they did not follow the LU graphic profile and it published material on a national level. This could not be tolerated. The final newsletter (No 186) was published on April 13, 2016. By then, the newsletter had more than 3,300 subscribers worldwide.

Lars Eklund utterly disapproved of this waste of important data material, and that was the reason he decided to retire from SASNET on December 31, 2016.

With an ambition to save the material, he launched the Nordic South Asia Network (NSAN) on a private basis, an ambitious follow-up venture to the old SASNET web site and newsletter service. He also wrote an application to the LU management to let him take over the old material and run it as a private side business ("bisyssla"), but that appeal was totally rejected and instead he became threatened with legal consequences by Lund University's Legal Division for trespassing immaterial rights by using the old SASNET data.

This did not happen though, but in the summer 2018 the NSAN web site was sabotaged and infected by data virus, and the site had to be deleted from the Net. Parts of the old data material has later been restored, and is now found at a new NSAN web site developed by Lars. This includes the travel reports, the descriptions of the more than 300 Swedish university departments involved in South Asia related research in 2015, and luckily all the newsletters. Go for the Saved Material.

### Last chance to save the national initiative

The decision to narrow down the SASNET mission from being a strong all-Swedish network into a local LU research centre was something entirely a Lund University decision. Researchers at all other Swedish and Nordic universities still wished that SASNET would remain as it had been from 2001. Together with **Ravinder Kaur** and **Peter B. Andersen** from the University of Copenhagen, Lars took an initiative that was accepted by his colleagues to be a SASNET



event, to invite people from the SASNET network to hold a workshop in Lund to discuss possible solutions to continue networking. The workshop was held in end of April 2016. More than 50 Nordic researchers and academics from 20 universities in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland participated discussing ways to expand collaboration on education and research.

An introductory address was given by **David Ludden**, Professor of History at New York University and former President of the Association for Asian Studies. Professor Ludden is well-known for his extensive writings on South Asia. His talk was entitled " *Why do we need South Asian Studies? What are the Challenges?* ", and was followed by short presentations by representatives of Nordic universities on their current South Asian activities. The meeting then addressed the question: How we can strengthen a South Asian perspective across all faculties at Nordic universities? The objectives could include a commitment to hold collaborative workshops and other joint events; circulate information about visiting scholars for the benefit of Nordic partner institutions who may wish to invite them; and creating a common Nordic newsletter on South Asian Studies and a joint website focusing on South Asia. At the end of the day it was decided to form a Nordic Network, but the title was yet to be finalized upon. The Network decide to have its first conference 2017 in Stockholm.



enhance a South Asian perspective across all faculties at Nordic universities? The objectives could include a commitment to hold collaborative workshops and other joint events; circulate information about visiting scholars for the benefit of Nordic partner institutions who may wish to invite them; and creating a common Nordic newsletter on South Asian Studies and a joint website focusing on South Asia. At the end of the day it was decided to form a Nordic Network, but the title was yet to be finalized upon. The Network decide to have its first conference 2017 in Stockholm.

Lars Eklund was given the task to create a new web page for the Nordic network, based upon the old SASNET web site.

See the full programme with a list of participants .

Lars took the network meeting's decision seriously, and on 23 June he posted the first Nordic Newsletter, filled with information. But it did not take many hours until he got an angry telephone call from the director, with a threat from her superiors that Lars would be immediately sacked unless he did not withdraw the newsletter. He had to oblige. Read the June 2016 newsletter.

## Book project final collaboration project by Lars and Staffan

After retiring from Lund University, Lars and Staffan again joined for a common project, to publish a popular scientific anthology with contributions by leading Nordic researchers on Indian history, society, economics, environment, culture, etc. The book entitled "Miraklet Indien och dess baksida", produced by Palmkrons förlag in Lund, was published on April 3, 2018.



Release parties were organised by SASNET in Lund, by **Kenneth Nielsen** and other South Asia researchers at Oslo University, and Lars presented the book at the Gothenburg Book Fair in September.

Unfortunately and most tragically, Staffan Lindberg passed away on January 7th, 2019. Too early for such a wonderful person and eminent South Asia researcher.

Besides, as mentioned before, Lars launched the Nordic South Asia Network, and continued to do networking with researchers and universities both in Sweden and in South Asia, and producing NSAN newsletters up till June 2018, after which evil forces attacked and destroyed the web site with planted virus. It would be interesting to know which individual or organisation that made this happen.

However, before that – in May 2017 – he was invited to visit the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) and more specifically by its College of Education in Samtse (SCE). The visit was planned for by Swedish musicologist **Johan Westman**, friend of Lars working at SCE,

The five-day visit became very fruitful, with holding seminars for all professors at SCE on possibilities of Swedish collaboration, and immediately one positive outcome materialized in the form of collaboration between the Department of Mathematics at SCE with the correlating department at Malmö University, Sweden, initially focusing on a joint research project on Ethno-Mathematics but later expanded to applying for a grant from the Linnaeus Palme Exchange programme. The application was successful and the exchange of students and teachers exchange started in the spring 2018. Read more.

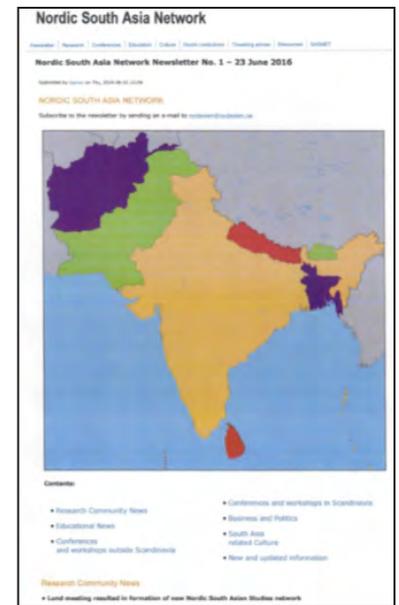


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In 2017, Lars also received a request from the INLANSO language institute in Varanasi to join them and manage their web site and communication. INLANSO – an acronym for the Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society was launched in 2012, offering qualified tailor-made Hindi Study Programmes for European students.

A number of Nordic universities have signed agreements with the centre, among them Uppsala, Oslo, and Aarhus, to send students to Varanasi for periods from



a few weeks up to four months. INLANSO also has collaborated with the universities of Würzburg and Göttingen in Germany. The unique concept of INLANSO has been to combine the classroom knowledge with outdoor practice, paying special attention to Varanasi's multireligious, multicultural and multiethnic anatomy. INLANSO also runs language training centres for European students elsewhere in India. Tamil is taught in Puducherry in the south of India, Urdu in Lucknow and Nepali in Kathmandu. Bengali may come.

Two extremely good friends of Lars, namely **Dipak Malik** and **Mirja Juntunen Malik**, run INLANSO. Mirja worked with the SYDASIEN magazine in the 1980s when Lars was the Editor-in-chief, and both Mirja and Dipak have played important roles with frequent contacts with Lars during the 16 years of SASNET networking. An interesting detail is that Mirja and Dipak actually first met and became a couple at the 2009 SASNET conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Lars was invited to the institute in Varanasi in mid-May 2017 to get an introduction into INLANSO's work, and then also followed a group of students on a train journey to Musoorie in the Himalayas, where a summer course was going to be held. Read more.

Unfortunately, in the period after the India visit, the number of students came down and in the end INLANSO could not afford to hire Lars' services.



## SASNET in media

**Article in Sydsvenska Dagbladet on the 2004 ECSAS conference in Lund**, "Miljön het på konferens om Sydasiens. 400 mötesdeltagare samlas i Lund",

**Article in LUM (Lunds Universitet Meddelar) 2004**, "Hemsidan är basen för SASNET".  
<http://larseklund.in/Old.sasnet.lu.se-23.april/sasnet.lu.se/wwwroot/lumomsasnet.pdf>

**Article in India-Sweden in Focus 2007**, "SASNET builds up Indo-Swedish Collaborations".

**Report on the 2004 ECMSAS conference in Lund**, by Prof. William Radice, SOAS, London.  
SWEDISH RHAPSODY. A Diary of the 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden, 6-9 July, 2004

**The Sida magazine Omvärlden published an article on SASNET** in its December 2008 issue (No. 7/2008). The article, written by senior journalist Jöran Hök, was entitled "Unikt svenskt nätverk blir förebild för fler forskare" (Unique Swedish network becomes a model for more researchers).

**Article in LUM (Lunds Universitet Meddelar) 2015**, Cecilia von Arnold writes about the SASNET Media Project, led by Andreas Mattsson, "Svenskar och indier möttes om nya medielandskapet"

**Article in LUM (Lunds Universitet Meddelar) 2015**, Interview with SASNET Director Anna Lindberg, "Forskar och driver pensionat i Indien"

# SASNET – Swedish South Asian Studies Network

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## The New SASNET from 2017

From January 1, 2017, SASNET changed its character, no longer being an all-Swedish network but now converted into a local Lund University research centre. Ironically, this was exactly what SASNET should not be when Sida/SAREC in the year 2000 decided to give Lund University the possibility to launch SASNET – instead of competing Gothenburg and Uppsala universities. Their proposals were very traditional, the classical formula to establish a research centre based on the strong South Asian studies environment at their respective university, whereas the Lund proposal from day 1 suggested it should to be a national network. The new SASNET officials proudly proclaimed in 2017 that its transformation from being a national network to a research-oriented institute at Lund University was successful, and the process should continue during 2018 and following years.

They are doing a great job as such, but of course it is not the same as the "old" SASNET.

See the Work Reports for the first three years of "new" SASNET:

### 2017:

[https://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/sasnet.lu.se/files/activity\\_report\\_sasnet\\_2017\\_0.pdf](https://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/sasnet.lu.se/files/activity_report_sasnet_2017_0.pdf)

### 2018:

[https://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/sasnet.lu.se/files/web\\_verkbroschyr\\_a4\\_andreas\\_0.pdf](https://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/sasnet.lu.se/files/web_verkbroschyr_a4_andreas_0.pdf)

### 2019

<https://www.sasnet.lu.se/article/sasnet-publishes-activity-report-for-2019>

On the current SASNET web page, very little information is given about the old SASNET before 2017. And that fact was the reason for me to write this SASNET history pamphlet, not to forget the fantastic time working with the SASNET network.

My story is dedicated to my colleague and close friend Staffan Lindberg (1943-2019), the man who created SASNET in 2000-2001.

**LUND October 17, 2020**

**LARS EKLUND**

**ANNEX:**

**Activity reports 2001-2016  
year by year**

# Swedish South Asian Studies Network Newsletters 2001-2016 & NSAN Newsletters 2016-2018

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2001-2002**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2003-2004**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2005-2006**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2007-2008**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2009-2010**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2011-2012**

**SASNET NEWSLETTERS 2013-2014**

**SASNET & NSAN NEWSLETTERS 2015-2016**

**NSAN NEWSLETTERS 2017-2018**

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**The SASNET Newsletters No.1 (2001-01-30) – No. 126 (2011-09-02).**

**Complete with web site, photos and working links.**

Original copies in files kept by Lars Eklund & also kept at the Lund University Record Management and Archives (Arkivcentrum Syd), Porfyrvägen 20, Lund

**SASNET Newsletters 127 (2011-10-11) – No 151 (2013-08-19).**

**Only few photos, no working links.**

Original copies (with all photos) only available at the Lund University Record Management and Archives

**SASNET Newsletters 152 (2013-09-05) – No 186 (2016-04-13)**

**Pdf-files with photos but no working links.**

Original copies in files only kept by Lars Eklund

**Nordic South Asia Net ( NSAN) Newsletters**

**No. 1 (2016-06-23) – No 19 (2018-06-02)**

**Pdf-files with photos but no working links.**

Original copies in files only kept by Lars Eklund  
(Newsletter No 18, April 2018 is missing!)

# YEAR BY YEAR important events

## 2001

### 2001 ACTIVITIES BY STAFFAN LINDBERG AND LARS EKLUND

- **26 January**: Inauguration of SASNET's office room at the International Office
- **30 January**: Publication of our first **newsletter**
- **1 February**: Meeting with **Lennart Badersten**, FOV about possible co-operation in distance education with Sri Lanka and South Asia
- **2 February**: Guest Lecture by Professor **R K Jain**, Centre for American and West- European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi: "*India in a Globalising World - especially its relation to the European Union*". Arranged in co-operation with Allmänna Seminariet i Sociologi and the Development Study Seminar at the same department.
- **8 February**: Guest Lecture by Professor **S. Uma Devi**, University of Kerala, India, on "*Systems of Knowledge and Development Ethics*". Arranged in co-operation with the Development Studies Seminar at the Department of Sociology and the Department of History
- **9 February**: Meeting of SASNET's working group
- **12 February**: Meeting with Lennart Badersten, FOV, about construction of the Internet Gateway
- **14 February**: Meeting with Prof. **Bo Lindblad**, Karolinska institutet, Stockholm
- **16 February**: Meeting of the working group to discuss suitable names for SASNET's board
- **7 March**: Meeting to plan an Öresund Masters in South Asian studies, several smaller meetings have taken place during 2001
- **25 April**: Meeting between representatives of Lund, Copenhagen and Roskilde Universities, concerning the development of Ørsa – Øresund Network of South Asian Studies. We also organised a Cultural programme with Indian cooking and a classical vocal concert with Prof **Laksmisree Banerjee** from Jamshedpur, India (but during the Spring 2001 guest professor at the Faculty of Humanities, department of literature, Växjö University). Her well-attended musical programme was named: "*Melodies of Soul & Sense*"
- **27 April**: Meeting with SASNET's working group + the Reference group for Planning grants, consisting of Mr. **Tomas Kjellqvist** (Sida-SAREC), Prof. **Pamela Price** (Department of History, Oslo), Dr. **Neil Webster** (Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen), and Dr. **Malin Åkerblom** (International Science Programme, Uppsala)
- **7 June**: The Vice-Chancellor of Lund University officially establishes SASNET by issuing Directions and taking decision on the composition of its board from 1 July 2001 to 31 December 2003.
- **27 – 28 August**: Workshop on Global Networking with a lot of prominent guests discussing the future for SASNET. For full documentation
- **29 August**: SASNET's Board has its first meeting on 29 August, during which several matters of importance for SASNET's future plans were discussed. The board decided that SASNET shall give priority to three areas, namely: • Interdisciplinary networking; • Interaction with the media and



Griha Pravesh  
26 January 2001

Staffan Lindberg

Lars Eklund

Buba Eklund

Göran Rombel

Kristina Andersson

Martin Eklund

Marie Eklund

Katrine Larsen

Poul Billgren

Tom S. DEPPER

Ulrika Q. Mohr

Srinivasan

Se J

Pravilla Hansson

Rajeshwari

Manjiv



the schools; and finally • Promoting education on South Asia, including PhD studies.

– **10-11 September:** SASNET was very actively involved in organising the Symposium and workshop on: "*Managing Common Resources – What is the solution?*". The symposium was jointly organised by the Programme on Population and Development (PROP), Department of Sociology, and Department of Economics. Key speakers were Prof. **Elinor Ostrom** (photo), Arthur F. Bentley Professor of Government, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, and Prof. **Jean-Philippe Platteau**, Department of Economics, University of Namur, Belgium.

– **15 September:** Announcement of Planning Grants 2001/02. The decisions to be announced on 24 January, 2002. Seed money given to: **Jan Lundqvist & Julie Wilks**, Department of Water and Environmental Studies, Linköping University; **Bo Mattiasson**, Department of Biotechnology, Lund University; **K. Hanumantha Rao**, Department of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering, Mineral Processing, Luleå University of Technology; **Gunilla Gren-Eklund**, Department of Asian and African Languages, Uppsala University; **Eva Hellman**, History of Religions, Uppsala University; **Bo S. Lindblad**, Karolinska Institutet; and **Eva Myrdal-Runebjer**, Museion, Göteborg University.

– **27 September:** Dr **J B Prajapati**, Associate Professor in Dairy Microbiology at Gujarat Agricultural University, India, gave a SASNET seminar at Lund University, on "*Probiotics, Fermented Foods and their Beneficial Role*", dealing with dahi, idlis and dosas. The seminar took place at the Center for Chemistry & Chemical Engineering in Lund

– **1-5 October:** Dr **Sudhir Kakar**, internationally renowned psychoanalyst and writer, based in Delhi, India (Center for the Study of Developing Societies), but at the time visiting scholar at the Center for the Study of World Religions (CSWR) at Harvard Divinity school, USA, (where he studies the mythology of spiritual healing in the Christian, Sufi, and Hindu traditions) visited Lund 1–5 October, for a Symposium on "*Mysticism and Psychology*", at the Division of Psychology of Religion. On 1 October he gave a SASNET public lecture on "*Globalisation and Hindu Nationalism*", at the Dept. of Theology

– **24 October:** Dr **Suman Khanna Aggarwal**, Peace Researcher, expert on the Theories of Mahatma Gandhi, and professor of philosophy at Delhi University, held a SASNET lecture on on the subject "*Terrorism – a Gandhian Perspective*". Venue: Conference room, International Secretariat, Gamla Kirurgen. Dr Aggarwal has worked with Gandhian philosophy and theories for a long time. She was on a Swedish tour, where she also conducted a workshop at Padrigu, Göteborg University

– **29 October:** SASNET arranged a concert with classical North Indian music, at Magasinet (above the bookshop Arken), Kungsgatan, Lund. The renowned vocalist **Sandipan Samajpati** from Kolkata, who was on a European tour (Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and England) presented a programme along with the accompanying tablaist **Amit Chatterjee**. The concert was co-arranged by the local singing choir Svart på Vitt and was part of the Lund Music Festival 2001

– **9 November:** The SASNET root node in Lund arranged the first in a series of Open House seminars. SASNET co-ordinator **Staffan Lindberg**, who recently returned from sociological fieldwork in Zanzibar, reported about how the war on terror in Afghanistan is interpreted in Tanzania, and also presented his assessment of the political implications for South Asia

– **19 November:** First meeting to plan the Symposium for PhD students 2002. Members of the planning group: **Malin Arvidson**, **Martin Gansten**, **Kristina Myrvold**, **Katarina Plank**, **Lars Eklund** and Staffan. 1

### **Staffan Lindberg's 2001 special activities**

– **2 February:** Planning meeting with the teachers for the India/South Asia course at Österlen's Folk High School. Later on during the Spring several meetings to plan the course, which was started in August 2001 with 25 participants

– **7 February:** Meeting with South Asia researchers and teachers at Göteborg University. Some persons from Karlstad University also participated. Presentation of SASNET and South Asia Research at Göteborg and Karlstad. Discussion of Göteborg's plan for a workshop programme in South Asia during 2002

– **16 March:** Meeting with staff at the Department of History of Religions to discuss the esta-

ishment of a section for Indic studies at the department. Several later meetings with staff and faculty people have led to the establishment of such a section. Special courses will start spring 2002

– **20 April:** Staffan Lindberg and **Shisher Kumra** from SASNET's working group participated in the First General Assembly of The Nordic Consortium for a Nordic Centre in India, Copenhagen, April 20, 2001

– **31 May:** SL gave a lecture at the International Development Studies Seminar, Roskilde University

– **21 August:** Start of the India/South Asia undergraduate 20 credit course at Österlen's Folk High School at Tomelilla. SL serves as the overall course leader. See

– **15 – 16 October:** Participation in the EU–India Think Tank Seminar, which took place in Brussels, Belgium, with representatives from a large number of Universities and Research institutions in Europe and India. The second Swedish representative at the seminar was Dr **Hanumantha Rao**, Dept of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering, Luleå University of Technology.

– **23 October:** Guest lecture on Indian Development Strategies since Independence at Österlen's Folk High School

– **6 November** at Linköping: Meeting **Jan Lundqvist** and **Julie Wilks**, Department of Water and Environmental Studies, Linköping University about their SASNET supported programme: "Triple Integration. Targeting poverty with water and social programmes"

– **20 – 22 November:** Meetings to discuss the work with SASNET with several persons in Stockholm:

- *Jon Sigurdsson, Handelshögskolan, SSAAPS, Swedish School of Advanced Asia Pacific Studies:* We agreed on continued interaction to see if there is a possibility to extend the graduate programme to South Asia

– *Anders Mellbourn, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs:* General information about SASNET

- *Bo Lindblad, Karolinska Institutet:* Discussion of the planning of the SASNET supported research programme: "Pregnancy and Infancy in South Asia."

- *Tomas Kjellqvist (head of division), Ramses Amer and Katarina Mählk, Sida – SAREC:* Organisation and financing of SASNET. SASNET must apply for funding for the period 2003 – 2005 to SAREC in April 2002

- *Jan Bjerninger (head) and Jan Essner (deputy head), Sida, Asia Division:* Organisation and financing of SASNET

- *Shahid A. Kamal, Ambassador of Pakistan:* General information about SASNET

- *Kerstin Pehrsson, the Swedish Institute (see below)*

- *Börje Ljunggren (head), Anna Lindstedt (deputy head) and Gautam Bhattacharyya, Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs:* Organisation and financing of SASNET

- *Chitra Narayanan, Ambassador of India:* Organisation and financing of SASNET

- *Christer Norström and Eva-Maria Hardtmann, Dept. of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University:*

– **21 November:** On 21 November, **Kerstin Pehrsson** from the Swedish Institute, **Jan Essner** from Sida, and Staffan Lindberg from SASNET met and discussed the possibility of applying for travel grants to the Swedish Institute for South Asia researchers. The following agreement was reached: Those programme leaders who have received networking grants from SASNET can apply to the Swedish Institute for supplementary travel grants, firstly aiming at inviting scholars from South Asia to meetings in Sweden. The meeting can be about planning research and/or education programmes. Applications should be sent to Kerstin Pehrsson at the Institute

– **24 November** in Göteborg: Lecture at a seminar on Development Strategies in India and China organised by Folkuniversitet, Göteborg University

– **26–29 November:** Evaluation work at the Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen: Information about SASNET to several researchers there

– **4–17 December:** Contact journey to South India, visits to Chennai, Tiruchirapalli, and Thiruvananthapuram:

- 6 December: Meeting with *Mr. Lawrence Surendra, National Law School, Bangalore, and Dr. Gunnel Cederlöf, Uppsala*, about their proposed undergraduate course at Dalarna University College with field studies in South India
- 6 December: Seminar about SASNET at *Madras Institute of Development* with an audience of about 35 persons. Meetings with Prof. C.T. Kurien, Dr. Ananta Kumar Giri, Dr. Kripa Ananth Pur, and other scholars
- 6 December: Meeting with *Prof. V. Sudarsen (head) and prof. M.A. Kalam, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Madras*: Possibilities to co-operate in research and in graduate courses, field studies, etc. Christer Norström and Björn Alm already have co-operation with this department, which could be extended in the future.
- 7 December (and 11 December): Meeting with *Dr. A. Rajagopal, South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies, Hyderabad*: Will participate in Jan Lundqvist and Julie Wilk's, SASNET supported programme: "Triple Integration. Targeting poverty with water and social programmes."
- 7 December: Meeting with *Dr. Paul Apasamy, Director, Madras School of Economics*: Possibilities to co-operate in research and in special courses for Nordic business personal. Apasamy has earlier collaborated with Jan Lundqvist and other Swedish researchers and is very positive to further collaboration
- 7 December: Meeting *Stina Vasu, Honorary Consul of Sweden in Chennai*: Presentation of SASNET (discussion about the vacant Church of Sweden Mission houses at Kodaikanal, if they could be used for some academic purpose by SASNET or related networks)
- 7 December: Meeting with *Prof. D. Jayalakshmi, Dept. of Sociology, University of Madras*: Possibilities to co-operate in research and in graduate courses, field studies, etc.
- 11 December: Seminar about SASNET at *Bharatidasan University, Tiruchirapalli*. Seminar and lecture attended by about 250 teachers and students. Meeting with *Prof. V.B. Athreya, acting registrar*: Discussion about future research collaboration. Also met the Vice-Chancellor, who wants an agreement of co-operation with Lund University
- 12 December: Seminar about SASNET at the *Dept. of Sociology, Kerala University*. About 30 teachers and students attended. Meeting with *Prof. Manu Bhaskar, prof. Indu Kumar (head), and Ms. Elizabeth Mathew, Loyola College of Social Science* about possibilities to give seminars to students from Österlen's Folk High School, who are going to Kerala for fieldwork in January – February 2002. An informal agreement of co-operation was made
- 13-15 December: Participation in the Conference: Labour and Capitalist Transformation at the *Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, Kerala*. About 50 prominent Indian and foreign scholars attended the conference: Presentation of SASNET. Contacts in Delhi, Kathmandu, Kolkata and Hyderabad for visits in February – March 2002.

The journey was mainly financed by the Indo-Dutch research collaboration programme IDPAD. The cost for SASNET was 8 055 SEK.

### Lars Eklund's 2001 special activities

- **31 January**: Course at the Press Institute, Stockholm: "How to create a web site". One full day + one month part-time studies at home (by E-learning)
- **21 February**: Participation in a conference in Copenhagen; planning for an Internet networking co-operation by creating a database on working papers. Representatives from SASNET, NIAS, EIJS (European Institute for Japanese Studies, School of Economics, Stockholm), Copenhagen Business School, and Centre for East and Southeast Asian Studies, Lund, present
- **5 March**: Lecture on the Indian Nobel laureate **Rabindranath Tagore**, his life and his music, at Svalöv municipal library (in connection with a concert by **Bubu Munshi- Eklund**)
- **22 March**: One-day course at CITU (Centre for Information Technology in Education). "How to use LUVIT (the Lund University e-learning system)"
- **27 April – 30 May**: Five half-days course on web production at CITU. One day overview on web pages and web sites, two days working with images on the web (in Photoshop), and two days working with Dreamweaver.

- **7–8 September:** Visiting the 7<sup>th</sup> Himalayan Languages Symposium, at Uppsala University. Presenting SASNET and its activities
  - **13–14 September:** Visiting the Göteborg Book Fair, in connection with the inauguration of the Indo-Swedish Translation project, taking part in seminars with Indian writers and translators
  - **20–22 September:** SASNET delegate to the biannual conference of NASA (Nordic Association of South Asian scholars), titled "Waters of Hope", at Voss in Norway. Presenting SASNET and its activities
  - **25 September:** Lecture on *India – current history and the underlying determining factors* for its destiny, at Höör, for teachers and other school personnel who are going to India. An arrangement by Sida
  - **1 October:** Visiting seminar and dinner in Lund with the renowned Indian psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar
  - **15-16 October:** Lars participated in the EU–India Think Tank Seminar, which took place in Brussels, Belgium, with representatives from a large number of Universities and Research institutions in Europe and India.
  - **17 October:** Organising a Durga Puja celebration in Lund, lecture on the myths around the Hindu goddess Durga
  - **11 December:** Master's Program in South Asian Studies at Öresund University Discussions. A meeting was held at the Asian Institute in Copenhagen on, in which the participants concluded that the efforts shall continue, not the least in order to ensure that the intended programme is standardised – valid on both sides of Öresund
  - **7 January 2002:** Lecture on Afghanistan – its history and its people. Rotary Club, Svalöv
- Besides these activities LE has been heavily engaged in the production of the magazine Sydasien, which has published 4 issues in 2001, including a special issue on Afghanistan. LE has also reviewed a number of new books, mainly in the fields of Indian contemporary history and religion, for Bibliotekstjänst.

## 2002

- **Planning and Networking Grants were distributed twice**, on 24 January and 27 August. In all 13 projects were awarded funding.
- **Eleven SASNET newsletters** were published, No. 12–22.
- **On 9–11 January** SASNET participated actively in the working group that organised the **Sida/SAREC funded conference about Swedish Development studies research** called "Fattiga och rika. Aktuell utvecklingsforskning och dess villkor i Sverige" at Lund University. Several of the presented research projects were related to South Asia. Representatives from the research councils, from Sida, and the Swedish universities also participated in a fruitful discussion about the future for Swedish development studies.
- **On February 4th, SASNET invited Mr. Shahid Kamal, Ambassador of Pakistan** to Sweden for a full-day programme. Vice-Chancellor Boel Flodgren hosted a lunch at the Old Bishop's Palace for the ambassador and invited representatives from Lund University. The ambassador visited the International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE) and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. Then followed a SASNET Open House Seminar on "Possible themes for Pakistan–Sweden co-operation in the fields of research and education". Finally, a public lecture by Mr Kamal on "The conflict in Afghanistan, and the Pakistan–India relations" in collaboration with the Lund Association of Foreign Affairs.



– **On 6 April**, The Urdu Academy of Sweden inaugurated its new magazine, Zafia, with a ceremony in Lund . Venue S:t Hans församlingshem, Fäladstorget. Chief guests at the ceremony were Jan Hjärpe, prof of Islamology at Lund University, and the SASNET director, Prof Staffan Lindberg. After the inaguration and tea/coffee there was a mushaira – recital of Urdu poetry.



– **More Swedish departments where research on South Asia is going on.** Added to the list of research environments at Swedish universities, presented by SASNET.

The full list by August 2002 included nearly 60 departments.

f Dept of History and Technology at Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan in Stockholm

f Dept of Biotechnology at Lund University

f Applied Environmental Impact Assessment; Department of Earth Sciences at Uppsala University

f African and Comparative Archaeology; Department for Archaeology and Ancient History at Uppsala University

f Dept of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University

f Dept of Human and Economic Geography at Göteborg University

f Division of Bacteriology; Department of Medical Microbiology, Dermatology and Infection at Lund University

f Dept of Theology; Islamology at Lund University

f Dept of Theology; Psychology of Religion at Lund University

f Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at Lund University

f Human Geography, Department of Social Sciences at Mid Sweden University, Östersund

f Stockholm Environment Institute, SEI

f Unit of Paleogeophysics and Geodynamics at Stockholm University

f Institute of International Education (IIE) at Stockholm University

f Dept of Government at Uppsala University

f Dept of Physiology at Uppsala University

f Dept of Theology; Psychology of Religion at Uppsala University

– **Tagore programme at Nobel Museum in Stockholm.** The Nobel Museum in Stockholm arranged a programme on the Indian author/poet, and Nobel laureate 1913, Rabindranath Tagore, on Thursday 31 October. P O Henricson lectured on Tagore's life, and Bubu Munshi-Eklund sings his compositions in the original language Bengali. The museum, located in Börshuset at Stortorget in Gamla Stan, also presented Tagore in its exhibitions, and through a film and an exhibition catalogue in several languages.

• **Bharata Natyam performance with a social content**

The Indian Bharata Natyam artist Sarangarajan Vijayalakshmi from Chennai toured Sweden during September–October 2002, with a performance called "Love's Wisdom in the Last Era". It was a touching performance that deals with the evil phenomenon of Infanticide in certain parts of the State of Tamil Nadu in South India, and it was arranged by Alvom, an organisation that fights infanticide. take place on 31 October, 19.00, at Stadsteatern in Kristianstad (Tivoliparken). SASNET sponsored a performance in Lund on Wednesday 23 October.



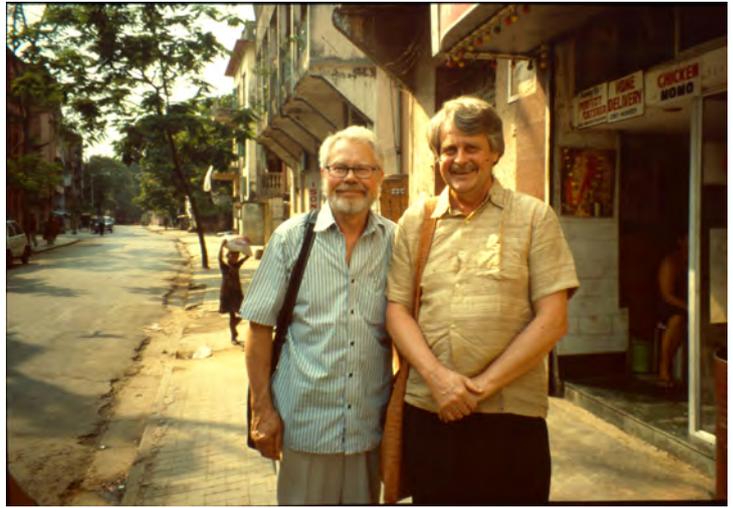
Meeting Professor Anders Närman from the Dept. of Human and Economic Geography, Göteborg University, at the University of Kelaniya).

– During February – March, Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund did a tour in South Asia in order to link up SASNET activities with universities and research institutions in the Maldives, Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh.

– On May 21st, SASNET hosted the Indian ambassador Ms Chitra Narayanan and the Counsellor Mr Sachdeva when they visited Lund University, and had lively discussions with the Vice-chancellor Boel Flodgren and a lunch hosted by the university.

– SASNET was represented both by Staffan Lindberg and by Lars Eklund at the **17th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies in Heidelberg**, Germany, 9–14 September. Here a decision was taken that SASNET/Lund University should organise the next conference in Lund 2004

– On 7 October, Staffan Lindberg participated in a **seminar on "New opportunities for Indian and Swedish business development"** on Stockholm. More than a hundred Indian and Swedish business leaders met under the heading 'India and Sweden – New Vistas of Cooperation'.



– SASNET's organised a **symposium for Swedish PhD students and post-docs** engaged in South Asia research on 25–27 October 2002, at Marstrands Varmbadhus, north of Göteborg. has published a special home-page under News & Info, with articles on and links to "Important analyses of the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and its implications for South Asia". The Gaeway also opened a new page called "Recommended reading/listening for South Asia scholars" to be continuously updated

– SASNET continued to work with a one-year **academic undergraduate course on India/South Asia at Österlen's Folk High School** (counted as 20 credit points). The teachers come from sociology, human ecology, and anthropology at Lund University.

– SASNET was strongly involved in assisting teachers and PhD students to organise a section for Indian studies at the Department of History of Religions at Lund University, and was a partner in a discussion at the Department of Theology which led to a **new chair professorship in Indian**

**religions** (decided in December 2002)

– SASNET involved in the launch of an **international Masters course at Lund University on "Globalisation and Transformation in a Comparative Perspective"**, organised by Kjell Nilsson and Jan-Olof Nilsson, by establishing contact with Dr. Dipak Malik at Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi to become an Indian partner.

– Lars and Staffan participated in the **17th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies in Heidelberg**.

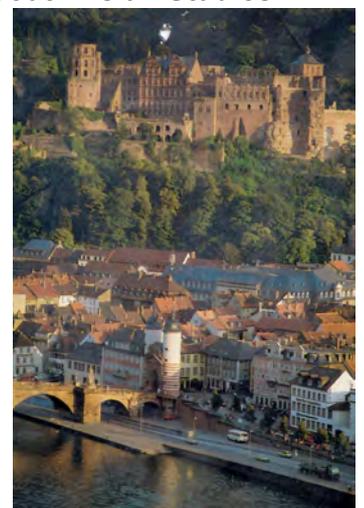


#### **SASNET 2002 Seminars:**

• Professor **Bhupinder Brar** from Dept of Political Science, University of Punjab, Chandigarh, India, was invited by SASNET to lecture at the Dept of Sociology, Lund University, on "*Stability and Security in South Asia: Towards a Post-Nationalist Perspective*", on Wednesday 9 October, 2002.

• Dr **Prakash Nelliya**t, environmental economist from Madras School of Economics, Chennai, India, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University, on "*Environmental cost of T-shirts. The case of Tirupur, India*", on Wednesday 2 October, 2002, at the Dept of Human Ecology. Prakash Nelliya is working on a thesis on "Economic Assessment of Industrial Water Pollution – A Case Study of Textile Processing Units in Tiruppur", and has been invited to Linköping University for two months during the Fall of 2002, on a World Bank Scholarship.

• Professor **Dipak Malik** from the Faculty of Commerce, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India, was invited by SASNET to lecture on "*Hindutva then and now: A profile of Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya*", at



Lund University, on Friday 20 September 2002. The lecture was held at the Dept of History of Religions.

- Dr **Tilak R Kem**, Additional Secretary at the University Grants Commission of India, visited SASNET and Lund University on Tuesday 4 June, 2002. Dr Kem, previously connected to the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, had come to Sweden as an invited guest to Högskolan Kristianstad, in his capacity of being an expert on distance education.

- **Sutapa Chattopadhyay**, research fellow at the Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, India, held a lecture and seminar on "*Development Projects and Resettlement: A Study of Health and Living Conditions of the Displaced Population*", at Lund University on Thursday 18 April 2002. It was organised by the Development Studies Seminar at the Dept of Sociology.

- A lecture and seminar with Dr. **A. Rajagopal**, Research Coordinator, South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies (SaciWaters) at Hyderabad, India, was arranged at Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, on Friday 8 February 2002, jointly by SASNET and the Development Studies Seminar. The title of the lecture was *Water Rights and Rural Development in India*.

## 2003

- **During 2003 SASNET continued to network with old and new partners in order to sustain already established activities and to start new ones.** The work included preparing for the 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies to be held in July 2004, funding and supporting with planning grants 17 new research and education projects across Sweden, and interacting with a large number of Swedish and South Asian students and scholars.

- **The Internet Gateway** was by now established as a reliable and thorough source of information for students, researchers and other persons interested in South Asian studies. It received worldwide attention and recognition for its wealth of useful information. In the beginning of March 2004 it has had more than 24 000 visitors since 5 August 2001 when it was originally launched. Since this was SASNET's main tool of communication a lot of time was spent on updating and developing its content. New information was added on a daily basis, and the work was done on a journalistic basis.

- **On 9–11 January**, SASNET participated actively in the working group that organised the Sida/SAREC funded conference about Swedish Development studies research called "Fattiga och rika. Aktuell utvecklingsforskning och dess villkor i Sverige" at Lund University. Several of the presented research projects were related to South Asia. Representatives from the research councils, from Sida, and the Swedish universities also participated in a fruitful discussion about the future for Swedish development studies

- **On April, 1-3**, SASNET was represented by Jan Magnusson at the Indo-Swedish Joint Commission's 14th session in New Delhi. The delegations were led by Swedish minister of trade and industry Mr Leif Pagrotsky, and Indian minister for commerce and industry Mr Arun Jaitley. Although mainly focussing on issues of trade and investment the session also included some matters pertaining to science and technology.

- **On April, 3-4**, SASNET participated in Roskilde University Centre's seminar about "Religious Mobilisation and Organised Violence in Contemporary South Asia"



- **Staffan and Lars went on a journey to Pakistan and Afghanistan** in November - December 2003, making many new contacts. One of the effects was that a number of scholars from Pakistan announced their participation in the 18th Conference on Modern South Asian Studies. They also discussed a proposal



to organise a programme for Pakistani PhDs in Sweden financed by Pakistan's government..

- **In November, SASNET moved its office** to the Centre for East- and South-East Asian Studies (ACE).

- SASNET assisted teachers and PhD students to organise a section for Indian studies at the Department of History of Religions at Lund University. The discussions led to a new chair professorship in Indian religions (decided by December 2003).

- **Continued organisation of an undergraduate programme** in South Asian Studies at Österlen's Folk high school

– **SASNET Reference group of South Asian researchers established.** The SASNET board at its meeting on 28 January 2003 decided to appoint Prof Zulfiqar Bhutta, Dept. of Paediatrics, Agha Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan; Dr. Rita Afsar, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh; Dr. Deepak Malik, Faculty of Commerce, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India; Prof. R. Indira, Dept. of Sociology, University of Mysore, India; Prof. Kumudu Wijewardena, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP), Colombo, Sri Lanka; and Dr. Bipin Adhikari, co-ordinator, Laws of Nepal, Kathmandu, to form a reference group of South Asian researchers whom the root node and the board will consult about SASNET's aims and activities.

– **SASNET involved in formation of Øresund Network of Asian Studies.** An Øresund Network of Asian Studies was under formation, with active participation from SASNET. This could eventually entail focused cooperation at all levels of education within the Øresund University.

– **SASNET symposia at Karlstad and Göteborg.** Follow-up meetings to the SASNET's symposium in Marstrand in October 2002 were arranged at Karlstad University and Göteborg University in September 2003. Researchers, teachers and students engaged in South Asian studies at Karlstad University presented their work at a meeting on Wednesday 24 September (some of the participants shown on Lars Eklund's photo to the right); and those engaged in South Asia related research at Göteborg University were given an introduction to SASNET and its web site at a meeting on Thursday 25 September.

– **New location for SASNET's root node office at Lund University.** From 6 November 2003, the new office was located within the premises of the Centre for East and South East Asian Studies, ACE, House Alfa 1 at Ideon Research Village, room 2042 (first floor).



– **Useful information before travelling to South Asia.** The Gateway now had a page with lots of useful information, for example links to Swedish Foreign Office's Recommendations about travelling to South Asia. In February 2003 the Swedish Foreign Office advised against all travelling to Afghanistan; Nepal; Pakistan; and specific states of India (Jammu och Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, and the western parts of Rajasthan). The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office, which similarly gave advice on safety aspects on travelling to all countries. The British recommendations differed somewhat from those issued by the Swedish Foreign Office, in that they did not rule out travelling to Nepal at all; as well as making essential (not tourist) visits to Pakistan and safe parts of Kabul city (Afghanistan). Regarding India the British advised against travelling only to one state, Jammu & Kashmir (except Ladakh); and besides that only against the border regions of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab and Ladakh. On the other hand the British still advised against travelling to the North and East parts of Sri Lanka, unless as travelling with an international agency or NGO.

– **Also new in the Gateway:** Visa rules for Swedish citizens intending to visit foreign countries; Visa rules for foreigners intending to visit Sweden, Swedish Embassies in South Asia, Information on Schengen Visa, South Asian embassies in Sweden (or in some cases, the closest diplomatic representation outside Sweden), South Asian Airlines; Swedish travel agencies specialised on South Asia destinations, Friendship Societies, now including Afghanistansolidaritet, Svensk-Indiska föreningen, Sweden Nepal Society, and Sri Lanka Association in Sweden.

## Useful information before travelling to/from South Asia:

- [Practical information](#) (currency converter, time zones, weather, maps, calendars, online translator, etc.)
- [Health and Malaria situation](#)
- [South Asian Telephone Directories](#)
- [South Asian Hotel Portal](#)
- [Travel advice from the Swedish Foreign Office](#)
- [Travel advice from the British Foreign Office](#)
- [Schengen Visa](#)
- [Swedish Embassies in South Asia](#)
- [South Asian Embassies in Sweden, or closest representation](#)
- [South Asian Airlines & Railways](#)
- [Swedish Travel agencies on South Asia](#)
- [Lonely Planet Online, and](#) • [Survival Guide to Kabul](#)
- [Official Tourist boards](#)
- [Friendship societies](#)

## SASNET 2003 Seminars:

• Dr. **Rajesh Kharat**, political scientist from the Department of Civics & Politics, University of Mumbai, held a SASNET Guest Lecture on "*The Bhutan Refugee Problem*", Thursday 13 February at the International Office, Lund University. Dr. Kharat is a leading expert on Bhutan, the refugee situation in the region, and more generally about the political and economic cooperation in South Asia. In 1999 he published the book "Bhutan in SAARC: Role of a Small State in a Regional Alliance".

• Prof. **Jan Breman**, Dept. of Sociology, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, held a SASNET lecture on "*Informalisation of work in India*". The 6th May seminar was organised in cooperation with the General Seminar at the Department of Sociology, Lund University.

• Professor **R S Deshpande** from the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, India, visited Lund University during the later part of May 2003. R S Deshpande held a SASNET lecture on "*Consequences of the Green Revolution in India*", on Monday 26 May 2003, at the Dept of Economic History, Ekonomikum, Tycho Brahes väg 1, Lund.

• SASNET arranged a concert with **Amit Chatterjee and Suman Laha**, two young Indian classical musicians from Kolkata, in Lund on Sunday 25 May 2003. Amit Chatterjee is a talented tabla player who has frequently toured Europe and the USA, whereas Suman Laha played the guitar in a rather unusual mode, like an Indian veena. The concert was arranged in collaboration with the Zimba Marimba World Music Studio in Lund, which also provided for the concert hall at the crossing Kobjersvägen/Qvantenborgsvägen in the northwestern part of Lund.

• **Bidyut Mohanty**, Head of the Women's Studies Dept, Institute of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi, gave a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Thursday 5 June 2003. Mohanty was on her way to the conference on "*Women and Politics in Asia*" in Halmstad, and she lectured on "*Seat Reservation in Local Politics – Impact on the Lives of Women in India*". Venue: Dept of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5, Lund

• Professor. **Dipak Malik** from the Dept. of Commerce, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India, lectured at Lund University on "*IT, Hindu Fundamentalism and Class Struggles in India*", Tuesday 19 November. Professor Malik's research has mainly focused on labour market and trade unions. He has extensive experience of international cooperation and has been guest professor at University of West Indies St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago; and University of York, Ontario, Canada. In this connection he has developed courses in for example "Politics and Sociology of Communalism". The lecture was organized by the General Seminar, Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, in collaboration with SASNET. Venue: Dept. of Sociology, room 3, Paradisgatan 3, Lund



*Dr. Rajesh Kharat after his lecture, surrounded by Leif Bjellin, Dept of Animal Physiology, Lund University; Zubair Warsi, Urdu Academy, Lund; Prof Staffan Lindberg, SASNET; and Sidsel Hansson, History of Religions, Lund University*



## 2004

– During 2004 SASNET concentrated on **organising the 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies**, Lund University 6–9 July 2004; further development of SASNET's Internet Gateway by mastering new programming techniques and continuous updating, funding and supporting the planning of 10 new research and education projects across Sweden; and interaction over the Internet and via telep-

hone with a large number of Swedish and South Asian students and scholars, providing information and contacts. The July conference had an effective organisation with a conference convenor and four co-convenors (Lars Eklund, Jan Magnusson, Elna Andersson and Sidsel Hansson) and they were assisted by 15 students, who worked before and during the conference with the packing of conference material, the secretariat, the technical equipment, the venues, the computer hall, etc.

– **Full reports from the SASNET contact journey to Pakistan and Afghanistan now available.** Staffan and Lars successfully completed their contact journey to Pakistan and Afghanistan lasting from Thursday 0 November – Sunday 7 December 2003. The aim of the tour was to link up the SASNET activities with universities and research institutions in the two countries, They visited Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore in Pakistan; and Kabul in Afghanistan. It turned out to be an extremely fruitful journey, both building on the already existing academic links between a few researchers/institutions in Sweden and Pakistan, and promoting new forms of cooperation there as well as in Afghanistan.

– **SASNET presented in the Lund University monthly magazine.** Lund University's monthly bulletin LUM – Lunds Universitet Meddelar – in its February 2004 issue presented SASNET in an article (in Swedish language) called "Hemsidan är basen för SASNET"

– **Karl Reinhold Haellquist Memorial Collection now being catalogued.** The renowned Swedish scholar Karl Reinhold Haellquist passed away in 2000. He was a historian specialised on South Asia and worked for more many years at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen. His wife Inger in 2004 has donated 5,000 volumes from Haellquist's private library to SASNET. It was catalogued and placed at Lund University's Asian Library (Asienbiblioteket).

– **William Radice's Conference Diary published in Indian newspaper.** The extensive Conference Diary prepared by Dr. William Radice during the 18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, organised by SASNET 6–9 July 2004, was published in extenso in the 2004 Puja Festival magazine, published by the Indian newspaper The Statesman, Kolkata (October 2004). The article was illustrated with photos of Lund University.

– **European Commission grant to the SASNET–Fermented Foods networking project**

The Delegation of the European Commission to India, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka decided to grant a sum of 63 280 Euro for the activities of the so called SASNET–Fermented Foods networking project, a joint project by the Dept. of Applied Nutrition and Food Chemistry, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund University (through Prof. Baboo Nair), SMC College of Dairy Science, Anand, India (through Dr. J.B. Prajapati), and the Institute of Rural management, also in Anand (through Dr. Pratap Reddy). The grant was used for organising a series of three strategic meetings/workshops during the year 2005.

– **Swedish Research Council grants to South Asia related research projects.** Four South Asia related research projects within the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences were given major grants from the Swedish Research Council. Decisions were announced on 5 November 2004. The projects awarded grants are run by Aida Lagergren Aragao, Uppsala University, Göran Djurfeldt and Staffan Lindberg, Lund University, Martin Gansten, Lund University, and Peter Schalk, Uppsala University.

– **On 4 March**, SASNET was represented at the Swedish Indian Business Council meeting "the Indian train is speeding ahead"

– **On 31 March** Staffan participated in the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs' India Seminar. He also held <http://larseklund.in/Old.sasnet.lu.se-23.april/sasnet.lu.se/wwwroot/bilder/rajkharat.jpg> meetings on the new Swedish India policy at the Embassy of Sweden in New Delhi in January 2005.

– **On 6 May**, Srilankan member of SASNET's South Asian reference group visited Lund. Dr. Kumudu Wijewardena from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP), Sri Lanka (photo to the right), visited SASNET. Dr. Wijewardena, who regularly visits Uppsala University where she is involved in research collaboration with the Dept. of Women's and Children's Health, is a member of SASNET's South Asian reference group, overlooking our work from a South Asian perspective.



– **On 14 September** The Öresund Network of Asian Studies was inaugurated at Copenhagen University.

– **During the year SASNET interacted on several occasions with the Ambassador of Pakistan**, Shahid A. Kamal about the Pakistan intentions to send 200 Masters students to Sweden annually. In November a Memorandum of Understanding was reached between the Ministry of Education and the Swedish Institute in this regard.

– **Two practicing Indian lawyers Vasudha Nagaraj and Anuroopa Giliya** visited SASNET on Wednesday 24 November 2004, along with Oscar Hemer from the School of Arts and Communication, Malmö University. Nagaraj is working for the Anveshi Research Centre for Women's Studies in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh; and Giliya is a member of the Alternative Law Forum, based in Bangalore. They were invited to

Sweden in order to lead a workshop at the Third Space Seminar, arranged in Malmö and Lund 26–28 November 2004.

– **Magazines/Library at SASNET's root node office.** A large number of South Asia related magazines were by now available at the SASNET root node office in Lund. Besides these SASNET kept a small library with a collection including a majority of the doctoral and licentiate theses on South Asia related issues from the Nordic universities since 2001, and in some cases even earlier. The root node library also kept a limited selection of useful reference literature on South Asia, in most cases donated to us or bought during contact journeys in the region. It includes the six-volumes *The Encyclopedia of Modern South Asia*.

– **12 SASNET Newsletters were published** plus an extra Tsunami Newsletter.

#### **SASNET Seminars:**

- Dr. **Sidsel Hansson** from the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, and the Centre for East and South East Asian Studies held a SASNET lecture on "*Reinventing a sacred landscape? The Ganges river as a contested domain*" on Tuesday 2 March 2004. The lecture was based on material from her 2001 doctoral thesis entitled 'Not just any water? Hinduism, ecology and the Ganges water controversy'. This was the first SASNET lecture to be held at its new location in connection with the Centre for East and South East Asian Studies at Ideon Research Park, Alfa 1 building.
- **Eva-Maria Hardtmann**, Dept. of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University held a SASNET guest lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 13 April 2004. She lectured on "*Indian Dalits in a globalising world*", discussing their networks, messages and strategies. Besides she talked about their participation in the World Social Forum in Mumbai in January 2004. Eva-Maria Hardtmann defended her PhD thesis 'Our Fury is Burning': Local Practice and Global Connections in the Dalit Movement' in November 2003. Venue: Hanlin hall, ACE, House Alfa 1, Ideon Research Park. The lecture was organized jointly with the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies at Lund University.
- On 11 May, Dr. **Martin Gansten**, Centre for Theology and Religion, Lund University, lectured on "*Ast- rology in Ancient and Modern India*" Gansten is, a Sanskritist and historian of religion specializing in classical Hinduism, his interests include Indian philosophical traditions as well as astrology and other divinatory arts. Venue: Centre for Theology and Religion, Allhelgona Kyrkogata, Lund.
- Prof. **Naila Kabeer**, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK, held a SASNET guest lecture on Monday 8 November. She lectured on "*Citizenship and Empowerment*". Kabeer, during 2004 guest professor at PADRIGU, Göteborg University, is an economist with specialisation on such areas as gender dimensions of poverty, population and health, and poverty and food security. The lecture was jointly organised by SASNET; the Development Study Group at the Dept. of Political Science; and the Development Studies Seminar at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University.
- Dr. **Suruchi Thapar-Björkert** from Dept. of Sociology at the University of Bristol gave a SASNET lecture on Tuesday 23 November.. She lectured on "*Gendered Caste Conflicts in rural North India*". Dr. Thapar-Björkert, was a visiting research fellow with the Dept. of Ethnic Studies at Linköping University, Campus Norrköping during the Fall 2004.
- **Doris Jakobsh**, University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, gave a SASNET lecture on "*Innovation or In- vention? The Sikhs, Colonization, Gender and the Feminization of Ritual*" at Lund University, on Wednesday 8 December. Venue: Centre for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR), Allhelgona Kyrkogata 8, Lund. Doris Jakobsh is a researcher specialized on Gender in Sikh Studies and visited Sweden in connection with the Nordic conference on "*Ritual Practices in Indian Religions and Contexts*" held at Lund University 9–11 December 2004.

## 2005

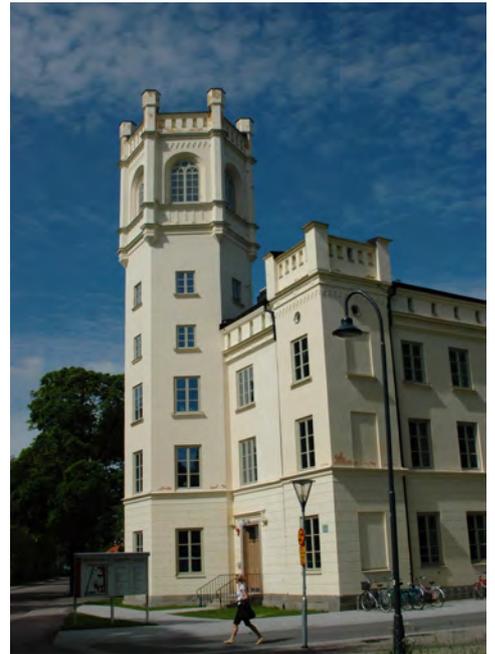
– **An evaluation of SASNET was carried out during the Spring.** This formed the basis for a renewed application to Sida SAREC in September for continued funding for the period 2006-2008. The external experts Prof. Carla Risseuw, Leiden, Prof. Ghanshyam Shah, Ahmedabad, and Mr. Lennart Wohlgemuth, Uppsala, worked in Sweden from 8 to 14 May and interviewed about 60 persons in Stockholm, Uppsala, Karlstad, Göteborg and Lund. They also had e-mail contacts with some of our partners in South Asia. Finally they met us at the root node in Lund on 13-14 May and discussed their findings. Their report was delivered in the end of June 2005. On 7 September, Staffan Lindberg and the head of the external experts, Mr. Lennart Wohlgemuth had a meeting with Sida/SAREC and discussed the results of the evaluation.

– **In September a new application to Sida SAREC** for funding during 2006 – 2008, and on 28 February 2006 Sida SAREC decided the funding of SASNET during 2006 – 2008 with the same amount as earlier re-

ceived, that is, 1.65 million annually.

– **The major networking effort was the contact journey to Northeast South Asia.** From 18 November to 19 December Lars and Staffan visited a great number of academic institutions in Kolkata, North Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhubaneswar, and Patna.

– **SASNET's webmaster Lars Eklund started to regularly visit departments** and researchers/educationists involved in South Asia related research at Swedish universities. It is part of an effort to strengthen the SASNET national network. In November 2004 he visited Örebro University in connection with the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Sweden–India Project, but also visited other departments. In December 2004 Lars went to Luleå University of Technology and earlier during 2004 Lars Eklund also visited the University of Dalarna, Campus Falun, and Göteborg University. On 20 June 2005 Lars visited Uppsala University, where he met with researchers at the Department of Linguistics and Philology and finally at the division of the Dept. of Women's and Children's Health. The following day he proceeded to Karolinska Institutet Medical University in Stockholm and met with researchers at the Dept. of Woman and Child Health, and other departments involved in South Asia related research and education. He also attended the meeting of Karolinska Institutet Research and Training Committee, KIRT, when it decided to intensify and extend the already existing collaboration on research and research training with Pakistan.



– **On 12-14 January**, a successful conference on Structures of Vulnerability was organised in Stockholm by the Dept. of Social Anthropology at Stockholm University in collaboration with Sida. Lars Eklund participated. It was the largest gathering so far in Sweden of Third world oriented researchers, within fields such as Biodiversity, Children and youth, Climate, Corruption, Environment, Ethnicity, Food and water, Gender, Hazards, Health, Infrastructure, Law, Religion, Urbanity, War and violence, and Welfare. More than 300 researchers and graduate/post graduate students took part in

the conference, and a vast number of South Asia related research papers were presented in the workshops. Key note speakers were Professor Ben Wisner, lecturing on "Root causes of vulnerability: What do we know after 30 years and what is to be done about them", Professor Hunter Wade and Professor Johanne Sundby. A panel debate was also held on "Victims and Actors – who get the blame? Concepts of structure and agency in the development research", with Ass. Prof. Hans Abrahamsson and Prof. Björn Hettne from PADRIGU, Göteborg University, Prof. Thomas Hylland Erikssen, Oslo University, and Prof. Gudrun Dahl, Dept. of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University (photo to the right).

– **On 10 March a public seminar on "Traditional Bengali Theatre, Culture and Music"** was held in Huddinge, south of Stockholm. Lars Eklund participated. Ten folk musicians, dancers and singers from Purulia, in the western part of the Indian state of West Bengal, on tour to Sweden, took part in the seminar that was organised by Associate Professor Christina Nygren, Stockholm University. Dr. Mirja Juntunen from the Department of Oriental Languages, Stockholm University, was also involved in the seminar, reading out translations into Swedish of the songs performed by the Purulia artists. The following day the group gave a performance called "Bengali Night" featuring suggestive so-called jhumu music and nachni dance (by Shonda Rani), at Södra Teatern in Stockholm.



– **On 11 April, SASNET organised post-tsunami seminar in Lund** in collaboration with Lund University's Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), and (a Lund University network dealing with global equity and sustainability issues) It was entitled "Beyond Control – Risk and Learning after the Tsunami". The seminar was inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor of Lund University, Prof. Göran Bexell, to be followed by afternoon lectures focusing on different aspects of risk and disaster management. Among the lecturers were Dr. Simron Jit Singh from the University of Vienna (who defended his dissertation on trade relations in

the Nicobar Islands, at Lund University in December 2003), and Dr Camilla Orjuela, Dept. of Peace and Development Research, Göteborg University. The seminar rounded up with a panel discussion with researchers, a student and a journalist with experiences of the tsunami catastrophe, in an evening session. Prof. Staffan Lindberg, SASNET, was the moderator.

- SASNET planned and organised two **workshops with South Asian sociologists** in New Delhi with financial support from a SASNET planning grant
- Further development of **SASNET's Internet Gateway**
- Funding and supporting the planning of **15 new research and education projects** across Sweden
- Continued support to the **Masters Programme in Asian Studies** at Lund University, and the undergraduate programme in South Asian Studies at Österlen's Folk High School
- **The Indian Ambassador to Sweden**, Ms. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa, along with the First Secretary of the Embassy, Ms. Vani Rao, visited Lund University on Monday 13 June 2005. The programme for the day, prepared by SASNET, included visits to the Dept. of Biotechnology, and the Section for Indic Religions at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, where meetings were held with a large number of South Asia related researchers at Lund University. The Ambassador also had meetings with the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Göran Bexell, and with the SASNET root node staff.
- **Dr. Rukhsana Chowdhury, Assistant Director of the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology in Kolkata**, India, visited the SASNET root node office in Lund on Tuesday 13 September 2005. Dr. Chowdhury is specialised on vibriocholera bacteria and their adaptation to environmental stress. She is member of a new collaborative research project with the Division of Bacteriology at Lund University, a project that was given a SASNET planning grant in February 2005.

#### **SASNET 2005 Seminars:**

- **Abul Barkat**, Professor of Economics at Dhaka University gave a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 15 March. Abul Barkat, respected researcher and much engaged in development issues and the public debate on human rights and politics in Bangladesh, lectured on the "*Criminalization of Politics in Bangladesh*". Barkat was coming to Sweden to participate in a workshop on "Globalization and Health" organised by Health Economics Division at the Dept. of Community Medicine, Lund University (in Malmö) 16–17 March 2005. He also gave another lecture at the Green Library in Lund later on the same day, Tuesday 15 March. In a lecture focusing on "*The Right to Development & Human Development*", jointly organised by SASNET and the Swallows India-Bangladesh section in Lund, Barkat discussed the development assistance Bangladesh has received over the years – 40 Billion US dollars since 1971. "Has this helped Bangladesh", Barkat asks, and gives the answer himself: "No, 75 p.c. of the money has been embezzled!".
- **Geshe Pema Dorje**, Director of Sarah College for Higher Tibetan Studies in Dharamsala, India, held a SASNET lecture on "*Tibetan Education in Exile*" at Lund University on Tuesday 10 May 2005. Dorje who is a Buddhist monk lectured on the organization and development of educational institutions in the Tibetan refugee community in India and Nepal. In Sweden he has a long-standing relationship with Karlstad University, and from Lund he proceeded there, to be a guest lecturer for a few weeks. Venue: Conference Room, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE).
- Professor **Venkatesh B. Athreya**, Economics Department at Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirapalli, India, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Wednesday 11 May. Athreya, who is specialised in the political economy of development, agricultural and social development, lectured on "*Indian Development under the Neoliberal Reforms, 1991-2005*".
- Professor **Manoj Kumar Sinha** from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Wednesday 25 May. Sinha was a Visiting Professor at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Lund, and he will lecture on "*Protection of Human Rights in India through Courts and Human Rights Commission*". The lecture was arranged together with the Development Studies Seminar at the Dept. of Sociology and the Dept. of Sociology of Law.
- **ØRNAST, the Øresund Network of Asian Studies**, invited students and scholars from both sides of Öresund for a social gathering in Lund, on Wednesday 26 October, 18–21. The programme included a lecture by Professor **Olle Qvarnström** on "*From Hampton Roads to Lundagård. Lund University Research on Indic religions*", and a musical performance by **Bubu Munshi Eklund**, singing Rabindrasangeet, the musical treasure of the Indian/Bengali Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore.
- Professor **Saraswati Raju** from the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, gave a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 8 November. Prof. Raju who is a geographer lectured on "*Gender, Poverty and Labour Market in Rural India in the context of Globalization*", focusing on the very low number of officially reported working women in North India compared to South India, irrespectively of poverty rates and ecological factors. She argues that this has to do with a

ruling preference within the patriarchal social structure of the Gangetic plains, that women if possible should not work. It explains why the ratio of working women is equally low in the poor state of Bihar and the rich state of Haryana, and in wheat-growing Punjab and rice-growing West Bengal. Saraswati Raju had come to Sweden to participate in the GADNET Workshop, held in Uppsala 10–11 November

• Professor **Frank J. Korom** from the Dept. of Religion, Boston University, USA, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Monday 19 December. Korom talked about "*Singing Modernity: Bengali Scroll Painters Confront Globalization*", based on four years of field work among Patuas, a community of itinerant scroll painters/singers residing in Medinipur District, West Bengal, India. Here impoverished artists adapt to modernity, and expand their repertoires to contemporary social and political issues (such as communal violence in India, religious identity, HIV prevention, and even 9/11 and the recent tsunami). Venue: Room 438, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund.

## 2006

– **SASNET was heavily involved in the planning and realization of a workshop on the "Role of South Asia in the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Sweden"** at Nobel Forum, Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm 28-29 November 2006. Representatives from 20 Swedish universities, and from the International Programme Office for Education and Training; the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education; STINT; the Government ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs; and the South Asian embassies in Stockholm. There were altogether about 80 participants. Presentations included one by Mr. **Sunandan Roy Chowdhury**, a provocative keynote speech, entitled "*The Mofussil and the Metropolitan – Higher Education's Meandering Paths*".



– **Recruiting a new director for the period 2007 to 2009.** The board suggested the Vice-Chancellor to appoint Anna Lindberg, Penn State University, USA, and the Department of History, Lund University. In December the Vice-Chancellor decided to appoint her from 1 July 2007 to 31 December 2009. Staffan Lindberg's appointment as Director was extended for the period 1 January to 30 June 2007.

– **Further development of SASNET's Internet Gateway**, providing extensive information about South Asia related research and education at Swedish universities.

– **Funding and supporting the planning of new research and education networking projects** across Sweden, including guest lecture programmes and interdisciplinary workshop grants. 16 projects were funded in 2006.

– **Interaction and meetings with network partners at universities** all over Sweden and in the other Nordic countries. During the spring of 2007, Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund visited Blekinge Institute of Technology and Kalmar University. Staffan participated in an Oslo University seminar on India, an EU Forum in Hässleholm and in a TV programme on modern Indian history (Kunskapskanalen, 6 May).

– **An India Business day** was organised with the Sweden India Business Council at Ideon in Lund on 23 May.

– **SASNET distributed 11 newsletters** during the year 1 300 addressees

– On 6 May, **Kusum Jain and Geetesh Sharma, journalists, poets as well as social activists from Kolkata, India, visited SASNET's root node office in Lund.** They have a long-standing relation to Sweden, being partly involved in the Indo-Swedish translation project. Mr. Sharma had recently published a book titled "*Whither Secularism*" (Dialogue Society 2006), about how a crisis ridden Indian society may overcome its problems.

– **On 18-19 May**, Staffan Lindberg had meetings at the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida SAREC, Sida Asia Section, Vinnova, and the Swedish Institute. The main theme of the meeting was the role of SASNET in promoting studies and research, the workshop on the "Role of South Asia in the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Sweden," and the future of SASNET as a university based networking programme.

– **On 19 May**, Staffan Lindberg met the new ambassador of Sri Lanka in Stockholm and informed about SASNET and its activities. On 9 June, Staffan Lindberg met the ambassador of Pakistan in Stockholm and informed about SASNET and its activities.

– During stay in Kolkata, Lars Eklund on 3 January presented SASNET for PhD students at Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute for Asian Studies (**MAKAIAS**) on invitation by Prof. Jayanta Kumar Ray; and on 5 January he met professors and lecturers at **Jadavpur University**, Kolkata, invited by Ass. Prof Asoke Bhattacharya.. He introduced Ferdinando Sardella, Swedish PhD Candidate in History of Religion, to be affiliated to the Dept. of Sociology at Jadavpur.

– On 18 – 19 May Staffan visited Stockholm, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida SAREC, Sida Asia Section, Vinnova, Also meetings with Bo Lindblad and Malin Åkerblom to prepare names for the new SASNET board 2007 – 2009.

– On 26-30 June: Staffan and Lars participated in the 19th European Conference for Modern South Asian Studies in Leiden, Netherlands. Staffan chaired panel No. 32 on "Post Green Revolution Agrarian Transformation in South Asia: Ecology and Peasant Life under Globalization", and he also participated in a panel discussion on the formation of ANERI, the Academic Network for European Research related to India), initiated by the European Commission (and formally launched during the Leiden.



– On 22 August, Lars participated in the World Water Week 2007 conference in Stockholm.

– On 11 September, Staffan visited the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, on behalf of the Faculty of Engineering, Lund University, to initiate a student and teacher exchange programme, and two days later visited the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, with the same purpose.

– Staffan Lindberg participated in the continued planning and organisation of **Nordic Research School for South Asia**, called SARTrain within the Asian Century Research School Network (ACRSN) lead by NIAS, Copenhagen. As part of this Lund University arranged an independent, interdisciplinary research training course for masters and PhD students on 'Religion, Conflict and Identity in South and Southeast Asia,' in the autumn of 2006.

– In the first week of May, Staffan and Lars attended **Roskilde University PhD Researcher Training Course on "Postcolonial sexualities: Politics and discourses"**, listening to Tejaswini Niranjana, Director for the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society in Bangalore, India. She lectured on "Question: History and the Present in India and Trinidad", and about "Music, Race and Sexuality in Contemporary Trinidad". Discussions were held with her on possible links to establish between her institution in Bangalore with Swedish researchers.

– On 21-22 September, Lars represented SASNET at the 2006 Book Fair in Göteborg.

– On 6 – 8 November, Staffan was guest speaker at the conference 'Asian Studies at a Turning Point' in Turku, Finland.

– Besides all these SASNET activities, Lars was intensively engaged in the **production of the magazine SYDASIEN**, that he had been editor-in-chief for since 1982.



### **SASNET 2006 Seminars:**

• Professor **Tulsi Patel** from the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 31 January 2006. She lectured on "*Health Professionals, New Reproductive Technologies and Sex ratio in India*", and the lecture was very well attended. Nearly 30 persons, senior researchers at Lund University as well as Masters students at the Programme for Asian Studies, participated in the meeting held in the conference room of ACE.

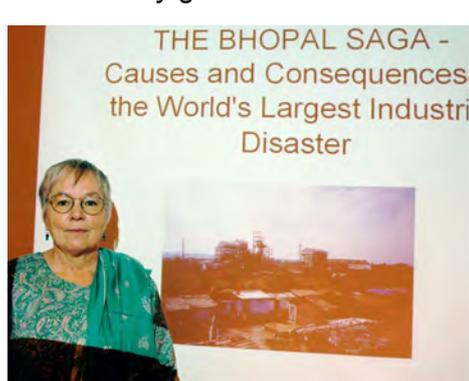
- Dr. **Gunilla Blomqvist** from the Dept. of Peace and Development Studies (PADRIGU), Göteborg University, Prof. Staffan Lindberg, SASNET, and the freelance journalist Petter Larsson, Malmö, participated in a seminar called "*Women in the export industry in South Asia – Exploitation or Emancipation?*" held on Wednesday 29 March. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund, and the venue was Nya Festsalen in the Academic Society Building (AF).

- On 18 April, SASNET arranged a guest lecture with Prof. **Sirimevan S. Colombage** and Dr. **Chandrabose** from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Sri Lanka Open University. They lectured about "*The role of microfinance in fighting rural poverty in Sri Lanka*". Prof. Colombage is an eminent economist specialised in macro-economic processes in Sri Lanka, and Dr. Chandrabose is regional economist specialised in the teaplantation economy. Since 2003 they have been engaged in a study of microfinance and rural poverty in Sri Lanka, a research project financed by a Swedish Research Links grant. The project has been carried out in collaboration with Associate Professor Alia Ahmad, Dept. of Economics, Lund University. Venue: Conference Room, Centre for East- and South-East Asian Studies.

- On 7 June, Professor **Sucha Singh Gill** from the Punjabi University, Patiala, India, held a SASNET lecture at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University. The topic was "*Marginalised Peasantry Seeking Safe Exit in India in the Era of Globalisation*". During June 2006 he was a guest researcher at NIAS in Copenhagen and the Department of Sociology, Lund University.

- Sri Lankan poet **Pireeni Sundaralingam** and Irish composer/violinist **Colm O'Riain** residing in San Fransisco, USA, visited Sweden with a program called "*Word and Violin*". SASNET invited them to Lund to give a well-attended performance on Wednesday 27 September 2006, 19.00. From Lund they proceeded to Uppsala University.

- On 1 November, Dr. **Bidyut Mohanty**, University of Delhi, India, gave a SASNET lecture, entitled "*One million women grassroots (village council) leaders: How do they govern the communities?*",



- On 15 November, the physician **Ingrid Eckerman** from Stockholm held a SASNET lecture about the 1984 toxic disaster in Bhopal, in Lund. The lecture, organised in collaboration with the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund, was entitled "*The Bhopal Saga – causes and consequences of the world's largest industrial disaster*". This is also the title of a book she published on Universities Press (India) in Hyderabad in 2005. In 1994, Dr. Eckerman was a member of the International Medical Commission on Bhopal, that studied the effects after the disaster that took place at the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal in December 1984, the world's worst industrial accident.



- On 29 November, Danish journalist **Eva Arnvig** held a SASNET lecture about "*Afghanistan: Warlords, Taliban or who will rule in the future?*" The event was organised in collaboration with the the Association of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan(SCA) in Lund. Eva Arnvig is not only an experienced journalist but also a clinical psychologist. She has worked for 18 years for UN organisations such as UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and has travelled extensively in Asia, not the least in Afghanistan. *Photo with Anders Davidson.*

- On 6 December, Prof. **K. C. Suri** from Nagarjuna University in Andhra Pradesh, India, held a SASNET lecture in Lund on "*The Emergence of coalitional politics in South Asia, with special reference to India*". Prof. K.C. Suri is a specialist on Indian and South Asian politics and also on agrarian economic and political issues. The lecture was organised in collaboration with the Development Studies Seminar at the Dept. of Sociology. Before coming to Lund, Prof. Suri participated in a conference on leadership in South Asia at the University of Oslo. He also visited Stockholm where he met research partners at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), involved in a research project on "State of Democracy in South Asia", a regional assessment to reflect citizens' perceptions and experiences of democracy in the region.



# 2007

– **The transfer of the directorship** was the most important occurrence during the year. On July 1, 2007, Dr. Anna Lindberg succeeded Prof. Staffan Lindberg. The latter used part of his remaining work time during the second half of 2007 to introduce Anna Lindberg into the work.

– **In November, Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund made a contact journey to India**, decided upon by the board. The main priority was to introduce SASNET at universities and research institutions in Delhi, Western, and South-Western India. They also organised the first-ever consultative meeting/workshop in Delhi for SASNET's South Asian Reference Group, consisting of members from five nations. A large number of fruitful meetings were held in all the places visited, including Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Mumbai, Loni, Pune, Bangalore, and Mysore. In New Delhi, the Swedish Embassy also organised a reception/dinner for the academic world in honour of the visiting SASNET delegation..

– On 16 May, Lars Eklund was invited to a **conference of 400 international coordinators at universities in Finland**. The conference in Seinäjoki included a session about academic collaboration with India from a Nordic perspective, to which Lars had been asked to present the activities of the Swedish South Asian Studies Network, and experiences from Indo-Swedish academic collaboration in general.

– **SASNET joined the Sweden India Business Council (SIBC)** in order to increase interaction with the business world. A joint SASNET/SIBC seminar titled "Det nya Indien" was held in Lund on May 23. It attracted around 50 people from companies in South Sweden and from Lund University. SASNET's Director, Staffan Lindberg, was the moderator for the day, and also lectured about "Vad är nytt med Indien – förändringar de senaste 25 åren". Other participants included Susanna Bill, Innovations Manager at Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications AB in Lund. She talked about "How to Unleash the Power of Emerging Markets", based on Sony Ericsson's experiences. Anne-Charlotte Sukhia from ACS Interkulturell Utbildning discussed cultural differences in business life, and Ingemar Ljungdahl from CTO Telelogic AB presented the development of Telelogic AB in the Indian market.



– **Interaction and meetings with network partners at universities** all over Sweden and in the other Nordic countries. Staffan and Lars visited Blekinge Institute of Technology and Kalmar University during the spring. Staffan participated in an Oslo University seminar on India, an EU Forum in Hässleholm, and a TV programme on modern Indian history (Kunskapskanalen, 6 May 2007). SASNET co-organised a two day India seminar during the fall with Roskilde University in Denmark. In September 2007, Anna and Staffan visited and met with researchers at Stockholm University, the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), and Karolinska Institutet.

– **The Swedish Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee visited Lund** University on October 22. Anna Lindberg was invited to introduce SASNET and some of its activities, and she also spoke on the topic of "The New India: A Trade and Research Nation".

– Through its involvement with the Masters Programme in Asian Studies (including a South Asia track), SASNET has been actively **working to open up Lund University's Asia Library to include South Asia-related literature** (besides its existing collections of literature on East and Southeast Asia). In January, the SASNET board decided to set aside SEK 25 000 to buy and catalogue books on modern South Asian studies for the Asia Library. A number of books from SASNET's root node office collection (more information) were also donated to the Asia Library.

– SASNET was actively involved in **European initiatives to enhance collaboration projects on research and education with India and South Asia**. Staffan participated in a meeting organised in Madrid by the the Asia-Europe Alumni Networks, 30 August – 1 September, and three representatives of SASNET (Sidsel Hansson, Per Hilding and Ferdinando Sardella) participated in the European Network on Contemporary Academic Research (Encari) roundtable conference in Brussels on 13 – 14 November. Finally, Lars Eklund participated in a meeting on the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) programme, held in Brussels on 19 December. This programme promotes the exchange of students and researchers from EU member states and targeted 'Thirdcountries'. Beginning in 2008, a separate lot is designed to promote collaboration between EU and India, and two other lots involve other South Asian countries. and education at Swedish universities.

– **Funding and supporting the planning of new research and education networking projects** across Sweden, including guest lecture programmes and interdisciplinary workshop grants. Nine projects were funded in 2007

– **SASNET distributed 12 newsletters** during 2007.

– **Important Stockholm visit on 15th August.** SASNET's Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg, and Deputy Director, Mr. Lars Eklund, visited Stockholm in order to participate in the celebration of the **60th anniversary day of Indian independence**, on invitation from the Indian Ambassador, Mrs. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa. A large gathering of diplomats, university and business people, artists and journalists gathered at the festive event in central Stockholm.

Later the same day, Anna and Lars visited the **International Programme Office for Education and Training** (Internationella Programkontoret) at Kungsholmen, and had a meeting with the administrator

Eva Ehdwall. The International Programme Office for Education and Training is a Swedish government agency that comes under the Education and Culture Department. It administers some 60 different programmes and activities aimed at internationalising education, and is the authority in charge for two programmes of much interest for South Asian studies in Sweden, namely the Linnaeus Palme International Exchange Programme and the Minor Field Studies grants. They also administer another interesting form of grants, Sida's travel grants for Swedish students who wish to do field work at an United Nations institution anywhere in the World, including South Asia.

From Kungsholmen, Anna and Lars went to make a short visit to the ongoing **World Water Week conference**, organised 12–18 August by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) in the Stockholm City Conference Centre. Hundreds of South Asian researchers participate in this major yearly conference, and we had a meeting with Dr Prakash Nellyat (*photo*), environmental economist from Madras School of Economics, Chennai, India, who has old links with SASNET.

– In 2007, SASNET supported the launch of a new **South Asia-related Nordic Summer University (NSU) programme** entitled “South Asia and the challenges of the 21st Century”. A cluster of Nordic researchers in South Asian studies, comprising Peter B Andersen, University of Copenhagen, Hans Blomkvist, University of Uppsala, Michael W Hansen, Copenhagen Business School, Sidsel Hansson and Catarina Kinnvall, Lund University, and Pamela Price, University of Oslo, had prepared the proposal, which included three winter sessions (2008 to 2010) and smaller thematic workshops at the yearly NSU summer sessions. The aim was to connect presently dispersed scholars on South Asian studies and upgrade the existing mass of Nordic Ph.D. students and younger researchers in the Nordic Summer University activities. The decision to accept “South Asia and the challenges of the 21st Century”, a development of a joint Nordic research school on Asia established in 2005 by NIAS in Copenhagen, was taken at the NSU annual conference in Uppsala in August 2007. The first session of the new South Asia-related NSU programme was held in Copenhagen 3-4 March 2008, focusing on the formulation of a research proposal on “Social Transformations, Political Capacities and Globalization” in the South Asian context. The organisers will invite 10 to 12 senior researchers and Ph.D. students.

– **On 9-11 May**, Mr. Rajesh Vaishnav First Secretary (Press, Information, Culture), Embassy of India, visited Lund University. The entire programme was prepared by SASNET.

– **On 25 October**, Muhammed Amir Rana of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, Islamabad, visited SASNET in connection with a meeting with Catarina Kinnvall and Sidsel Hansson at Lund University.

– **On 19 – 21 September**, Anna and Staffan met with officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wilhelm von Warnstedt, Börje Ljunggren, Ingrid Wiklund, and Katrin Månsson); and Sida's Asia Section (Jan Essner, Jörgen Schöning and Thomas Bergenholtz).

– **On 22 October**, Anna gave a presentation about SASNET for the Swedish Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee during its visit to Lund University.

– **In September**, Anna and Staffan visited both the Bangladeshi and the Sri Lankan embassies in Stockholm. Finally, the Pakistani Ambassador, Shaheen A. Gillani, was invited to participate in a SASNET seminar on October, 10, and on the following day he visited SASNET's root node office.

– **On 19 December**, Lars Eklund participated in a meeting on the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) programme in Brussels.



### SASNET 2007 Seminars:

• On 15 March. Dr. **Kazi Ali Toufique** from Bangladesh and Prof. **R. Parthasarathy** from India participated in a SASNET seminar about fish production and aquaculture in India and Bangladesh held in Lund. Dr. Kazi Ali Toufique is affiliated with the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies, BIDS, in Dhaka, and he talked about "*Floodplain Aquaculture in Bangladesh: A case of Enchantment or Disenchantment?*". Prof. R. Parthasarathy from the Gujarat Institute of Development Research in Gota, Ahmedabad, India, talked about "*Governance Issues in Natural Resources Management: The case of Fisheries in India*". Both Dr. Toufique and Prof. Parthasarathy visited Sweden to participate in a three-day workshop on "Community Management of Openwater Inland Fisheries in Bangladesh and India" held in Lund 14–17 March. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Department of Economics.

• On 17 March–17 April. **SASNET organised a series of seminars** In collaboration with the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), The lectures were attended by Lund University Masters students in Asian Studies, as part of their training.

– On 26 March 2007, **Ravinder Kaur**, Post-doctoral Fellow at Roskilde University, Denmark, gave a lecture about "*Islam between East and West – the Political Situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan*" at the Department of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5, Lund.

– On 3 April 2007, Dr. **Camilla Orjuela**, Researcher at the Department of Peace and Development Studies, School of Global Studies, Göteborg University, lectured about "*Ethnicity and Violent Conflict in Sri Lanka*". Venue: Java Hall, Scheelevägen 15 A, Lund.

– On 17 April, **Neil Webster**, Senior researcher at Development Studies, Danish Institute of International Studies (DIIS), Copenhagen, lectured about "*Nepal: Kingdom versus Maoism*" at Java Hall, Scheele.

– On the same day, SASNET organised a combined seminar/film titled "*One Year after Nepal's Rhododendron Revolution*" at the Conference room, IM, Spolegatan 12 B, Lund. The film showing the dramatic events of April 2006 that paved the way for a political settlement in Nepal, was produced by the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT). It was presented by **Leif Bjellin**, researcher at the Department of Cell and Organism Biology, Lund University, which has strong ties to Nepal. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Swedish Organisation for Individual Relief (IM) and the Swallows India-Bangladesh section (Svalorna), both based in Lund.

• On 25 September. Professor **Priyankar Upadhyaya**, Director of the Malaviya Centre for Peace Research at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University about "*Naxal Violence in India. Security Threat or Failure of Governance?*" The lecture was organised in collaboration with Lund University's Department of Economic History. Professor Upadhyaya, who has longstanding Swedish connections with the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, and the Department of Religious Studies, Karlstad University. He also made a visit to the SASNET root node office for a meeting with Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund, and Neelambar Hatti, Department of Economic History.



• On 10 October, a well-attended seminar on "Global Terrorism: Myth or Reality" was held in Lund. The seminar was organised by SASNET in collaboration with the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University. The Ambassador of Pakistan to Sweden, H.E. Mr. **Shaheen A. Gillani** was the key speaker on the theme for the evening, questioning the use of the concept "terrorism" to only indicate individuals and groups but excluding the prevalent cases of state terrorism. Other speakers at the seminar were Professor **Bo Huld** from the Swedish National Defence College in Stockholm, who talked about "Is Terrorism the Model for Warfare in the New Millennium?", Dr. **Maria Bjernevi**, former Sen-

ior Analyst at the Swedish Security Service (Säpo), who spoke on “*Global Jihad, Local Terrorism*”, and **Iram Asif** from Copenhagen University, who talked about “*Behind the Screen: Young Women of Jamia Hafsa*”, based on material from fieldwork carried out in Pakistan. The seminar, attended by more than 150 people, was held at SOL-Centrum, Lund University’s Centre for Languages and Literature. A newspaper report about the seminar appeared in the 12 October issue of the weekly web magazine Veckobladet, written by Bertil Egerö

- On 23 October. **Sunandan Roy Chowdhury**, Editor-Publisher of the Sampark Journal of Global Understanding in Kolkata, India, gave a SASNET lecture on “*Ideology of Nation State and Educational Policy*”, focusing on Indian higher education since 1947, at Lund University. He gave his lecture at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Java Hall.

- On 12 December, Professor **Arild Engelsen Ruud** of the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, held a well-attended lecture at Athen, AF-borgen in Lund. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF). Professor Ruud, who has a Ph.D, in History, Anthropology, and Development Studies from The London School of Economics (LSE), talked about “Democracy in a poor country: Bangladesh at the crossroads?”

## 2008

– For a number of reasons, SASNET’s activities during 2008 differed somewhat compared from previous years. One reason was **SASNET’s strong involvement in Lund University’s application for a European Commission funded mobility programme – the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) lot 15** – regarding mobility for 400 students, researchers, and academic staff between India and Europe. SASNET’s coordinator, Anna Lindberg, devoted six weeks at the beginning of the year to writing this project application on behalf of Lund University’s International Office. The deputy director/web master, Lars Eklund, was also occupied with the application, in addition to setting up the project’s webpage. The application was successful, and Lund University became coordinating partner in the Indo-European university consortium that ran the mobility programme.

– SASNET’s work during 2008 has also differed in character due to the fact that **financial support from Sida/SAREC was going to come to an end** by December 31, 2009. The coordinator therefore spent a large part of her working hours drafting a new strategy document proposing ways in which SASNET may renew and consolidate itself in order to explore other funding possibilities.

– However, **Anna fell ill in April 2008 and had to go on sick leave** for eight months. This affected the longterm strategy work, even though a competent substitute coordinator, Sidsel Hansson, held SASNET’s positions during Anna’s absence.

– Routine business going on as usual. SASNET has **organised a large number of seminars and lectures** at Lund University, often in collaboration with other departments or the Association of Foreign Affairs at the university.

– In August 2008, SASNET also financed and co-organised a **conference on Environmental History in South Asia** in collaboration with Uppsala University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU).

– **SASNET’s director and deputy director were actively networking**. During 2008, they visited several Swedish universities and met with researchers and educators involved in South Asia-related studies.

– On 12 March, Lars visited the **Institute for Security and Development Policy (ISDP)** in Nacka-Stockholm. A fruitful meeting was organised by ISDP’s deputy director, Robert Nilsson, in order for Lars to introduce SASNET to Director Niklas Swanström and other ISDP researchers currently working on projects related to South Asia and Afghanistan. ISDP was established as an independent research institute in October 2007, but its roots go back to the Silk Road Studies Programme launched at Uppsala University in 2002.

– Sidsel and Lars also interacted with the **South Asian embassies** in Sweden and participated in international conferences and seminars in Europe.

– **The SASNET website was steadily expanded**, providing information on such matters as South Asia-related research at Swedish universities and conferences being held worldwide. In 2008, SASNET’s website logged 38,000 visitors. On April 9, 2009, the website contained 1,490 pages, with 2,500 photos and 13,300 external links. All work done by Lars Eklund, however, for a short period in September-October he received some assistance in updating information on the web pages by Ms. Maria Tonini on a voluntary basis.

– Newsletters were sent via e-mail to approximately 1,700 subscribers every month, in all **11 newsletters were published** during 2008. In August, a **SASNET Student Forum was launched**. This interactive web forum provides a meeting location for research students interested in South Asia.

– On December 1, **SASNET launched the Karl Reinhold Haellquist Memorial Collection (KRHMC) web site** on Mahatma Gandhi. The site presents unique material on Gandhi from the private collection of the renowned Swedish historian Karl Reinhold Haellquist, that had been donated to Lund University. SASNET hired librarian Erik Svanström to digitalize the collection and create the Gandhi web.

– Finally, in order to facilitate and strengthen South Asia-related research and educational programmes at Swedish universities, while also contributing to network building, **SASNET provided planning grants** to a value of SEK 1 m.

– **On 13 March**, Anna Lindberg participated in a meeting at the Dept. for Asia and the Pacific Region, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) in Stockholm. The aim of the meeting was to discuss Sweden's new strategy for development cooperation with India announced by the government.

– **On 16-17 March**, Professor Asoke Bhattacharya from the Adult and Continuing Education and Extension Centre at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, visited SASNET and Lund University. During the spring of 2008, Prof. Bhattacharya spent three months as a visiting scholar at the Danish University for Pedagogy in Copenhagen. His research focuses on the work by the 19th century Danish priest, poet, and writer N.F.S. Grundtvig, who is considered to be a pioneer in the field of adult education. While in Denmark, Prof. Bhattacharya's new book, *Education for the People*, was launched during a function at the Centre for Grundtvig Studies, University of Aarhus. Besides visiting SASNET, with which Prof. Bhattacharya has a long-standing relationship he also met researchers at Lund University's Dept. of Education to discuss possible new collaboration projects.

– **On 19 March**, Associate Professor Aida Aragão-Lagergren, Dept. of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University, visited the SASNET root node office in Lund on Wednesday 19 March 2008. She discussed the status of her ongoing research project "Children Left Behind. A Study on Children of Migrant Women in Sri Lanka", carried out in collaboration with Prof. Kumudu Wijewardena, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP), Sri Lanka. The project was initially given a SASNET planning grant, and later on awarded major research grants from Sida/SAREC and the Swedish Research Council.

– On 18 April 2008, **Lars and Sidsel visited Gothenburg University and Chalmers University of Technology**. In the morning they participated in a seminar on "*Indien – ett framtidsländ?*" (India – Land of the Future?), organised by the Board of Regional Research in West Sweden (Reväst) and held at the Dept. of Human and Economic Geography, School of Business, Economics, and Law at Gothenburg University. In the afternoon, an informal meeting with researchers interested in South Asia-related projects focusing on technology was organised at Chalmers University of Technology. The meeting was convened by Dr. Catharina Hiort at Chalmers Biocenter, which co-ordinates bioengineering activities at Chalmers with an aim to strengthen research related to biology, biotechnology, and medicine.

– **On 13 May**, Lars and Sidsel again visited Gothenburg University. In the morning they visited different medical departments at Sahlgrenska Academy that are involved in research collaboration with Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. In the afternoon a meeting was organised at the School of Global Studies for several researchers working on South Asia-related projects in different divisions within the School of Global Studies, as well as some researchers from other departments in the Faculty of Humanities at Göteborg University. For full information about the SASNET visit to Göteborg, see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/gbgapril08.html>

– **On 27-29 May**, Lars participated in the conference on current Swedish development research that was held in Uppsala. It was the fourth in a row of conferences initiated and financed by Sida/SAREC – the unit for research cooperation within the the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Sida. The 2008 conference was organised by the Centre for Sustainable Development in Uppsala, an interdisciplinary centre for education and research redundant, jointly run by Uppsala University and the Swedish



University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala. The general theme for the three-day conference was "*Meeting Global Challenges in Research Cooperation*". Researchers and development professionals were invited to gather and discuss key themes at the frontiers of research and global development issues.

– On 8-11 July. Lars Eklund participated in the **20th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS)** that was held in Manchester, UK. The 2008 conference was hosted by the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures at the University of Manchester. 40 panels were included in the programme, covering a vast field of scientific areas, from "Censorship, Subjectivity, and Subversion: Cultural Regulation in India from the Colonial



*Era to the Present*" to "Vegetarianisms: the communicative power of meat in South Asia" and "Routes and Roots of Democracy in the Himalayas". Professor Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Professor of Indian History at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), held the keynote lecture on "Cultures of Travel between Anjou and Agra in the Early Modern World". The conference also offered a range of cultural events including an illustrated lecture on the textiles trade between Manchester and South Asia held at the Whitworth Art Gallery, and a reception at Manchester's spectacular town hall, built during the 1880s.

– **Interaction with Ambassadors.** On 11 August, Sidsel and Lars participated in the celebration of the Indian independence day in Stockholm. During this occasion, a chance was given to say farewell to the outgoing Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Ms. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa, and also meet a large number of India related academics, cultural personalities and diplomats. At the same time, Lars also met with the outgoing Pakistani Ambassador to Sweden, Mr. Shaheen A. Gillani. On 23 October, The Nepalese Ambassador to Scandinavia, Mr. Vijaykant Lal Karna, visited Lund University on SASNET's invitation in connection with a Nepal seminar held the same evening. A meeting was organised with the Vice Chancellor of Lund University, Prof. Göran Bexell.



– On 25–26 September, Lars Eklund travelled to Gothenburg to visit the **2008 Göteborg Book Fair**, an important event with several South Asian features. Seminars were held with Mahas-

weta Devi, Ambai, and other invited Indian writers, who had their works translated into Swedish.

– Lars also visited the **Nordic School of Public Health (NHV)**, a highly regarded institution of higher education funded by the the Nordic Council of Ministers. He met with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Göran Bondjers, and discussed new South Asia-related research projects at NHV.



– On 4 October, SASNET was represented by its then Acting Director, Dr. Sidsel Hansson, at the so-called **India Platform UGent meeting** at Ghent University, Belgium. The meeting was organised by the Research Centre Vergelijkende Cultuurwetenschap (Comparative Science of Cultures) at Ghent University. Its purpose was to explore potential forms of collaboration among a network of European universities. The ambition was to form a so-called India Platform UGent to coordinate and facilitate setting up European collaborative research and educational projects related to India in the humanities and social sciences. Not much resulted from the Ghent meeting, but discussions were supposed to continue at a forthcoming session at the University of Tartu in Estonia to be held during 2009.

– On 9-10 October, SASNET's Acting Director, Sidsel Hansson, participated in a **conference on "Pakistan – Consequences of Deteriorating Security in Afghanistan"** that the Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI, organised in Stockholm, 2008. The keynote speakers included Dr. Stephen Cohen, author of *Four Crises and a Peace Process* (2007), Shuja Nawaz, author of *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, its Army and the Wars Within* (2008), and others. Several speakers at the conference drew attention to a recent report by the Pakistan Policy Working Group entitled "The Next Chapter: The United States and Pakistan". This report suggests a new Pakistan policy for the incoming administration in the United States. The October conference followed up a previous workshop organised by FOI in April 2008, in which Lars Eklund also participated with others from different Swedish universities, research institutes, and government departments. The April workshop and the October conference form part of an ongoing FOI research programme on Asian Security. Within this framework, the Swedish Defence Research Agency has initiated a number of sub-projects dealing with Pakistan.

– On 21 October, SASNET participated in a **half-day seminar on Indo-Swedish research** and educational collaboration organised by the Faculty of Engineering (LTH), Lund University. A large number of researchers gathered to listen to presentations by Tomas Aronsson from the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA), who talked about the formalised India-Sweden collaboration within the field of Science & Technology; and Prof. Ramon Wyss, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm, who introduced INSTEC, the national network for India-Swedish Cooperation on Technical Research and Education. Lars Eklund then spoke about



SASNET and its role as a national resource base for increased collaboration between researchers and institutions in Sweden and India (as well as the rest of South Asia). Finally Prof. Per Warfvinge, Vice-Dean for International Relations at the Faculty of Engineering gave a talk on the European Commission-funded Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) programmes, and especially the new India lot being coordinated by Lund University. Prof. Warfvinge talked about the great possibilities of the EMECW programme and the urgent need for a quick process to recruit students and researchers.



– During their 23 October stay in Lund, **Nepalese Ambassador Vijaykant Lal Karna and Dr. Malla**, old colleagues from Tribhuvan University, visited SASNET's root node office at Scheelevägen. A fruitful discussion took place regarding the ongoing democratic transition process in Nepal and the urgency of support for this positive development. The Ambassador welcomed such initiatives from Sweden, and thought SASNET should play a facilitating role.

– On 6-7 November, SASNET was represented by Lars at the **International conference on "Peacebuilding in Afghanistan: Local, Regional and Global Perspectives"** that was held in Stockholm. The conference focused on what the peacebuilding efforts look like in the country? What roles do the Afghan authorities, the International Community, the UN and the Nato-led ISAF forces play? Do they contribute to peace or armed conflict? Are there local initiatives at grassroots level promoting peace and how does the civilian population contribute to the reconstruction of the country? Why does Afghanistan receive so little funding for reconstruction compared to other areas of armed conflict? Have the complex developments in Afghanistan become something that the West would rather not have to deal with? The conference was organised by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), in cooperation with ENNA (European Network of NGOs in Afghanistan). Invited speakers included prominent persons such as Sima Samar (photo), Chairperson of

the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission; Kristian Berg Harpviken, senior researcher at the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO) in Oslo; and the eminent Pakistani writer/journalist Ahmed Rashid.

– **On 1 December**, Dr. Seteney Shami, Program Director for Eurasia, Middle East and North Africa at the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in New York, USA, visited SASNET's root node office in Lund on 1 December. During the academic year 2008/09, Dr. Shami is serving as a research fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study (SCAS) in Uppsala. She came to SASNET to discuss possibilities for setting up an international collaborative network for the study of inter-Asian processes and developments. SSRC is planning for a project entitled "Inter-Asian Connections". SASNET was represented by its Director, Anna Lindberg, and Acting Director, Sidsel Hansson. Dr. Leif Stenberg from Lund University's Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CME), and Prof. Roger Greatrex from the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE) also participated in the meeting. After fruitful discussions, it was suggested that Lund University host a network planning meeting in the Spring of 2009 with people representing different institutions across Asia as well as Europe and America.

– **On 10 December**, Lars made a visit to **Umeå University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences** in Umeå.

Lars met with a large number of researchers, university teachers and administrators interested in South Asia-related collaboration projects both in research and education, and the possibilities that SASNET might offer in facilitating such. He visited departments where South Asia-related research and/or education is going on, including the Unit for Epidemiology and Public Health Sciences, the Dept. of Social Work, and Umeå Plant Science Centre (UPSC), run jointly by Umeå University's Dept. of Forest Genetics and Plant Physiology, and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Umeå.

– **On 20 November**, Marie Yoshida, coordinator for the Asian Dynamics Initiative (ADI) at the University of Copenhagen visited SASNET. Ms. Yoshida, who is based

at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen wished to strengthen links to SASNET. Possible forms of future collaboration were discussed. Lars Eklund also demonstrated SASNET's website and its wealth of information on South Asia-related research at Swedish universities.

• **On 17 December**, Dr. Christer Norström, Dept. of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University and former SASNET board member, represented SASNET at the first so-called Sida Science Day held in Stockholm. The event was organised by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and was expected to become an annual event to monitor the implementation of Sida's strategy for the advancement of research in developing countries during the period 2009–13. The Sida Science Day should enable context analysis in the area of research policy in low income countries and present major research findings. Representatives of the Swedish Ministry of Education, directors of the Swedish Research Councils, as well as Vice Chancellors and Professors of Swedish universities and university colleges were invited to discuss issues such as "The Swedish Research Bill 2008"; "The Swedish Policy for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries"; and "The Swedish Experience of Research Cooperation".

#### **SASNET 2008 eminars:**

• On 6 February, the **documentary film "Killing Time"**, focusing on the Bhutanese refugees now living in camps in Nepal, was shown at an open SASNET seminar in Lund. The screening of the film, organised in collaboration with the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, was followed by an open discussion with Swedish-Canadian Director **Annika Gustafson**, about refugees, religion, development aid, exile, war, education, and the Gross National Happiness concept.

• On 10 March, Dr. **Soumyajit Samantha** of North Bengal University, Siliguri, India, held a SASNET lecture



in Lund on *"From Salman Rushdie to Arundhati Roy – Modern Indian Novels as Analysis of Changing India and as World Literature"*. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Association of Foreign Affairs (UPF) and the Dept. of Comparative Literature, Lund University. Dr. Samantha's visit to Sweden was underwritten by a SASNET guest lecture tour grant. He spoke at Lund University and Växjö University.

- On 13 March, Dr. **Hans Blomkvist** and Dr. **Katrin Uba** from the Dept. of Government, Uppsala University, held a joint SASNET seminar in Lund on Thursday 13 March 2008. Prof. Blomkvist, currently doing research on institutions and political decision making in India on energy and bioenergy in particular, talked about *"Energy Challenges in India's Rapidly Growing Economy"*. Dr. Uba, who defended her PhD thesis in 2007 on political activism in developing countries, talked about *"Protests against privatisation and their outcomes in India"*. Her presentation provides an overview of the privatisation process in India from 1991 till 2003, actors opposing the process, and the eventual impact of protest mobilisation.

- On 1 April, Dr. **Anirudh Krishna**, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at the Sanford Institute of Public Policy, Duke University, Durham, N.C., USA held a lecture in Lund. The lecture, jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF), was entitled *"Active Social Capital: Tracing the Roots of Development and Democracy in India"*, which was also the title of Dr. Krishna's recently published book.

- On 12 May, Professor **Venkatesh B. Athreya**, MS Swaminathan Foundation, Chennai, India, held a well-attended SASNET/UPF lecture at Lund University. The lecture, jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF), was on the subject of *"Wealth and Poverty in Rapidly Globalising India"*. At the time, Prof. Athreya was co-operating with Swedish sociologists Göran Djurfeldt and Staffan Lindberg, Dept. of Sociology, Lund University; and two Indian researchers, Dr. R. Vidyasagar from the Madras Institute of Development Studies in Chennai, India, and Dr. A. Rajagopal from SACI-WATERS in Hyderabad, in a restudy of 300 agricultural households in the Tiruchirapalli District, Tamil Nadu, originally interviewed in 1979/80. Prof. Athreya came to Lund to participate in a concluding workshop regarding this project.

- On 26 August, SASNET was very much involved when **Baul Shilpi**, a group of baul singers from Bangladesh, visited Lund. The group came to Sweden on the invitation of Dr. **Christina Nygren** from the Dept. of Musicology and Theatre Studies, Stockholm University. The group consisted of four professional baul singers – Kajal Dewan, Akkas Dewan, Aklima Begam, and Nasima Dewan – and two other musicians, plus the tour leader, all from villages near to Dhaka. On Tuesday 26 August, SASNET organised a seminar on baul music and other forms of Bengali folk culture with Dr. Nygren. The seminar was also held at Sagohuset (where a well-attended concert was held the same evening).



- On 10 September, **Parul Sharma**, CSR Advisor, Group Assurance, Sandvik AB, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. The lecture was entitled *"A Globalised South Asia and Human Rights"*, and drew an audience of more than 40 people (mostly students from the Masters programme in Asian studies at Lund University's Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Humanitarian Rights (RWI). Ms. Sharma has an affiliation to the Dept. of Law, Stockholm University, and the National Law School of India University in Bangalore, India, but has also worked for the Amnesty Business Group. Since August 2008, she is employed at the Swedish company Sandvik AB. Her lecture focused on the current interest in how the business operations have been promoted by heightened debates about human rights in the South Asian region.

- On 19 September, Prof. **Radhika Desai**, Dept of Political Studies, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada, held a lecture on *"The Dynamics of Caste, Class and Hindu Nationalism in India"* in Lund. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Dept. of Political Science, Lund University. Prof. Desai said the

politics of Hindutva and those of caste are generally assumed to be opposed in India. Her paper contests by comparing an original account of caste, and its modern dynamics, and their interaction with class, especially in the context of liberalizing economic policy since the late 1960s. The main reason for Radhika Desai coming to Sweden was to participate in the 2008 European Social Forum in Malmö on 17-21 September.

- On 24 September, a **seminar/panel discussion on Afghanistan** titled "*Upptäckning Afghanistan. Vilken roll spelar de svenska soldaterna?*" (Escalation in Afghanistan. Which role do the Swedish soldiers play?), and was jointly organised by SASNET, the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF), the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund, and the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (MES). The participants were Mr. **Bengt Kristiansson**, former general secretary for SCA Sweden; and Mr. **Allan Widman**, MP representing Folkpartiet, specialising in defence policy issues. Dr. **Catarina Kinnvall**, Dept. of Political Science, Lund University, moderated the discussion.

- On 7 October, Dr. **Durre S. Ahmed**, Head of Communication & Cultural Studies, National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan, gave a seminar in Lund, entitled "*Human Rights and Women's Activism in Contemporary Pakistan*". The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET, the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CME), and Lund University's Human Rights programme (based at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies). Dr. Ahmed has a doctorate in Communications from Columbia University in New York and was also a practicing psychotherapist.

- On 23 October, a joint SASNET/UPF (Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University) **seminar on the political**

**developments in Nepal** was held. **David Ludden**, Professor of Political Economy and Globalization in the Dept. of History at New York University, USA, was the main speaker with a presentation entitled "*Where is the revolution? Towards a Post-National Politics of Social Justice*". In August 2008, Ludden was invited by the Social Science Baha to hold the 2008 Mahesh Chandra Regmi Lecture in Kathmandu. Other participants in the Lund seminar were Dr. **Katak Malla** of the Dept. of Law, Stockholm University, who spoke about "*Nepal from Monarchy to Republic: the Ongoing Political Process*"; and His Excellency the Ambassador of Nepal to Denmark (ditation to Sweden), Mr. **Vijaykant Lal Karna**, who was also a political scientist by profession, having worked at Tribhuvan University for 20 years. SASNET's former Director, Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, was the moderator for the seminar that drew a crowd of about 40 people.



- Earlier the same day, Prof. **David Ludden** also held a lecture on the concept of Asian area studies for Master's students at Lund University. In an illuminating talk, he briefly explained the US national agenda behind the establishment and funding of area studies departments at US universities.

- On 28 October, Prof. **Rana P.B. Singh** gave a SASNET lecture on "*Indian Village: Tradition, Modernity and Change*". The seminar, focusing on developments in a village in Uttar Pradesh not far from Varanasi, was organised in collaboration with the Dept. of History and Anthropology of Religions, Lund University. Rana P.B. Singh was a Professor of Cultural Geography at Banaras Hindu University, BHU.

He had long been closely connected to Sweden, regularly coming here since 1988, mostly as a visiting professor at Karlstad University, but has also given lectures at the universities of Lund, Göteborg, Uppsala, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Aarhus, Turku, Vasa, Oslo, and Bergen.

- On 11 November, Prof. **James Heitzman** was to have given a SASNET lecture on "*The City in South Asia: Historical Templates and Contemporary Challenges*", in collaboration with the Division of Housing Development and Management, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund University. However, due to health problems he was forced to cancel his tour of Scandinavia and the seminar in Lund. Sadly, on 15 November 2008, Prof. Heitzman passed away.



# 2009

– **Final year of Sida/SAREC funding, meaning lot of efforts to find alternative funding.** Throughout the year, meetings and phone calls were held with SIDA, other funding agencies, and representatives of Swedish universities in an attempt to secure continued national funding for SASNET after 31 December 2009. A crucial meeting was held at the Ministry of Education in Stockholm on 30 November 2009. Anna Lindberg was accompanied by Ann-Katrin Bäcklund, Dean of the Faculty for Social Sciences, Lund University, and SASNET board member Dr. Camilla Orjuela from PADRIGU, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. They met with Katarina Bjelke and Mattias Jennerholm from the Division of Research Policy (forskningspolitiska enheten) within the Ministry of Education. Although the the Division of Research Policy was very positive to SASNET's activities, the meeting did not lead to the funding that we had hoped for.

– **SASNET also networked frequently on the diplomatic front,** with interactions with the ambassadors of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, discussing the future of SASNET. Most spectacular was the 19th December visit to Lund under heavy security by Her Excellency **Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, to deliver a speech on “Climate change in Bangladesh – Facing the challenges”**.



She was accompanied by a large delegation of Bangladeshi MPs, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and newspaper and TV teams, and was hosted by Lund University Vice-Chancellor Per Eriksson. The initiative to invite Sheikh Hasina came from Mashiur Rahman, PhD candidate at the Dept. of Sociology and later becoming the Pro-Vice Chancellor of National University in Bangladesh, and SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. The Bangladeshi Ambassador to Sweden, Mr. Imtiaz Ahmed, also attended the event.

– Earlier in the year, on 3–4 August, SASNET's director **Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund went to Stockholm to meet the ambassadors** of cooperation between South Asian institutions. At the Embassy of India they were received by Ambassador Mr. Balkrishna Shetty and First Secretary Mrs. Madhumita Bhagat; at the Embassy of Pakistan they were received by the new Ambassador Mr. Nadeem Riyaz; and at the Embassy of Bangladesh they were received by outgoing Ambassador Mr. Muhammad Azizul Haque. Fruitful discussions were held at all three embassies. On 31 August 2009, Anna and Lars went to Hellerup, north of Copenhagen, to meet the Ambassador of Nepal to Scandinavia, Mr. Vijaykant Lal Karna.

– So many positive things happened during 2009. **The network grew tremendously,** the web site presented more than 250 Swedish university departments where some form of South Asia-related research or educational collaboration projects were going on, and the SASNET newsletters reached 2,000 recipients worldwide. SASNET's searchable database for Swedish and Nordic researchers doing work on South Asia was updated during the year, and the graphic design of all major web pages was reworked by Geoffrey Gardella.

– On 12 September, SASNET's recently catalogued **Mahatma Gandhi book collection was inaugurated** and was officially launched the Mahatma Gandhi web site that has been constructed by librarian Erik Svanström. Indian Ambassador attended the function and took the opportunity to donate to Lund University and SASNET another 120 volumes of Mahatma Gandhi literature on behalf of the Indian government. The function, which included a puja ceremony by Ms. Bubu Munshi-Eklund, took place at Lund University's Asia Library. A large number of Lund University faculty, as well as Indian students and guest researchers at Lund University through the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window India lot 15, participated. Lund University was officially represented by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Sven Strömqvist. Ms. Inger Sondén Haellquist was the guest of honour since she is the person who in 2004 donated the extensive pri-

vate book collection of her late husband, Karl Reinhold Haellquist, to Lund University. The collection, consisting of nearly 7 000 volumes of South Asia related literature, was selected by Lund University researchers Neelambar Hatti and Jan Magnusson. The daily newspaper, Sydsvenskan, reported on the event, as did the Lund University magazine LUM in its issue of 8/2009.

Later that evening, the Ambassador participated in a well-attended SASNET seminar on "*The role of Mahatma Gandhi in today's society*".

– The interactive **SASNET Student Forum** created by Malin Gregersen in 2008 became a more effective platform for discussion. It proved especially useful in arranging a conference at Falsterbo on August 17–19 for young Nordic scholars working on South Asia-related projects.

– The **SASNET conference for young Scandinavian scholars attracted many Ph.D. and masters students** coming from Sweden and other Nordic countries. A working committee led by Kristina Myrvold, Lund University, Julia Velkova, Gothenberg University, and Ferdinando Sardella, Gothenburg University, planned the conference. The success of the conference was such that it was repeated not once but three more times, in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Prof. **Vinayak Chaturvedi**, University of California Irvine, was the keynote speaker, lecturing on "*Dialogues with M.K. Gandhi on History and Violence in India*". Prof. **Pamela Price**, Oslo University, was another principal speaker, lecturing on "*Being a South Asianist in the Nordic countries: Being Global*". Dr. **Mirja Juntunen**, Uppsala University, coordinator of the Nordic Center in India (NCI), talked about "*A Nordic Perspective on Prospects and Challenges for Scholarly Interaction with South Asia*"; and Mr. **Teddy Primack**, Editor, Academic Documents Associates, New York, made an exciting and useful presentation entitled "*How to displease an editor*" about how to deliver manuscripts for scientific publishing".

– In February 2009, SASNET co-organised an **international workshop on "Women and migration in South Asia. Health and Social Consequences"** that was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The workshop was organised in collaboration with the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP) in Colombo, and the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at Uppsala University. Researchers in the field



were invited from all over the South Asia region and from Swedish institutions. Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund both participated in the workshop. The focus was on the consequences of migration for women, their children and families in South Asia. The themes to be covered were the effects of such migration with respect to: social consequences, gender perspective, economy at family level, health including sexually transmitted diseases, and child development and psychology.

The workshop was also the **first effort to realise the concept of SASNET sub-networks**, put forward at the informal meeting by SASNET's South Asian Reference Group held in Delhi in November 2007, later decided upon by SASNET's board. One of the group members, Dr. Kumudu Wijewardena from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP) in Colombo chaired the Colombo workshop. A separate meeting was held with SASNET's South Asian Reference Group on Tuesday 10 February.

– On his way to Colombo, Lars Eklund made a **stop in the Maldives, where he met Minister of State for Education, Dr. Ahmed Ali Maniku**. Meanwhile, Anna Lindberg proceeded from Colombo to Kerala, India, where she joined in discussions about the development of the new "Sustainable Kerala Network", a Swedish South Asian network on sustainable development. She also met with representatives of the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation (CREST), in Kozhikode, and the NGO Kabani, based in Wayanad.

– On 25 March, the **Vice Chancellor from Jahangirnagar University** in Bangladesh, Prof. Shariff Enamur

Kabir, visited SASNET's root node office in Lund on. He was accompanied by Professor Pradeep Mathur from the Dept. of Chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai, and Dr. Ebbe Nordlander, Dept. of Chemical Physics, Lund University. The three researchers were involved in a joint reserach project on "Modelling of hydrodesulfurization reactions and development of new molecular hydrodesulfurization catalyst" that received a SASNET planning grant in 2008.

– In March, Lars Eklund and Stig Toft Madsen, who worked at SASNET's office in the spring, participated in a brain-storming and awareness-raising **workshop on "Contemporary India Study Centres in Europe"** organised by Sciences Po/CERI in Paris.

– On 14 May, SASNET faciitated and planned for a **one-day visit by Indian Ambassador Mr. Balkrishna Shetty to Lund University.**

He met with the University Director Dr. Marianne Granfelt and participated in a seminar with researchers, teachers, students, and international coordinators involved in India-related projects at Lund University. Mr. Shetty was accompanied by Mrs. Bhagat, First Secretary (Commercial, Consular, Culture), Embassy of



India. The ambassador listened to a few selected presentations: Dr. Sidsel Hansson presented the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window lot 15 programme, coordinated by Lund University; Prof. Baboo Nair, Dept. of Applied Nutrition and Food Chemistry, discussed the SASNET Fermented Foods project; and Prof. Olle Qvarnström spoke about the Division of Indic Religions at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.

– SASNET also co-hosted an **India seminar in cooperation with the Sweden-India Business Council (SIBC)** and Ideon Research Park, where the Indan Ambassador was the main speaker. The seminar also included a presentation by Prof. Baboo Nair. The moderator was Anna Lindberg. During his stay, the Ambassador also met with the Mayor of Lund, Ms. Annica Annerby Jansson, and visited Lund University's Faculty of Engineering – especially its Department of Electrical and Information Technology. In the evening Mr. Shetty went to Malmö, first to visit the Bollywood cinema hall in Limhamn, and then to host a reception at Hipp for 100 invited guests, mostly from the Indian community in Malmö/Lund, but including a delegation from Malmö University and people working on Indiarelated projects in art, music, and theatre. All arrangements were made by Lars Eklund.

– **SASNET's networking activities within Sweden** consisted of visits by Lars Eklund to the universities of Jönköping, Växjö, Skövde, and Västerås. In September, he also travelled to the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, in connection with the first consortium meeting for the new Indo-European Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) mobility programme "EURINDIA", coordinated by KTH.

– **On September 29**, Anna Lindberg participated in a seminar entitled "India Today". It was arranged by Centre for Development and the Environment, part of the Institute for Cultural Studies and Oriental Languages at Oslo University.

– In 2009, **SASNET awarded networking/planning grants to five new research projects.** Financial support was also given for three programmes in which a guest lecturer from South Asia will be invited to visit more than one Swedish university, as well as to two South Asia-related interdisciplinary research workshops to be held in Sweden or South Asia. The total amount distributed was SEK 525 000. Grants were awarded to researchers at the following universities:

- Blekinge Institute of Technology (1)
- Gävle University (1)

- Jönköping University (1)
- Karolinska Institutet (1)
- Lund University (2)
- Stockholm University (2)
- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) (2)

– In 2009, **SASNET's website logged 40,159 unique visitors**, with 1,670 pages, with 2,950 photos and 14,786 external links, and 13 SASNET Newsletters were published during 2009.

– **On 19 May**, Professor G.N. Tiwari from the Centre for Energy Studies at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi visited SASNET's root node office in Lund. He was accompanied by Professor Krister Håkansson, Dept. of Psychology, Växjö University, with whom Prof. Tiwari is involved in a collaboration project to organise research and a conference on hybrid photovoltaicthermal technology (H-PV/T), to be held in New Delhi. Prof. Tiwari is a leading expert in the research on how solar energy can be introduced in Indian villages without electricity.

– **On 22 May**, PhD candidate Malin Jordahl, Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), Uppsala University, visited SASNET's root node office and had a meeting with the Director Anna Lindberg. It was a follow-up meeting of a discussion that took place in February 2009 at the SASNET conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Malin and Anna now discussed the possibility of creating a sub-network within SASNET on the topic for the Colombo workshop. PhD candidate Malin Gregersen, Dept. of History, Lund University, and Dr. Kristina Myrvold, Dept. of History of Religions, Lund University, participated in the meeting as well.

– 28 May, **Lars Eklund visited the University of Skövde**, he was invited to participate in the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the universities of Skövde and Rajshahi, Bangladesh. The MoU focuses on student exchange and research collaboration within Biomedicine, Bioinformatics, Ecology, Molecular Biology, Physiology, and Systematic Biology. The initiative comes from Dr. Abul Mandal and his colleagues at the School of Life Sciences, University of Skövde. SASNET has been instrumental in promoting the Skövde–Rajshahi collaboration by providing a planning grant for a project on "Development of new varieties of crops for avoiding loss of harvest caused by climatic instability in Bangladesh" in 2008. To further celebrate the visit to Skövde by a delegation from the University of Rajshahi, a "*Bengali Evening*" was held at 20.15 with a cultural programme that included a *Bharata Natyam performance* by Ms. Shivapriya Bagchi from Kolkata, India (who happens to be Lars Eklund's niece).

– **On 1 September**, Lars Eklund participated in the first **consortium meeting for the new Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EMECW) mobility programme** entitled "EURINDIA", one of the four programme 13 lots devoted to mobility interaction between universities in Europe and India selected in 2009. This programme is administered by the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm and involved another 9 universities in Europe and 8 universities



in India, plus 3 associated partners. The meeting was held at KTH in Stockholm, and Lars met with the programme coordinator, Ms. Alphonsa Lourdudoss, based at KTH, as well as representatives from the Indian partner universities. They include Anna University, Chennai; Anurag Narayan College, Gaya (affiliated to Patna University); Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati; Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee; National Law School of India University, Bangalore; Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore; University of Kalyani, West Bengal; and University of Pune.

– **On 22 October**, SASNET invited Lund University Masters students, Ph.D. candidates and senior re-

searchers interested in studies and research related to South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and Maldives) to an open meeting. Nearly 50 people turned up for the meeting that was intended to increase the interest in pursuing South Asia related education and research at Lund University. Eminent researchers involved in South Asia related projects, including Prof. Baboo Nair, Dept. of Applied Nutrition, Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Dept. of Sociology, Prof. Rajni Hatti Kaul, Dept. of Biotechnology, and Dr. Catarina Kinnvall, Dept. of Political Science, gave presentations on their work. Dr. Vipin Negi, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, and Dr. Gopinath Bhandari, Lund University Centre for Risk Assessment and Management (LUCRAM), also told about their experiences being scholarship holders through the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window Programme. Venue for the meeting: Kårhuset, Hörsalen, John Ericssons väg 3, Lund.

– **On 24 November**, Kumudu Wijewardena and Mohsin Saeed Khan, two members of SASNET's South Asian Reference Group visited Lund on Tuesday 24 November 2009. The purpose was to have informal discussions with Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund about the future direction of SASNET from 2010. Both Kumudu and Mohsin had spent the recent months in Sweden. Professor Wijewardena from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura in Sri Lanka, has been involved in a longstanding collaborative research programme on "Health and Social Care for the Socially Marginalized People" with the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at the Dept. of Women's and Children's Health, Uppsala University. This programme is now near its completion. Mohsin Saeed Khan is a Health Specialist from Islamabad, Pakistan, but also PhD Candidate in a sandwich programme with the Division of Global health (IHCAR) at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm. His doctoral thesis project deals with "HIV and STI infections among Female Sex Workers in Lahore, Pakistan", and is in its final stage.

– In February, **two students from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai visited SASNET** and Lund University. They were the winners of a Nobel Prize quiz competition organised by the Embassy of Sweden in India in October 2008. The winners received a one week all-expenses paid trip to Sweden and the opportunity to visit Swedish universities and major technology companies in Lund, Gothenburg, Linköping, Sandviken, and Stockholm. Lars Eklund organised their visit to Lund University, that included visiting the Nanoscience laboratory at the Dept. of Physics.

– **SASNET also sponsored a exhibition of photographs** by second-year students from Lund University's Masters programme in Development and Management (LUMID) 2007–2009 that ran from 25 May to 4 June 2009, illustrating their fieldwork in Asian and African countries.

### Seminars:

• On 26 February, Dr. **Daya Kishan Thussu** from the University of Westminster, UK, was invited by SASNET to lecture at a Focus Asia conference on "*Media Cultures and Politics in Asia and Beyond*" that was held at Lund University 26–27 February 2009. Focus Asia was a yearly event organised by the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE) at Lund University, and this 10th Focus Asia event brought together leading media scholars who discussed media in Asia and beyond.. Dr. Thussu talked about "*Infotainment – Indian Style: Changing Contours of TV News in the World's Largest Democracy*".

• On 11 March. Professor **Ravinder Kaur** from the Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on "*Strangers as Spouses: Marriage Implications of India's Skewed sex Ratio*". The lecture was organised in collaboration with Lund University's Dept. of Economic History, and Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE).

• On 16 March. Dr. Walter Andersen, Associate Director of the South Asia Studies Program at Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., USA held a joint SASNET/UPF (Lund University Association of Foreign Affairs) lecture in Lund. Dr. Andersen, who has a PhD in Political Science from the University of Chicago, lectured on "Islamic militancy in India: A domestic issue with significant foreign policy implications".

• On 11 May, Prof. **Dipak Malik**, Director of the Gandhian Institute in Varanasi, India, held an open SASNET lecture at Lund University on "*Riots and Elections in India*". Prof. Malik, also working at the Dept. of Commerce, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi, discussed the multi-faceted factors deciding the outcome of the ongoing elections for the Indian parliament, Lok Sabha, and the profile of Indian communal riots, now and in the past. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Research group on Development and Environment at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University,

• On 18 May, Dr. **Tabish Khair** from the Dept. of English, University of Aarhus, Denmark, held a SASNET lecture on "*The Gothic and Postcolonialism: Alterity, Difference and Narration*". The seminar was co-organised by Prof. Claes-Göran Holmberg, Dept. of Comparative Literature, Lund University.

• On 26 May, the Tabla player **Subrata Manna**, the classical singer **Sudokshina Chatterjee Manna**, and the Kathak dancer **Sohini Debnath**, all from Kolkata, India, participated in an well-attended academic sem-

inar on intercultural education research in Malmö. They gave a presentation titled "*Application of Classical Indian Music in World Music of today*". The artists visited Scandinavia as part of a European tour (with concerts in Copenhagen on May 26th and in Lund on May 27th). The Malmö seminar was jointly organised by Lund University Intercultural Education Research Forum at Malmö Academy of Music, and SASNET.

- On 16 September, Dr. **Ruby Sain** from the Dept. of Sociology, Jadavpur University, India, held an open lecture at Lund University. The seminar was jointly organised by the School of Social Work at Lund university, Vårdalinstitutet and SASNET. Dr. Sain, who mostly works on health, illness, ageing, religion and research methodology issues, talked about "*Depression – a social problem of the elderly population in India*". She came to Sweden on a SASNET guest lecture programme grant, invited by the Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion, Gothenburg University.

- On 16 September, the joint SASNET/UPF (Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University) seminar on "*Contemporary Pakistan: Islamism, Human Rights and Terrorism*", drew an audience of more than 100 people.

The speakers were Prof. **Ishtiaq Ahmed**, working as Visiting Research Pro-



fessor at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore; and Dr. **Rubya Mehdi**, University of Copenhagen. Prof. Ahmed was currently on leave from the Dept. of Political Science, Stockholm University.

- On 23 September, a joint SASNET/UPF (Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University) seminar on "*Political Transitions affecting the Peace Process in Nepal*" was held in Lund. **Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya**, Professor of Political Science and Director, Centre for the Study of Nepal at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi, India, participated in the seminar along with Mr. **Vijaykant Lal Karna**, Nepalese ambassador to Scandinavia. The audience consisted of more than 70 people, mostly Lund University students, but also visiting Nepalese students.

- On 24 September, Professor **Priyankar Upadhyaya** from Benaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, India, held a lecture at Lund University on "*Religious Peace Building in India*". The seminar was jointly organised by the Dept. of History of Religions, Lund University, and SASNET. Prof. Upadhyaya is Director at the Malaviya Centre for Peace Research at BHU. During September 2009 he had been based at the International Peace Research Institute (PRIO) in Oslo.

## 2010

– **2010 was a year of changed circumstances for SASNET. After 10 years of Sida funding (2000-2009), SASNET in 2010 only received financial support from Lund University (LU).** As a consequence the board, representing other Swedish and Nordic universities as well, was dissolved on 30 September 2010. An additional subsidy from LU, SEK 830 000, was decided upon on as late as 18 March 2010, and came from the Vice-Chancellor's, Per Eriksson, strategic research funds. In the decision it was clearly stated that the extra funds should be earmarked to prepare a report on the university's common and long-term strategy for collaboration with South Asia. The mission also included exploring possibilities to find external collaboration partners and secure new external funding for SASNET's continued South Asia-related activities,

– **Anna Lindberg, reappointed as SASNET Director** for the period 2010-2012, spent a considerable time preparing this report, in close consultation with representatives of all faculties at Lund University and the university's International Relations division, and with input from SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund, and Mr Henrik Hofvendahl, International Programme Officer at the International Relations division. Anna also participated in an official Lund University delegation to India in the last week of April 2010. The group was led by Eva Åkesson, Lund University Pro Vice-Chancellor.

– During the visit, negotiations were held with representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), regarding details of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning a proposed **Indian visiting guest professorship at Lund University.** It

was later ratified by an MoU signed on 22 June by Mr. Balkrishna Shetty, Indian Ambassador to Sweden, and Per Eriksson. The ICCR/LU- collaboration was valid for four years, with a new Indian Professor to be selected each year. Professor Lipi Ghosh from Calcutta University became the **first Visiting ICCR Chair Professor**. She stayed in Sweden from November 2010 till 5 April 2011. During this period she was hosted by the Faculty of Social Sciences, and had a workplace at the university's Centre for Gender Studies.

– **The additional subsidy from Lund University** made it possible for SASNET to continue its extensive website, the popular newsletters, and arranging seminar activities, including organising the Second Nordic Conference on South Asian studies for young scholars in Falsterbo in August. Some of the conferences and workshops were organised by SASNET itself, but mostly in collaboration with other university departments or organisations such as The Swallows, Sweden India Business Council (SIBC), and the Association for Foreign Affairs (UPF). However, unfortunately with a reduced budget (only funded by LU) SASNET could **no longer distribute planning grants**, something that used to be an integral part of SASNET's mission.

– In September, SASNET was given SEK 217 000 as a **grant to improve and update its web site** and data bases from Lund University's Council for Research Infrastructure. Discussions were immediately held with the Lund University IT department (LDC) on how to proceed.

– On behalf of Lund University, SASNET was closely involved in the planning for a **new Asia Regional Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programme** that was decided upon by the European Commission in July 2010. The project, involving seven universities in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan, was again coordinated by Lund University (that successfully has coordinated existing Indo-European Erasmus Mundus mobility programmes since 2008).

– On 18–20 August 2010, the **second SASNET conference on South Asian Studies for young Nordic scholars** was organised in Höllviken, south of Malmö with 23 masters students, PhD candidates and recent PhDs from Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland participating. The three-day conference focused on three major issues: Interdisciplinary Research; Field Work and Ethics; and Academic Career (Publishing, Teaching, Networking). Julia Velkova, MA in Eastern Philosophy and Culture from the University of Sofia – and recently moved to Sweden, was the conference convenor.



• **In December 2010**, a delegation from DM Foundation, a private business corporation based in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, India, visited Lund University. Led by the eminent Indian nuclear scientist Dr. Anil Kakodkar, they were involved in a dialogue with Lund University Commissioned Education and the Department of Biology, Lund University, regarding plans to establish a new university campus in India and staff it with teachers from Lund University. SASNET was involved as a consultant to Lund University.

– In July 2010 Lars Eklund represented SASNET at the **21st European Conference on (Modern) South Asian Studies, ECMSAS**, successfully organised by the University of Bonn. At the same conference, the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS) decided to appoint

Anna Lindberg as a member of its board. This led to a visit by Professor Roger Jeffery and Dr. Margret Frenz, President and Vice-President respectively for EASAS to Lund in November 2010. Discussions were held regarding closer collaboration between EASAS and SASNET, as



well as strengthening links between Lund University and the University of Edinburgh, UK, in the field of South Asian studies.

– **SASNET's networking activities** within Sweden continued in spite of the reduced budget. During 2010 Lars Eklund visited the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), the Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD) at Uppsala University, and the Institute of International Education, Stockholm University. Besides, SASNET coorganised a one-day seminar on Toxic Metal Pollution at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in June.



– **The cordial relations to the Embassy of India** continued during 2010. The Embassy gave financial support to a seminar on "India's Changing Role in the Global Political Economy" held in April. The seminar was inaugurated by the Indian Ambassador to Sweden, H.E. Mr. Balkrishna Shetty, who also gave some opening remarks. It was organised in collaboration with the Sweden India Business Council (SIBC). After the seminar, Lund University Vice-Chancellor Prof. Per Eriksson invited the Indian Ambassador, and the First Secretary Mrs. Madhumita Bhagat for an official lunch at the Old Bishop's House. The lunch was also attended by the University Director Dr. Marianne Granfelt, Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund from SASNET, SIBC Senior Advisor Mr. Stig Victorin, and a few invited guests from Lund University.

– During the fall, the newly installed Ambassador **Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar came twice**. SASNET planned for his first official visit to Lund University in September, and two months later, he came back for Prof. Lipi Ghosh's installation seminar in November.

– **The diplomatic networking events** during 2009 included the attendance of Mr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Ambassador of Bangladesh as a guest of honour in **SASNET's seminar on Arsenic in Drinking Water** held in May; and the visit of the Sri Lankan Ambassador, Mr. Jayasooriya, to Lund University in October, and SASNET was involved in discussions on educational collaboration between Lund and Sri Lankan universities. Jayasooriya had a mission from the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka to express the Sri Lankan government's keen interest to promote strengthened academic collaboration between universities in Sri Lanka and Sweden, and not the least with Lund University. The meeting with Mr. Jayasooriya was hosted by Ms. Gunilla Carlecrantz, Acting Head of Lund University's International Relations division.

– **On 7-10 December**, SASNET was partly involved when two Indian researchers and film makers from the Centre for Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, Professor K.P. Jayasankar and Professor Anjali Monteiro, visited Lund University from 7–10 December 2010. They were invited to participate in the second Focus Asia Documentary Film Festival.

– **The SASNET Board met the last time** on 11 May 2010. The meeting was held at Uppsala University.



– **Fourteen SASNET Newsletters** were published during 2010.

– **On 27–29 May**, Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund participated in the Nordic Association for South Asian Studies (NASA) conference at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

– **On 8 June**, Anna and Lars participated in the farewell reception for the outgoing Ambassador of India to Sweden and Latvia, Mr. Balkrishna Shetty. The reception was held at the Embassy of India in Stockholm. Three months later the new Ambassador from mid-August 2010, H.E. Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar presented his credentials to His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden. In the evening a reception for invited guests was held at the Ambassador's residence. SASNET was represented by Lars and Bubu Eklund.

– **On 4 March**, Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund visited the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), and the Asia Research Centre (ARC) at Copenhagen Business School in Copenhagen. It was part of an ongoing

effort to strengthen collaboration with Nordic institutions engaged in South Asia-related research and other activities.

– In September, **Anna Lindberg spent one month at the Centre for Gender Studies**, Kerala University, India. Anna was selected for a scholarship by the Erasmus Mundus Indo-European mobility program administered by Lund University. She gave a lecture at Centre for Development Studies (CDS) about Child Marriages in Travancore. She also gave another lecture at the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation (CREST) in Kozhikode.

– In October, Anna Lindberg was a member of the committee when **Malin Gregersen defended her doctoral dissertation** on "Fostering Obligations. Representations of a Mission in South India in the First Half of the 20th Century" at the Dept. of History, Lund University.

– **On 28 October:** Anna Lindberg participated in a conference organised by the Asian Dynamics Initiative (ADI) at the University of Copenhagen, presenting a paper.

– **On 1 November**, Lars Eklund participated in a half-day seminar at Stockholm University on Mahatma Gandhi, organised by the Embassy of India in Sweden. The seminar entitled "*Is the Mahatma still relevant?*" was hosted by Prof. Vinayagum Chinapah and the Institute of International Education at Stockholm University.

– **On 2 June**, PhD candidate Naonori Kusakabe from the Center for South Asian Studies at Gifu Women's University in Japan visited SASNET's office in Lund, where he met with its deputy director Lars Eklund. Since the spring 2010, Mr. Kusakabe was connected to the Stockholm School of Economics and its European Institute of Japanese Studies as a Visiting researcher, first in Stockholm and then from July 2010 based at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh.

#### **SASNET 2010 Seminars:**

• On 18 March, Prof. **Yogendra Yadav**, Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi, India, held a SASNET lecture on "*Democracy and Poverty in India*", organised in collaboration with the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE).

• On 19 April, **Anthony P. D'Costa**, Professor of Indian Studies at the Asia Research Centre (ARC), Copenhagen Business School, held an open SASNET lecture at Lund University on "*India's Changing Role in the Global Political Economy*".

• On 27 April, **Nils Finn Munch-Petersen**, Senior expert at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, Denmark, held an open SASNET lecture on "*The Maldives – Paradise Lost?*", focusing on the current developments in the Indian Ocean republic, claimed to be threatened by a rise in sea level due to anticipated global warming.

• On 5 May, a **seminar on Arsenic in Drinking Water** was organized by SASNET in collaboration with Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies at the Division of Water Resources Engineering; the KTH-International Groundwater Arsenic Research Group at the Dept. of Land and Water Resources Engineering, Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm; and The Swallows India-Bangladesh section.

• On 22 May, **Muhammad Azam Khan Swati**, federal minister of Science and Technology from Pakistan, participated in a seminar on "*The Role of Overseas Pakistani Students in Nation Building*". The seminar was organised by Pakistani students of Asian Studies at Lund University with support from SASNET.

• On 24 May, Professor **Gitiara Nasreen**, Professor & Chair, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Dhaka University, Bangladesh, held a SASNET lecture on "*Images of Gender on Media in Bangladesh*". Organized in collaboration with the Department of Sociology.

• On 26 May, Professor **Sudipta Bhattacharya** from the Dept. of Economics and Politics, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, India, and during the academic year 2009/10 Visiting Professor at the Asia Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School (CBS), held a SASNET lecture on "*Neo-liberalism, Weakening State and Peasant Differentiation in Indian Agriculture*". Organized in collaboration with the Department of Sociology.

• On 7 June, SASNET co-organised a **seminar in Stockholm on "Environmental and Ecological Risks of Toxic Metal Pollution from Natural and Anthropogenic Sources. Problems, Challenges and Remedies"**. It was held at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) and was organised in collaboration with the KTH-International Groundwater Arsenic Research Group; Uppsala University; Swedish Maritime Environmental Markets (SMEM); and the Centre for Environmental Science and Engineering (CESE) at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB), India.



- On 13 September, Dr. **A. Rajagopal**, R.S.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, India, lectured on "*Water Management and Agrarian change in India*". The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Research Group Society, Development, Environment (Samhälle, utveckling och miljö) at the Department of Sociology.
- On 17 September, Prof. **Venkatesh B. Athreya**, R.S.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, India, lectured on "*Food Security Challenge in India*". The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Research group Society, Development, Environment (Samhälle, utveckling och miljö) at the Department of Sociology.
- On 22 September, Professor **Shahana Urooj Kazmi**, Pro-Vice Chancellor at the University of Karachi, Pakistan gave an engaging presentation entitled "*Devastating Floods in Pakistan: A story of Pain, Grief and Suffering – Can We Help?*". A large audience of students and faculty from Lund University attended the seminar, jointly organised by SASNET and Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS).
- On 29 September, Associate Professor **Jagannath Prasad Panda** from the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis (IDSA) in New Delhi, India, held a SASNET lecture on "*The Pattern of Sino-Indian Relations: Evaluating the Strategic Discourse*" at Lund University. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Department of Political Science.
- On 20 October, a SASNET seminar was held on "*Emancipation or Dependency: Microcredits in South Asia*", coorganised by The Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund at University (UPF), and the Swallows India Bangladesh, an NGO based at Lund. The seminar featured **Markus Pauli**, Doctoral Candidate, University of Heidelberg, Germany who talked about "*Microfinance in India – assessing its impact with the capability approach*"; and Ms. **Khushi Kabir**, Coordinator for Nijera Kori, a nongovernmental development organization in Bangladesh, giving an engaged presentation entitled "*Setting Development Priorities: Economic Well-Being or Empowerment for the Poorest?*"
- On 24 November, a well-attended Seminar on "Sri Lanka after the War" was held in collaboration with the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF). Dr. **Camilla Orjuela**, Peace and Development Studies, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg spoke on "*Sri Lanka after the War: Sustainable Peace or new Conflicts?*"
- On 2 November, **Anna Lindberg** held an informal public lecture on "*Gender, Dowry, and the Marriage of Children in South India*". The seminar was organized by the University's Global Gender Matters Network, hosted by the Department of Gender Studies.
- On 9 November, Professor **Roger Jeffery**, Director for the Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh, lectured on "*Trust and the Regulation of Pharmaceuticals: South Asia in a Globalised World*", organised in collaboration with Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS).
- On 9 November, Dr. **Margret Frenz**, Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (but otherwise connected to the University of Leicester) lectured on "*Making the World One's Home. Goan migration across the Indian Ocean and Beyond*", organised in collaboration with the Dept. Of Sociology.
- On 15 November, SASNET organised Prof. **Lipi Ghosh's** inaugural lecture as new ICCR Professor at Lund University. Her presentation was entitled "*Ethnicity, Religion and Nation Building: The Northeast Indian Profile*". Indian Ambassador Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar was the guest of honour, and he gave an interesting presentation on "India-Sweden Bilateral Relations".
- On Decemeber xx, Professor **Peter Schalk**, Chair in the History of Religions, Faculty of Theology, Uppsala university, spoke on "*Defeated but Defiant. The Ilamtamil Resistance Movement after May 2009*".
- On 6 December, Dr. **Heinz Werner Wessler**, Guest Professor at the Dept.of Linguistics and Philology, Uppsala University, lectured on "*The Liberating Force of Hindi and 'Goddess English'. Language Policies and Identity Politics in India*". Organised in collaboration with the Dept. of Political Science.
- On 17 December, Prof **Swaran Singh** from the Center for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, lectured on "*India's Disarmament Policy: Past, Present, Future*". The seminar was co-organised by the Department of Political Science



## ATTACHMENT 1

### SASNET ACTIVITIES 2011

**18 January:** SASNET launches an Interdisciplinary South Asia Seminar series at Lund University, in the form of Brown bag lunch seminars. The aim is to present and disseminate the eminent South Asia related research that is carried out in so many departments at Lund University. Catarina Kinnwall talked about "*Religion, Nationalism and Discourses on Terror in South Asia*".

**27 January:** SASNET's acting webmaster/ deputy director, Julia Velkova, attended a reception organised by the Embassy of India in Stockholm on the occasion of the 62nd Republic Day of India. The reception was inaugurated with an Indian dance performance. It was followed by a speech by H.E. Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar, Ambassador of India in Sweden.

**20–24 March:** SASNET successfully organised a Rabindranath Tagore 150th birth anniversary celebration week in Lund. In collaboration with other local institutions and organisations, the week included popular lectures by Dr. Olavi Hemmilä and P-O Henricson, Swedish experts on Rabindranath's life and literature, as well as exhibitions, film shows, concerts and poetry reading. On Tuesday 22 March, SASNET and Lund University organised a well-attended academic seminar, featuring Professor William Radice from SOAS, University of London. Prof. Radice (*photo*), who has made new inspiring translations of Tagore's poetry and prose from Bengali into English – a new volume of Gitanjali was supposed to be published in May 2011, spoke extensively and passionately about the relevance still present in his literature.



The seminar programme, prepared by Lars Eklund, also included lectures by Dr. Claes-Göran Holmberg, [Comparative Literature, Centre for Languages and Literature](#), who talked about "Tagore in Sweden and the Nobel Prize of 1913", and Mag. Art Annemette Karpen from Copenhagen who talked about "Tagore's Drama Production, and Satyajit Ray's films based on Tagore works". Free-lance journalist Gabrielle Gunneberg talked about Tagore's Nobel prize medal that were stolen from Santiniketan in 2004. Prof. Lipi Ghosh from Calcutta University, and currently ICCR guest professor at Lund University, recited poems by Rabindranath Tagore, and Bubu Munshi Eklund (*photo*) sang some of his songs.

**21–25 March:** SASNET's Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg is part of a high-level multi-disciplinary delegation from Lund University, led by Pro Vice-Chancellor Dr Eva Åkesson (*on photo*) to visit India. The reasons for the visit, partially planned for by the Swedish Embassy in New Delhi, were the already substantial collaborations with India and expectations of further increased cooperation in the coming years. The delegation consisted of deans and outstanding scientists, representing several of Lund University's faculties.



**1 April:** SASNET's director Dr. Anna Lindberg participated in the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS) Council meeting. The meeting was held at L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHSS) in Paris. Other members present: Professor Roger Jeffrey (University of Edinburgh, President EASAS); Dr. Margret Frenz (University of Leister, Vice President EASAS); Professor Ulrike Müller-Böker (University of Zürich, Treasurer EASAS); Dr. Heinz-Werner Wessler (University of Uppsala); Professor Danuta Stasik (University of Warzaw); Dr. Nicolas Jaoul (EHSS). Discussion were held regarding the upcoming 22nd EASAS conference to be held in Lisbon, Portugal in July 2012, and also future conferences in 2014 and 2016. The Council also discussed EASAS' updated web page, [www.easas.org](http://www.easas.org), and all agreed that it has improved greatly, thanks to design work carried out by Ms. Julia Velkova from SASNET.



**14 April:** SASNET successfully organised a full-day seminar on "Managing Diversity: The Indian Experience", in collaboration with the Embassy of India in Stockholm, and a concluding dance performance and reception. The events gathered an audience of more than 100 people, in the Pictura hall, inside the main Lund University Building for the seminar, and then in The Old Bishop's Palace. The seminar was attended by Lund University Vice Chancellor Per Eriksson, the Governor of Skåne County, Göran Tunhammar, and Ashok Sajjanhar, Ambassador of India to Sweden and Latvia, who introduced the theme for the day, Managing Diversity: The Indian Experience.



Invited speakers included Professor Sushil Khanna, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Kolkata; Dr. Stig Toft Madsen, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen; Dr. Christina Nygren, Visiting Research Fellow, Dept. of Oriental Languages, Stockholm University; Professor Staffan Lindberg, Dept. of Sociology, Lund University; and Mr. Ulf Pehrsson, Vice President, Government and Industry Relations at Ericsson. The reception at the Old Bishop's Palace was hosted by the Embassy of India in Sweden. A mixed crowd consisting both by Lund University academicians and students, and members of the Indian/South Asian community in Malmö/Lund, enjoyed a marvellous performance by Anette Pooja (*photo*), eminent classical Odissi dancer from Gothenburg.

**4 May:** SASNET organised a seminar on "Forest Rights in India" in collaboration with Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS); and The Swallows India Bangladesh. The seminar, that drew an audience of about 30 people, was held because 2011 had been selected to be the United Nation's International Year of Forests. Issues related to forests and deforestation in India were discussed, as well as the problems that the tribal people who live there face. The speakers were Dr. Beppe Karlsson, [Dept. of Social Antropology](#), Stockholm University; Dr. Pernille Gooch, [Human Ecology Division](#), Lund University; PhD candidate Nabikanta Jha, from the same department; and Mr. Praveen Kaushal Manto from [SOPHIA organisation](#) in India. All presentations became available on the Internet.



**8 May:** SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the 150 years birth anniversary celebration of Indian/Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore that was held in Uppsala. The event was organized by the [Uppsala University Seminar for South Asian Studies](#), and drew an audience of more than 100 people. The programme consisted of academic lectures by Dr. Heinz Werner Wessler and Dr. Ferdinando Sardella, and cultural performances by Bubu Munshi Eklund from Lund, who sang a range of beautiful Tagore songs (Rabindrasangheet) accompanied on Harmonium; and by Uppsala based Trio Creation, with Jonas Landahl and Suranjana Ghosh on Tablas and Iti Malo on Sitar. The celebration event was also attended by the Ambassadors from Bangladesh and India, Mr. Gousal Azam Sarker and Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar respectively, who both gave inspired presentations.

**9 May:** In connection with his visit to the Tagore celebration event in Uppsala, Lars Eklund also met with researchers involved in Uppsala University's Seminar for South Asian Studies. A meeting was organised at the [Dept. of Linguistics and Philology](#). Heinz Werner Wessler, Christiane Schaefer, and Anju Saxena, all from the Linguistics department, along with Gunnel Cederlöf from the [Dept. of History](#), presented among other things their current



plans to form a more formalised Forum for South Asian Studies at the university. They also informed about discussions being held with the Embassy of India and ICCR to establish an ICCR professorship at Uppsala University along the same lines that Lund University has since 2010. Lars Eklund stressed SASNET's continued commitment to support such South Asia oriented initiatives at all Swedish universities, in spite of the fact that SASNET since 2010 is only funded by Lund University. Collaborative efforts in the field of establishing masters programmes in South Asian Studies is one specific field where SASNET could play a key role.

**11 May:** Partha N. Mukherjee, Professor Emeritus, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, came to Lund University in the first week of May 2011, to be a member of an international team to evaluate the university. The week-long evaluation was part of the EQ 11 project initiated at Lund University in 2009 in order to improve education quality. While in Lund, Prof. Mukherjee held a SASNET Guest Lecture, organised in collaboration with the Departments of Sociology and Political Science, Lund University, on "Land Acquisition for Industrialisation in West Bengal: the Case of Nano and Tata Motors". Partha Mukherji has been the holder of a Ford Professorship at the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), New Delhi. He was formerly Vice Chancellor of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, and President of the Indian Sociological Society.



**16 May:** Lars Eklund visited Skövde University to attend a seminar meeting organised by Professor Abul Mandal, School of Life Sciences. The aim was to discuss Skövde University's ongoing partnership programmes with both University of Rajshahi University, Bangladesh (a Linnaeus Palme exchange collaboration programme), and two universities in Pune, India, involved in a Sida funded Partner driven collaboration project on Urban Indian Development.



Professor Mandal, who coordinates both programmes, organised the joint meeting to discuss how to proceed with them. The meetings were attended by the Vice Chancellor at Skövde University, Professor Sigbritt Karlsson, and Ms. Sofia Henningsson, International Coordinator at the university. Ms. Sadia Sharmin from the Embassy of Bangladesh in Stockholm also participated.

**19 May:** SASNET held its second Brown bag lunch seminar. Professor Rajni Hatti-Kaul from the Department of Biotechnology, talked about "Biotechnology and sustainable development". She informed about the eminent environmental research that is carried out at Lund University. A major part of it has been directed towards the use of biotechnology for environmental bioremediation and for producing bioenergy and biodegradable chemicals and materials from renewable resources. Several projects have focussed on India, including a project on treatment of textile dyes using biological and physiochemical techniques in the city of Tirupur in Tamil Nadu.



**26 May:** Professor Mizanur Rahman from the Dept. of Accounting & Information Systems, Dhaka University, Bangladesh (and also the Treasurer of Dhaka University), held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. He spoke about "Social Marketing: Lessons from Bangladesh". The seminar was organized in collaboration with the Dept. of Sociology. Prof. Rahman has a research interest in Global payment imbalance and the current global economic crisis; and Infrastructure, trade and economic growth in Asia.



**27 May:** Lars Eklund visited Gothenburg, in order to learn about two interesting projects with strong relevance to South Asian studies at the University of Gothenburg. In the morning, a meeting was organised at the School of Business, Economics and Law by Professor Ramnath Narayanswamy, one out of three Indian researchers currently based there as part of the Visiting Professors programme. Another Indian visiting professor also attended the meeting, Associate Professor Ashok Thampy, as well as the program coordinator, Dr. Robin Biddulph, the Head of the International Visiting Professors Programme at the School, Dr. Sara Stendahl, and Ingela Palmgren, Director, Corporate Relations, School of Business, Economics and Law.



From the School of Business, Economics and Law, Lars Eklund proceeded to the Nordic School of Public Health (NHV), this time accompanied by Julia Velkova, at this time working on a project basis for SASNET. They went to NHV in order to meet Dr. Alexandra Krettek, Associate Professor of Cardiovascular Prevention at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg; and Professor Göran Bondjers, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Sahlgrenska Academy. A meeting was organised to present University of Gothenburg's new collaboration project with three partner universities in Nepal – Kathmandu University, Tribhuvan University, and Patan Academy of Health Sciences. The interdisciplinary project, headed by Dr. Krettek, involves researchers from several departments and is entitled "Collaboration between GU and Nepali Institutions: Strengthening Health Education, Supporting Research, Monitoring Health".



**7–9 June:** Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova visited University of Gothenburg, to attend the first day of the kick-of conference for its Go:India project, launched in November 2010. This is a three year project (2011 – 2013), intended to build a platform for co-operation within the areas of research, teaching and education between researchers at University of Gothenburg's Faculties of Arts; Fine, Applied and Performing Arts; Sahlgrenska Academy; and the Faculty of Social Sciences, and their collaboration partner institutions in India. Lars and Julia interacted with the Gothenburg researchers and project coordinators, but also with the representatives from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi; Sarai/Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in Delhi; Gandhian Institute of Studies in Varanasi; Jadavpur University in Kolkata; Punjabi University in Patiala; Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan; Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai; Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology in Bangalore; and Union Biblical Seminary in Pune.

Go:India  
गो:इंडिया

Second and third day of the conference, Anna Lindberg came from Lund to participate in the meetings dealing with planned activities for the coming three years, including, among other things, joint conferences, writing of joint research projects, teacher and student exchange.

**13 June:** After attending the Go:India kickoff conference at Gothenburg University, and holding a lecture for Hindi students at Stockholm University, Prof. Dipak Malik (*photo*) from Gandhian Institute of Studies in Varanasi came to Lund, and visited SASNET's office. Prof. Malik has been a member of [SASNET's South Asian reference group](#) and has a strong attachment to Lund and Lund University. During his stay in Lund he met colleagues from the departments of Sociology and Social Work, besides having discussions with Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund from SASNET.



**14 June:** Associate Professor Sudipta De from the Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India, visited SASNET's office in Lund. Dr. De has been involved in collaborative research for many years with Prof. Mohsen Assadi at the Dept. of Energy Sciences, Lund University. He has also spent time at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, as a scholarship holder under the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 programme India4EU (coordinated by Politecnico di Torino, Italy). During his visit to SASNET he met Lars Eklund.

**15 June:** Lars Eklund visited the [Division of Global health \(IHCAR\)](#) at Karolinska Institutet Medical University in Stockholm. The main purpose was to attend the PhD dissertation by Mr. Mohsin Saeed Khan, who successfully defended his thesis entitled "Poverty of Opportunity for Women Selling Sex in Lahore, Pakistan: Knowledge, Experiences and Magnitude of HIV and STIs". While at IHCAR, Lars also interacted with a large number of other researchers – professors, post-docs and PhD candidates in Global Health, including Dr. Fauzia Rabbani, now back at Aga Khan University in Karachi (on photo together with Mohsin Saeed Khan). A separate meeting was held with Professor Vinod Diwan and Professor Emeritus Bo Lindblad (*photo*), discussing IHCAR's long-standing collaboration with universities in India and Pakistan, the large number of sandwich PhDs attained in recent years, and the impressive number of large EU grants for research projects, partly focusing on South Asia, that IHCAR administers.



**21 June:** Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund from SASNET had a fruitful meeting in Lund with Vice Chancellor Professor K R Shevgaonkar (*photo*) and Dr. Prasad Kulkarni from the University of Pune, India. They had come to Sweden in order to visit two of their partner universities, namely Lund University and KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm and Lund University, both of which are involved in Indo-European Erasmus Mundus Action 2 programmes with University of Pune. Prof. Shevgaonkar had recently taken over as the Vice Chancellor of University of Pune. Before that he was attached to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay for many years.



**30 June:** Anna Lindberg handed over the report she has prepared on Lund University's common and long-term strategies on South Asia collaboration during the coming five years to the Lund University Vice Chancellor Professor Per Eriksson. The report was written in close consultation with representatives of all faculties at Lund University and the university's External Relations division.

**4 August:** Dr. Y. S. Alone, Assistant Professor at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi, India, visited SASNET's office at Lund University. Dr. Alone who is basically an art historian and studies Buddhism in western India, had come to Sweden to participate in the 2011 Nordic Summer University (NSU) symposium on "Narrativity and Political Imaginaries" held at Falsterbo, south of Malmö, 31 July – 6 August 2011, and more specifically the NSU symposium's study circle focusing on "Psychoanalysis and Politics". He presented an opening address entitled "Confronting Political Representation: Politics of Visuality", focusing on the relation between Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar in the Indian freedom struggle. At SASNET, Dr. Alone had a fruitful interaction with Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova. He also met Dr. Jan Magnusson from the [School of Social Work](#), Lund University.



**16–18 August:** The third Nordic Conference on South Asian Studies for Young Scholars was held at Falsterbo kursgård in Höllviken, 20 km south of Malmö. As usual, it was organised by SASNET but from this year in collaboration with the Copenhagen based Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS). Julia Velkova from SASNET was the main coordinator. The conference became a grand success, gathering graduate students and postdocs, along with other junior scholars affiliated with universities in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, who are focusing on South Asia in their work. This year a few students from other European countries (Scotland and Germany) were also invited.

**21–15 August:** Julia Velkova represented SASNET at the World Water Week Conference in Stockholm. It was a fruitful week in which she attended a number of South Asian related seminars and events. While in Stockholm, she also visited the Embassy of India in Stockholm and researchers at Stockholm University.

**6 September:** The new redesigned and restructured SASNET website was launched. Julia Velkova has been in charge of the transfer of the old pages to the new website format, as well as fixing technical problems and bugs. Bernd Wunsch from the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen meanwhile kept working on the new SASNET Research database that was launched somewhat later.

**7 September:** Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova from SASNET visited Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH) at its main university campus in Karlskrona. They spent the day meeting representatives from the university involved in collaboration projects with South Asia, mainly India. BTH has an impressive amount of working agreements with Indian universities, especially in the state of Andhra Pradesh, and has had a large amount of Indian students at Masters level studying at BTH in recent years. Besides educational collaboration agreements, BTH is also involved in a number of India related research projects funded by the Swedish research Council, and in a large India Project run over a number of years.



**15 September:** SASNET held its first Brown bag lunch seminar during the fall semester 2011. Dr. Malin Gregersen from the [Department of History](#) talked about "Fostering Obligations: Swedish Medical Missionary Narratives from South India". Even though Sweden was not participating in the run for colonies during the era of the new imperialism in late 19th and early 20th century, Swedes often took a close interest in African and Asian countries through the work of Christian missionaries. Thus, Christian missionaries played an important role in forming early 20th century Swedish world views. But their depictions of everyday life in foreign countries were formulated on the basis of an aspiration not only to convert people to Christianity, but also to educate, shape and change people according to Swedish and Christian ideals. Such missionary narratives, originating from a South Indian hospital, was the focus of Malin's talk. The seminar was held in Murbeckssalen, Gula Villan (inside the Botanical Gardens), Östra Vallgatan 14, Lund.



**19 September:** Dr. Bidyut Mohanty, Head, Women's Studies Department at the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), New Delhi, India held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. During the lecture, co-organised by the [Department of History of Religion](#), she talked about "Nuances of Rice Culture, Goddess Lakshmi and the Status of Women in India". The lecture was based on her forthcoming book entitled "Rice Culture and Status of Women: A Comparative Study of Lakshmi Puranas". [Read an article written by Dr. Mohanty on the same issue](#). Bidyut Mohanty has been a Visiting Professor in the Global and International Studies program at the University of California, Santa Barbara and is the coordinator of an ISS and UNDP project on capacity building of elected women leaders in local government in India, and as well



as of a project sponsored by the National Commission on the protection of child rights. She has also coordinated several UNIFEM funded projects on HIV and AIDS and role of panchayats, trafficking and local government's new role. Besides, Dr. Mohanty is also a specialist on famine, agrarian history and decentralization. She combines grassroots activism with participatory research.

**19–23 September:** SASNET was again strongly involved in commemorating the 150th birth anniversary year of the great myriad-minded Indian/Bengali poet, philosopher and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). A series of anniversary celebrations took place in Sweden and Denmark with kind support from the embassies of India in Stockholm and Copenhagen, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in Delhi. Thereby, three eminent international Tagore scholars – Professor William Radice, SOAS, University of London, UK; Dr. Reba Som, ICCR Rabindranath Tagore Centre in Kolkata, India; and Professor Asoke Bhattacharya, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India – could be invited to do a Scandinavian tour. Academic seminars were held at Copenhagen University (19th), Lund University (21st), Stockholm University (22nd) and Uppsala University (23rd).



**20 September:** Manoranjan Mohanty, Durgabai Deshmukh Professor of Social Development at the Council for Social Development in New Delhi, India held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. During the seminar, co-organised by the departments of [Political Science](#) and [Sociology](#), he talked about "*India and China: Competing Hegemonies or Forces of Democratization*". Prof. Mohanty is a China scholar with many publications on theoretical and empirical dimensions of social movements, human rights, development experience and regional role of India and China. Currently he is also the Chairperson, Institute of Chinese Studies in Delhi, and President, Development Research Institute, Bhubaneswar. Besides, he is a Visiting Professor in Global Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara since 2007 where he teaches every Spring. Prof. Mohanty retired in 2004 as the Director, Developing Countries Research Centre and Professor of Political Science at the University of Delhi, where he taught since 1969. He is a former Director of ICS and a former Editor of China Report.



**22–24 September:** The Fifth European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies was held in Paris at the Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS). The purpose of this yearly event is to encourage the construction of a European network of young social scientists working in the field of South Asia. Previous PhD workshops have been jointly organised by Heidelberg University, Germany; Ghent University, Belgium; University of Edinburgh; UK; and Le Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS), Paris, France, but from 2011, SASNET/Lund University has been accepted to be a co-organiser. The 2011 workshop was successfully organized by CEIAS, with support from a *European Association for South Asian Studies* grant, and in collaboration with the *Association des jeunes études indiennes* (AJEI). The 6th European PhD Workshop in South Asian Studies will be hosted by SASNET/Lund University in September 2012.



**26 September:** The [International Science Programme \(ISP\)](#) at Uppsala University celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a one-day seminar. It was held at Ihresalen, in Engelska Parken, Thunbergsvägen, Uppsala, and was attended by a large number of invitees and guests, including several former ISP scholarship holders from Third World countries. SASNET was represented by deputy director Lars Eklund. When it started in 1961, ISP was called the International Seminar for Research and Education in Physics. Over the 50 years since then, the programme has developed from a fellowship programme into a capacity building programme, not only in Physics, but also in Chemistry (since 1970) and Mathematics (since 2002). ISP is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and provides long term support to the establishment of viable research teams and institution building in developing countries, including South Asia. It is a quite unique work concept internationally. Regional cooperation and networking are also important parts of the activities.



**27 September:** Professor Venkatesh Athreya from the Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, India held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. During the well-attended seminar, organised in collaboration with the [Dept. of Sociology](#), he talked about "*Political Economy of Indian Development since 1991*". Professor Athreya has been co-operating for many years with Prof. Göran Djurfeldt and Prof. Emeritus Staffan Lindberg at Lund University. Currently he is co-operating with Djurfeldt and Lindberg at Lund University in a restudy after 25 years of 213 agricultural households in the Cauvery delta in Tamilnadu.

**6 October:** More than 60 people, students, academics from several departments and other SASNET members participated in the inaugural seminar for G K Karanth, second Visiting ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) Professor at Lund University. He arrived to Lund University in mid-September 2011, and was being hosted by the [Department of Sociology](#) during the academic year 2011/12. The ICCR professorships at Lund University are an outcome of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Council for Cultural Relations ([ICCR](#)) and Lund University, that was signed in 2010. The agreement is valid for four years, with a new Indian Professor to be selected each year. SASNET was actively involved in finalizing the ICCR professorship at Lund University, with strong support from the Embassy of India in Stockholm.



The theme for Prof. Karanth's inaugural lecture was "Changing Rural India: Caste and Social Mobility". After the lecture, a cultural programme was organised with eminent Indian Tabla player Subrata Manna, classical singer Sudokshina Chatterjee Manna and Kathak dancer Sohini Debnath. Their wonderful performance was highly appreciated by the audience.

**13 October:** SASNET held its second Brown bag lunch seminar during the fall semester. Associate Professor Åsa Ljungh from the Section of Medical Microbiology, Dept. of Laboratory Medicine talked about "*Lactic acid bacteria – from stone age man to functional food*". Dr. Ljungh works in collaboration with Indian researchers.



An interested audience listened to Dr. Ljungh talking about Lactic Acid Bacteria (LAB, Lactobacillus sp, Bifidobacteria sp and others), prevalent in nature since the stone age. As long as we know, LAB have been used to ferment food, and as a means for preservation



of food. Nowadays, our intestinal content of LAB has decreased, and this is part of the reason that the prevalences of several gastrointestinal disturbances have increased. With modern technology, several important and beneficial criteria of LAB have been demonstrated such as antagonistic effect against enteric pathogens, binding of potentially carcinogenic substances (evoking cancer), effects on the immune system, and production of antioxidants which bind reactive oxygen species, ROS, which are produced in our intestine and are very toxic. Part of this knowledge has led to that multiple preparations are sold as “beneficial for your health, prevents against travellers’ diarrhoea” etc. but the doses of LAB are low, the shelf life is not documented, and there are few scientific reports documenting their effects. Clearly, more scientific studies are needed to document their beneficial effects!



**18 October:** SASNET hosted a meeting at Lund University between representatives of South Asia oriented research within Humanities and Social Sciences at the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, Gothenburg and Lund. The constructive meeting aimed to discuss increased collaboration on South Asian studies between these four major Swedish universities, and possibilities for launching a joint Swedish Masters programme in South Asian studies. At Uppsala University a Forum for South Asian Studies was formed recently, and at Stockholm University a Forum for Asian Studies was formed in 2010. At University of Gothenburg the researchers are involved in the Go:India project launched in May 2011; and at Lund University SASNET is the driving force in connecting researchers working on South Asia related projects in all disciplines.

**19 October:** G K Karanth, ICCR Guest Professor at Lund University, held an open lecture entitled “*Pigeonholing Oneself: Emerging Identities in Contemporary India*”. Venue: Dept. of Sociology, conference room 1 (335), Paradisgatan 5, Lund. The seminar focused on the general consensus that Indian society has been witnessing a new wave of rapid social transformation. It is meant to initiate a discussion to assess these transformations and to locate them in the wider debate on the feasibility of social sustainability – even as the concept is undergoing a refinement. Prof. Karanth states that, even though one is eager to anticipate many radical changes, in regard to the identities of persons, it is useful to bear in mind Arjun Appadurai’s summing up of Ashis Nandy’s offering of lessons in any discussion of self-making in contemporary India.

**20 October:** Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund from SASNET were invited to visit the Ambassador of Nepal to Sweden and Denmark, Mr. Vijaykant L. Karna, in his Hellerup residence. The Ambassador has a close relation to SASNET, having participated in a number of important seminars at Lund University in recent years. Ms. Elisabeth Axell from Lund University's division of International Relations was also invited to the Ambassador, since she is the coordinator of an Erasmus Mundus Asia regional mobility programme involving Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu.



**21 October:** PhD candidate Indrajit Roy from the Dept. of International Development, University of Oxford, UK, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University. He spoke about *"Employment Guarantee in India: At the Cusp of Policy and Politics"*. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the [Department of Sociology](#), Lund University. Indrajit Roy focuses on the role of actors in political society in interceding on the behalf of different groups and individuals during disputes and deliberations among populations. Understanding these roles will illuminate the ways in which actors in political society, people and institutions who are by definition embedded in the socio-economic rubric of the locality, resolve tensions between often conflicting interests.



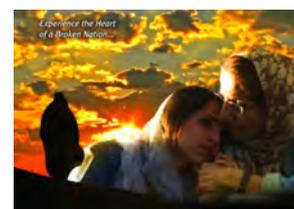
**3 November:** In collaboration with Lund University International Master programme in Development and Management ([LUMID](#)) and the [Swallows India Bangladesh](#) organisation, SASNET organised a well-attended seminar on *"Violence, Caste Discrimination and Resistance – The situation of Dalits in India"*. Venue for the seminar: Edebalksalen, School of Social Work, Bredgatan 26, Lund. Dr. Aase Mygind Madsen, Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work, VIA University College in Aarhus, Denmark, gave a presentation on *"Dalits in the caste system"*, focusing on the social and economic discrimination they face in India, and the prospects of change. Aase's research has focused on processes of social exclusion and integration. In 1996, she defended her doctoral



dissertation entitled *"Untouchables: Stuck at the Bottom or Moving Upward? A Study of Changing Conditions for the Scheduled Castes in five Villages in Karnataka, South India"*. Over a period of 30 years she has been engaged in activities related to social problems in the 3rd world as well as taken part in Danish, Nordic and European Development Researchers' network. She has also worked on gender issues in Denmark and the Third World.

Kathir and Thilagam, activists from the Indian non-governmental organisation Evidence then spoke about their work to support victims of caste based violence and discrimination and how they advocate for change. Evidence is a Madurai based organisation working in the state of Tamil Nadu, and involved in collaboration with the Swallows India Bangladesh. Its aim is to create a society that ensures equality and justice to all. Activities include undertaking fact finding missions following incidents of atrocities against Dalits and Tribals in order to establish the facts of an incident and compile the necessary documentary evidence enabling the victims/survivors to access formal justice through the law.

**8 November:** A Doc Lounge event focusing on Afghanistan was held at Mejeriet, Stora Södergatan 64 in Lund. It was co-organised by SASNET. To this event, *"Where My Heart Beats"* was screened, and the director Khazar Fatemi participated in a discussion with Anders Fänge, representing the local section of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA). Fänge was for 20 years SCA's head of office in Kabul until he retired in 2010 and settled in Skåne.



**9 November:** SASNET organised a social gathering for the South Asian Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders currently at Lund University. They were invited for dinner in the residence of SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund and his wife Bubu Munshi Eklund. Professor Gopal Karanth, ICCR Profesor at Lund University during the academic year 2011-12 was also invited as honorary guest to interact with the students and researchers coming from a large number of universities in South Asia. Lund University coordinates one of the Indo-European Erasmus Mundus Action 2 programmes (lot 15/13), and one of the Asia Regional lots, the EMEA programme, involving universities in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Altogether more than 30 South Asian scholarship holders, Masters students as well as PhD candidates and post-docs, are currently at Lund University.



**10 November:** SASNET held its third Brown bag lunch seminar during the fall semester 2011. Dr. Olle Frödin from the [Department of Sociology](#) spoke about *"Modernization, Neoliberal Globalization or Variegated Development: the Indian Food System Transformation in Comparative Perspective"*. The lecture reviews three theoretical approaches to agro-food system change, placed at different levels on the ladder of generality. It then considers these approaches in relation to India's changing agro-food system. Finally, it examines the general and the particularistic features of the Indian case, and discusses their implications for theories relating to global governance and international political economy.

**11 November – 13 December:** Anna Lindberg was on a combined research and networking tour in Nepal and India. The research part of the tour concerned a project entitled *"Transnational Mobility of Higher Education within Asia: An Interdisciplinary Study of Strategies and Educational Conditions among Young Persons"*, an interdisciplinary project involving six Swedish researchers from different fields that will be based on fieldwork and data collection in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Dubai, Thailand, and Turkey. Anna's contribution will be to study Nepalese students who are currently or have formerly been studying at Indian universities.

**16 November:** Lars Eklund lectured for students at the [Department of Comparative Religion](#) at Åbo Akademi University, the Swedish medium university in Turku, Finland. Lars gave an engaged talk about "*Indiskt samhällsliv: Visioner och Verklighet*" (Social life of India: Visions and reality) for a group of 20 second-year undergraduate students who will travel to India in January 2012 on a field tour led by Dr. Måns Broo, Senior Lecturer in Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University. During his two-day visit to Turku, 15–16 November, Lars also had a chance to meet Dr. Outi Luova at the [Centre for East Asian Studies](#), University of Turku. Outi is the coordinator for the Finnish University Network for Asian Studies, and the Graduate School of Contemporary Asian Studies at the University of Turku. Lars and Outi discussed forms for closer collaboration between SASNET and the Finnish network, that currently focuses more and more on South Asia, and not only on East and South-East Asia as it used to do.



**17 November:** Dr Henrik Chetan Aspengren, [Department of History](#), Uppsala University, held a well-attended seminar at Lund University on "*Pakistan – History, Politics, Society*". More than 30 participants attended the seminar, many of them students from the Lund University Master in International Development and Management programme (LUMID) programme and from the Centre of East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE). The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET, LUMID and ABF Lund – a new collaboration partner for SASNET.

**17 November:** On this World Day of Philosophy, one of the leading daily newspapers of Bangalore, [Deccan Herald](#), published an article written by Julia Velkova. The article entitled "*Search for spiritualism in a land now steeped in materialism*" is a personal reflection on the transformation of the philosophy for a daily life in India. The author argues that the economic growth of India has transformed the values of a traditionally spiritualistic society into a materialistic society that in the course of this transformation and urge to catch up with the West has forgotten its own intellectual potential and philosophy of life.

**30 November:** Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova made a one-day excursion tour to Denmark as a SASNET social activity along with Lund University's current ICCR Professor G K Karanth and his wife Raji. They first visited Kronborg Castle in Elsinore (Helsingør), and thereafter they proceeded to Louisiana Art Museum in Humlebaeck.

**5 December:** Participants from the Sida funded training programme on "Sustainable Urban Water and Sanitation – Integrated Processes", managed by the [Division of Water Resources Engineering](#), Lund University, visited SASNET's office in Lund. The programme runs every year, and always include professionals in the field from South Asia. [M. Luckose](#), Regional Manager for the international WaterAid organisation in Bhopal, India; Assistant Professor [V. Iyer](#) from the Indian Institute of Public Health in Gandhinagar, India; and Dr. [S. Wickrematilake](#), Regional Director's Health Service Office, Kegalle, Sri Lanka, met Lars Eklund and discussed their respective work on water issues in India and Sri Lanka.



**8 December:** Lars Eklund participated in a highly interesting conference on "*Protecting Minority Rights in South Asia*" that was held at the EU Parliament in Brussels. The conference was organised by the Hague based Global Human Rights Defence organisation (GHRD). Human rights defenders from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan and Nepal addressed the situation in their respective home countries to some 130



European representatives, MEPs, policymakers, NGOs and media. Amongst the speakers were Taslima Nasreen, Bangladeshi writer in exile, winner of the European Parliament Sakharov Prize 1994, and Anuradha Koirala, awarded CNN Hero 2010 for her work against human trafficking in Nepal.

**8–9 December:** Julia Velkova visited [Aarhus University](#) in order to meet Professor Uwe Skoda from the Contemporary India Study Centre Aarhus – CISCA and discuss potential future collaborations with SASNET. The visit also coincided with participation in a workshop on "*Visual Cultures in Contemporary India*" that was arranged by CISCA at the same time. During the meeting, potential collaboration regarding joint seminars and an exchange of guest lecturers in 2012 was discussed, as well as the future developments for both CISCA and SASNET.



From Aarhus Julia travelled north to Aalborg, and on 9 December she also had a fruitful meeting with Associate Professor [Marianne Georgsen](#) at the [Department of Communication, Aalborg University](#).

SASNET wanted to explore the extensive work that Aalborg University, and in particular the Dept. of Communication, has carried out in Bangladesh during the last few years. Among the most interesting projects that Aalborg University and Marianne Georgsen are involved in is the collaboration with the Chittagong based [Asian University for Women](#), as well as a number of exchange programmes focused on PhD students from Bangladesh and Denmark.

**10–13 December:** Staffan Lindberg, Professor Emeritus at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, and SASNET's former director, participated in the [Indian Sociological Society's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations](#) at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. The theme for the conference, gathering 2,000 participants, was "*Sociology and the Crisis of Social Transformation in India*" and Staffan gave a short speech in the first session focusing on an international perspective. Staffan also lectured at the [Young Sociologists Workshop on Doing Ethnography](#), held in conjunction with the Indian Sociological Society conference, at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. From Delhi he then proceeded to Udaipur in Rajasthan, where he lectured at the [Indian Society of Labour Economics 53rd Annual Conference](#), held 17-19 December 2011.



**15 December:** Coinciding with the 40th anniversary of Bangladeshi independence, the Victory Day of 16th December 1971, SASNET held a well-attended seminar on "*Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society 40 years after Liberation*".

The seminar was organised in collaboration with the [Department of Sociology](#), Lund University at Edens Hörsal, Paradisgatan 5. More than 40 people, including a large number of Lund University students and researchers, listened to the keynote speaker, David Lewis, Professor of social policy and development at London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE). He spoke about "*Repositioning Bangladesh in the global imagination*", giving new perspectives on Bangladeshi development. It was based on his recently published book "*Bangladesh. Politics, Economy and Civil Society*".

Khandker Masudul Alam, First Secretary & Head of Chancery at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Sweden, also participated in the seminar, giving a presentation on Bangladesh's development from 1971 till today. The seminar was moderated by Lars Eklund, who also took part in the introductory singing of Bangladeshi songs along with Jasmine Zabbar and Bubu Munshi Eklund! The two latter also served delicious home made Bengali snacks and sweets at the reception, that followed after the seminar.





# Annual Activity Report 1 January – 31 December 2012

SASNET  
Swedish South Asian Studies Network  
Lund University  
<http://www.sasnet.lu.se>

Lund, 13 February 2013

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## JANUARY 2012

### Successful SASNET social evening with film show and art exhibition

More than 30 SASNET network members in Lund participated in a social gathering with food (knytkalas) and film show on Wednesday 18th January 2012. The event was jointly organised by SASNET and the Division of External Relations, Lund University, and aimed primarily at the South Asian Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders – students and researchers – currently staying at Lund University, but many other interested people within or outside the university came for the evening. The film to be screened was Girish Kasaravalli's 2002 Kannada movie "Dweepa" (The Island), a touching film that has been shown at several international film festivals, including in Gotthenburg a few years back. The film was introduced by Professor Gopal Karanth, the honorary guest for the evening, and distinguished ICCR Professor at Lund University during the academic year 2011-12. The event was arranged in Kyrksalen at Gamla Kirurgen, Sandgatan 3, Lund.

### Indian Republic Day 2012 function in Stockholm

The Embassy of India at Stockholm hosted a reception at the Elite Palace Hotel, Stockholm on 27 January 2012 to celebrate the 63rd Republic Day of India. A large crowd consisting of people from politics, business, diplomacy and academics gathered to hear speeches by the Ambassador, Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar, and also by the chief guest, Ms Hanna Hellquist, Secretary of State in the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Lars Eklund represented SASNET at the event, which offered a good opportunity to meet network colleagues from Stockholm University, Karolinska Institutet, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Uppsala University, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, and others.



## FEBRUARY 2012

### Successful SASNET seminar on the 1947 Partition of Punjab

Ishtiaq Ahmed, Professor Emeritus at the Department of Political Science, Stockholm University, and Honorary Senior Fellow of the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, held an interesting and highly appreciated SASNET lecture entitled "The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed: Unravelling the 1947 Tragedy through Secret British Reports and First Person Accounts" about the 1947 Partition of Punjab, on Thursday 2 February 2012. Professor Catarina Kinnvall, Dept of Political Science, Lund University, acted as a brilliant discussant at the seminar. The lecture was based on Ishtiaq Ahmed's recent book on the tragic events during and after Partition in the two Punjabs, a book that will get worldwide publication in February 2012 by Oxford University Press. In his lecture, Prof. Ahmed shedded light on how and why the Punjab, a Muslim majority province of British India with large Hindu and Sikh minorities, was partitioned in 1947.



### **SASNET seminar with Mohsin Saeed Khan on Pakistan's HIV Epidemic**

Dr. Mohsin Saeed Khan from Lahore, Pakistan, held a SASNET lecture on "Selling sex without HIV – Pakistan's HIV Epidemic" on Monday 6 February 2012. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Division of Social Medicine and Global Health, Department of Clinical Sciences, Lund University in Malmö. Venue: Auditorium, Clinical Research Centre (CRC), Skåne University Hospital in Malmö (SUS Malmö). The audience consisted to a large extent of students and teachers from the Master's Programme in Public Health (MPH), run at the Division of Social Medicine and Global Health. This programme partly focuses on South Asia, and many of the students are from that area.



During his visit to Lund University, Dr. Khan also visited SASNET's office in Lund, since he has had a special relation to SASNET. Till 2010, he was associated with SASNET as a member of its advisory South Asian Reference Group.

### **Second meeting to plan for joint Swedish masters programme in South Asian Studies**

After a kick-off meeting in Lund that took place in October 2011, a second meeting was organised on Tuesday 7 February 2012 to discuss the creation of a Swedish masters program on South Asian studies. This time, the meeting took place at the Faculty of Arts in the University of Gothenburg in which Åke Sander, Clemens Cavallin and Sigridur Beck from the University of Gothenburg hosted the meeting.



SASNET, who initiated the discussion about developing such a program in Sweden, was represented by its director, Anna Lindberg and its assistant webmaster, Julia Velkova. Kristina Miolin from the Division of External Relations, Lund University was also specially invited to share her expertise on the practical and administrative issues related to setting up a Masters program between several Swedish universities. Other participants in the meeting were Per-Olof Fjällsby from the Department of History at Karlstad University, and Ferdinando Sardella, coordinator of the Forum for South Asian studies at Uppsala University.

### **SASNET visit to Malmö University departments with South Asia focus**

On 8 February 2012, Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova from SASNET visited Malmö University for the second time in a short period, to again meet people involved in South Asia related activities. This time they visited the Faculty of Education and Society, and the Faculty of Odontology.

First they went to the Department of Science, Environment, Society at the Faculty of Education and Society (lärarutbildningen). Here they met Inge-Marie Svensson, a Lecturer in charge of an optional 15 ECTS credits course, "Möte med U-land" (Encounter a developing country), that has been offered for teachers training students at Malmö University since 1993. The course focuses on India and is open for all fifth semester students. The students spend three weeks in the southern states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, where they do field studies according to individual choice.

Julia and Lars then visited the Faculty of Odontology (Tandläkarhögskolan), and met Dr. Jayanthi Ramanathan Stjernswärd, one of the Directors for the Centre for Oral Health Sciences. She informed about the Centre, that has had an international touch ever since it started in the 1940s. The Centre took an early interest in the dental health problems of the Third World, which made the Centre attractive to the World Health Organization. Dr. Jayanthi Stjernswärd informed about the Centre's ongoing educational collaboration with South Asia. Every year a number of students choose South Asia related research project works, that include a fieldwork stay in the region.

## **SASNET visit to the University of Sofia in Bulgaria**

On Friday 10 February 2012, SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund, and assistant webmaster Julia Velkova were on an official visit to the University of Sofia in Bulgaria. Their goal was to explore ongoing re-



search on South Asia in the university, as well as possibilities for future collaboration. They primarily visited the Centre for Eastern Languages and Cultures, which is part of the university's Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology. It has a number of programmes at bachelors and masters level related to Indian studies, and also some research in the areas of Indian Philosophy and Literature. A meeting was organised by Associate Professor Milena Bratoeva, Head of Classical East Department, with a number of scholars, academic staff and PhD candidates working on South Asian projects in Sofia. Bubu Munshi Eklund from Lund also participated in the meeting.

Lars and Julia then visited the International Relations office at the University of Sofia, to discuss current collaboration projects between the University of Sofia and Swedish universities with the Head of International Relations, Mr. Rumen Grigorov, and the Erasmus/Socrates operative administrator, Mr. Tsvetan Bogdanov.

## **Sheba Saeed visited SASNET's office in Lund**



On Tuesday 14 February 2012, Sheba Saeed, PhD candidate in History, Film and Television at the University of Birmingham, UK, visited SASNET's office in Lund to meet deputy director Lars Eklund. Sheba, a solicitor by profession, is a guest researcher at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, during the month of February 2012. Her PhD research project focuses on the begging phenomenon in Mumbai, India, using criminological theory. A topic quite similar to her previous MPhil thesis project on Beggars of Lahore, which resulted in a documentary film as part of an audio-visual dissertation.

This film, "Beggars of Lahore" has been screened at international conferences and film festivals, and Ms. Saeed has also made a successful Beggars of Lahore photo exhibition, first shown in 2009. Sheba Saeed had been invited to visit Lund University by Teres Hjärpe, international co-ordinator at the School of Social Work, and she accompanied Sheba to SASNET. The School of Social Work is currently expanding its South Asia oriented activities and SASNET is actively promoting this development.

## **Neelambar Hatti held SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar on gendercide**

On 16 February 2012, the first SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar for the spring semester 2012 was successfully held. It was also the first seminar organised in collaboration with Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund (ABF) Lund, and Lunds Konsthall, and quite a large crowd of people, both academic and non-academic, turned up at the wonderful public art gallery (Lunds Konsthall) in central Lund, to listen to Professor Emeritus Neelambar Hatti from the Department of Economic History, Lund University. He lectured on the ongoing gendercide, as he calls it, and deteriorating sex ratio figures in India, with the provocative title "Where have all the girls gone?".

### **SASNET farewell dinner for outgoing Nepalese Ambassador**

On Thursday 23 February 2012, SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund and his wife Bubu Munshi Eklund hosted a farewell dinner for Dr. Vijay Kant L. Karna, the outgoing Nepalese Ambassador to Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland, and his family. Dr. Karna has been Ambassador in Copenhagen for three years, but he now returns to Nepal where he will take up his professorial position at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu from mid-March 2012.

Besides the Ambassador and his family, SASNET's Assistant Webmaster Julia Velkova, and Professor Gopal Karanth, ICCR Professor at Lund University during the academic year 2011/12, also participated in the farewell reception.

## **MARCH 2012**

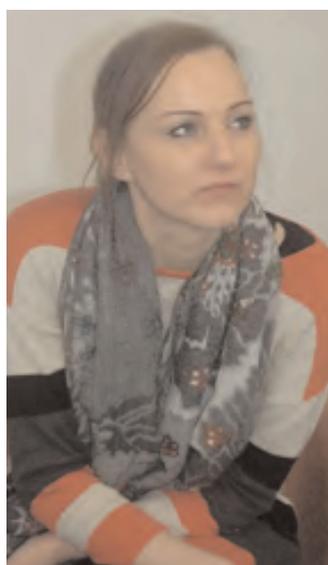
### **SASNET visit to South Asia researchers at Linköping University**

On Wednesday 7 March 2012, SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund, and assistant webmaster Julia Velkova visited Linköping University (LiU) in order to meet with researchers working on South Asia related projects. They had fruitful meetings with representatives from the Department of Culture and Communication (Alia Amir); the Department of Water and Environmental Studies at Tema Institute (Julie Wilk, Joyanto Routh and Sivakiruthika Natchimuthu); the Division of Gender and Medicine at the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine (Katarina Swahnberg and Humlan Svensson); and finally the Department for Studies of Social Change and Culture (ISAK) at Campus Norrköping (Ingemar Grandin and Per-Anders Forstorp).



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### **SASNET March 2012 Brown Bag seminar on Young Sikhs in Sweden**



On Thursday 15 March 2012, the second SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar for the spring semester 2012 was held in collaboration with Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund (ABF) Lund, and Lunds Konsthall. Assistant Professor Kristina Myrvold from the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies gave an enthusiastic presentation entitled "I'm a Punjabi-speaking Swedish Sikh: Identity Constructions among Young Sikhs in Sweden" focusing on her current research about identity formation among young sikhs in the Nordic Countries.

In this seminar, Kristina Myrvold presented parts of her research findings within the Nordcorp project "Sikh Identity Formation: Generational Transfer of Traditions in the Nordic Countries" that is carried out in cooperation with scholars in Denmark, Finland and Norway. The seminar paid special attention to young Swedish Sikhs who are brought up in rich multilingual environments and the various strategies they use for learning and identifying themselves with the Punjabi language in different social contexts.

## APRIL 2012

### **SASNET/NCI meeting on increased future collaboration**

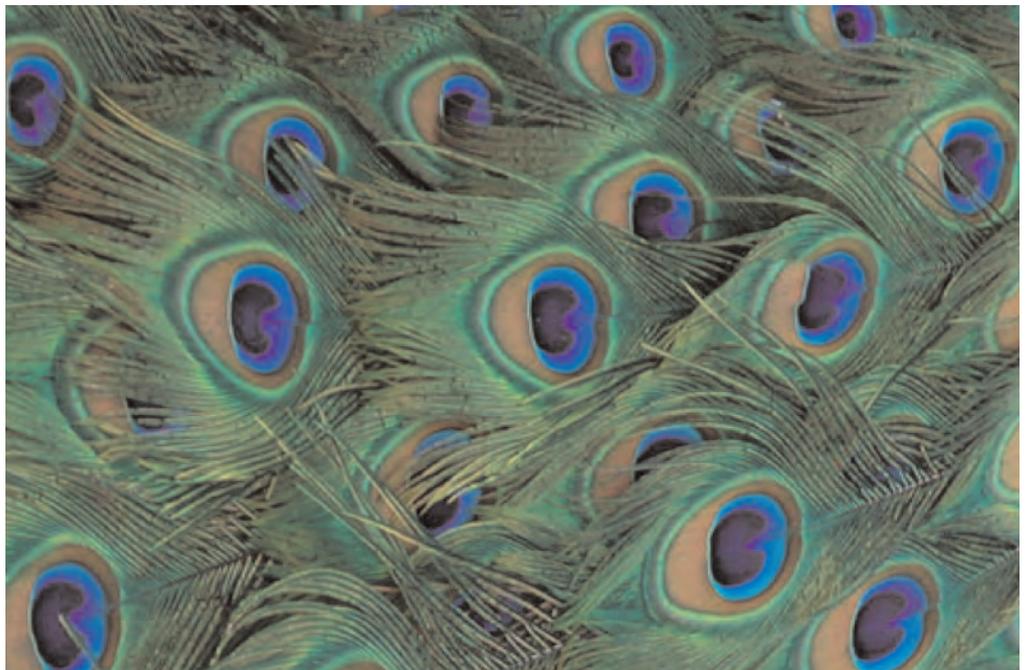
On Tuesday 10 April 2012, a meeting was held at SASNET's office in Lund between representatives of SASNET (Anna Lindberg, director, and Lars Eklund, deputy director); the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) university consortium (Kristina Myrvold, director); and Lund University (Henrik Hofvendahl, International Programme Officer at the Division of External Relations). The aim was to explore the possibility of various forms of increased collaboration between SASNET, based at Lund University, and the Nordic Centre in India. Several ideas were discussed and may be realised within a near future.

### **Ramnath Narayanswamy held SASNET seminar on Indian Economy in Transition**

Ramnath Narayanswamy, Professor in the Economics and Social Sciences Area at the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore (IIMB), held a SASNET lecture about "Understanding India. A Country in Transition" on Wednesday 11 April 2012. The seminar was co-organised by the Dept. of Economic History, Lund University. In his presentation, Prof. Narayanswamy focused primarily on understanding the Indian economy, society and polity as a bumpy transition process from an economy dominated by state controls to an economy dominated by competition. Specifically, he focused attention on an issue that is likely occupy attention of policy makers, namely, a program of affirmative action in the private sector. The author along with two other colleagues has completed a piece of research on this subject and the paper is a summary of its results.

### **SASNET co-organised successful Indian Mela at Lunds konsthall**

A large crowd of people joined the Indian cultural programme/Mela that was held at Lunds konsthall on Saturday 14th April 2012. The programme was jointly organized by Konsthallen, SASNET, Lunds kommun/Kulturskolan and ABF, and was held in connection with an Indian art exhibition at Lunds konsthall, an exhibition entitled Social Fabric. The exhibition, to a large extent focusing on textile production in India, included works by prominent Indian artists such as Archana Hande, Sudhir Patwardan, and Raqs Media Collective.



Indian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar participated in the 14th April event that coincided with the Indian and Bengali New Year, Baisakh. The mela programme included joyful Bollywood dance performances, and the newly launched Indian Choir of Lund, led by Bubu Munshi Eklund and Thomas Wiehe, had its premiere performance.

On invitation from SASNET, Senior Lecturer Tania Alyhr from Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, finally gave an appreciated lecture on "Textile Life in Western India", focusing on the mass of textile expressions and crafts, the multitude of uses of textiles, and the beauty and the variety of Indian clothing and the highly skilled, thorough and highly dedicated craftspeople who perform their work in a meticulous way.

### **Magnus Larson held Brown Bag seminar on Sri Lanka's vanishing beaches**

Professor Magnus Larson from the Department of Water Resources Engineering, Lund University, held an interesting SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar lecture on "Sri Lanka's vanishing beaches" on Thursday 19 April 2012 at Lunds konsthall, Mårtenstorget 3, Lund. Professor Larson presented the different projects that his department does that focus on various problems in the coastal regions of Sri Lanka. He discussed the movement of sand along the Sri Lankan coast and its consequences for the beaches, including the impact of man-made structures introduced in recent years to halt the erosion. The impact of the 2004 tsunami on the beaches of Sri Lanka was also briefly spoken about.



### **Lars Eklund report from Kristianstad University**

On Monday 23 April 2012, SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund visited Kristianstad University in order to meet some of the researchers and staff working on South Asia related collaboration projects. A meeting was kindly organised by Associate Professor Kerstin Samarasinghe from the School of Health and Society, and Lise-Lotte Nilsson, Director of International Relations, Kristianstad University. Associate Professor Ann-Sofi Rehnstam Holm, and Associate Professor Torvald Olsson from the School of Education and Environment, both of them strongly involved in India related research, participated. Lars also met the university Vice Rector Lena Persson, and Dr. Christer Ohlin, in charge of Special Education at the School of Education and Environment.

The university has had a long-standing collaboration with Sri Lanka, not the least due to Dr. Kerstin Samarasinghe's efforts over the years, with Linnaeus Palme exchange programmes first with the Open University in Colombo, and now with Sri Jayawardenepura University.

### **Growth Analysis seminar on recruitment of Indian students to Sweden**

On 25 April 2012, the Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis (Tillväxtanalys) organised a seminar on "Student recruitment in India – regions, collaborations and advantages for Sweden". The seminar took place in Gothenburg and SASNET was represented at the meeting through the participation of Julia Velkova. Present in the seminar were also representatives from Jönköping University, University of Gothenburg, University of Borås, Chalmers University of Technology, Skövde University, and Halmstad University.



### **Christ University delegation visited Lund University and SASNET**

SASNET's Lars Eklund with Bino Thomas and Johny Joseph from Christ University, Bangalore. On 26 April 2012, Bino Thomas, Head of the Dept. of Social Work, Christ University, Bangalore, India; and Johny Joseph, Director of the Center for Social Action at the same university, made a courtesy call to SASNET's office in Lund. They met with Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova. Thomas and Joseph had come to Lund University to participate in a conference on "Social Work in an International Context", organised by the School of Social Work, Lund University. During this conference, the School of Social Work's partner universities and organizations in India, Argentina, Holland, Iceland and Denmark – among them Christ University – held presentations on social work in their countries.

## MAY 2012

### **SASNET Brown Bag seminar on Inland Fisheries in Bangladesh and India**

Associate Professor Alia Ahmad from the Department of Economics, Lund University, held a SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar lecture on Thursday 10 May 2012, at Lunds konsthall, Mårtenstorget 3, Lund. Her presentation was entitled "Community Management of Inland Fisheries in Bangladesh and India", and was based on results of a joint research project in which she has been involved in recent years. The study was initially supported by a planning grant from SASNET and later on sponsored by Sida and the Swedish Research Council. Organisations from three countries have been involved – Lund University, Sweden; Gujarat Institute of Development Research, India; and WorldFish Center, Bangladesh. The project addressed two major research issues: community management of inland fisheries for poverty alleviation, and the role of external agents in promoting user-based community organisations.



### **Nepalese researcher lectured on Migration from Nepal**

The Nepalese researcher Dr. Anita Ghimire from Kathmandu University visited and gave lectures at Stockholm University, Copenhagen University, Aarhus University in Copenhagen, and Lund University from May 6 to May 19, 2012 on a trip arranged by SASNET.

At Lund University, Dr. Ghimire held a well-attended open brown bag lunch seminar entitled "Migration: The case of Nepal". The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), Lund university. Her presentation focused on the fact that while Nepal is largely understood as a labor sending country to countries of East Asia, Gulf and Malaysia, it has significant number of other types of out migrants and also hosts different kinds of migrants from other countries. She discussed the trend and the present status of these different kinds of international migrants related to Nepal. The objective was to shed light on different forms of migration related to Nepal and present the real position of Nepal in the migration hub.

### **Success for SASNET India Evening in Lund with seminar on Caste Identity**

On Wednesday 16 May 2012, an evening programme devoted to Indian society and culture was held in Lund. The successful event was jointly organised by SASNET/Lund University and Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund (ABF) Lund, and was free of charge. It drew a full house. The programme started with a lecture by Professor G K Karanth on "Caste 'Pride' and Caste 'Prejudice': Personal Reflections". In his presentation, he discussed issues related to Indian caste identities, based on his own personal experiences as having been born and brought up in a family with a caste identity of its own. The lecture was followed by an appreciated performance by the new India Choir of Lund (Indiska Kören i Lund), led by Bubu Munshi Eklund and Thomas Wiehe, and then came the cultural highlight of the evening – a classical North Indian music concert by



young talented Sarod player Somabanti Basu from Kolkata, being accompanied by her husband Suman Sarkar on Tabla, offering a wonderful concert programme, highly appreciated by the audience.



### **Successful results from SASNET supported research project in Sikkim**

On Tuesday 22 May 2012, Assistant Professor Anamika Barua from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, and her Swedish research partner Associate Professor Pernille Gooch, Division of Human Ecology, Lund University, made a courtesy visit to SASNET's office in Lund and met Lars Eklund. They came to report on the successful results from their joint research project on "Water, Climate Change and Rural Livelihood: Assessing Socio Economic Vulnerability and Potential Adaptive strategies in Sikkim, India".

### **Professor Sahadevan lectured on Post-Civil War Sri Lanka during Nordic tour**

23–24 May 2012, Professor P. Sahadevan, Professor of South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, India, visited SASNET and Lund University. In a seminar jointly organised by SASNET and the Pufendorf Institute at Lund University, he lectured about "Challenges to Peace and Reconciliation in Post-Civil War Sri Lanka".

In his presentation, he discussed the dawn of a new political life and qualitatively different challenges facing both the state and nation, that connotes the end of the 26-year long ethnic war in Sri Lanka. The country has entered a 'post-war situation' marked by absence of manifest violence, armed resistance movements and open use of military coercion as a state policy. However, post-war Sri Lanka is yet to become a post-conflict society. This underlines the need for a permanent political solution aimed at redressing the legitimate grievances of the Sri Lankan Tamil community. Yet, a political solution is far from the reality. Where is Sri Lanka heading towards? What are the post-war realities? Does the international community have a role to play in the conflict? Prof. Sahadevan tried to identify the emerging trends and challenges to peace and reconciliation in the island.

### **Dipak Malik held SASNET seminar on the Maoist Movement in India**

Professor Dipak Malik, Director for the Gandhian Institute of Studies in Varanasi, India, held a learned SASNET lecture on "Indian Naxalism Today" on Tuesday 29 May 2012. The reenergized Maoist movement in India is often referred to as Naxalism because of its beginning in late 1960s emanating from a small hamlet of the northern part of the state of West Bengal. Naxalbari has in recent years again emerged as a potential force of course in India, though within a different context. Maoism today poses a vital question that needs a perspective from the world of social sciences. In his presentation, Prof. Malik focused the changed character of the conflicts today compared to the 1960s naxalite movement.



### **Successful GO:India & SASNET brown bag seminar in Gothenburg**

A second Go:India & SASNET Brown Bag seminar was held in Gothenburg on 29 May 2012. The seminar featured Annika Härenstam, Professor in Work Science at the Department of Sociology and Work Science, University of Gothenburg. She spoke on "Gender, leadership and health promotion in working life", presenting the SIGN network – Sweden-India Gender Network, a network which aims to link researchers and organizations in India and Sweden, in order to share knowledge on Gender, Work, OSH (Occupational Health and Safety) and Environment in both countries for long-term collaboration.

## **JUNE 2012**

### **Lund meeting to discuss India collaboration between Gothenburg University and SASNET**

On Tuesday, 5 June 2012 SASNET hosted a meeting with Professor Åke Sander and Dr. Clemens Cavallin, representatives of the University of Gothenburg's Go India initiative, and Professor G K Karanth, ICCR guest professor at Lund University during the academic year 2011/12. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss future collaborations, as well as possibilities to seek financial support for joint Swedish-Indian research projects with the help of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). Professor Karanth advised that potential future areas of joint research could be those with focus on gender, urban development and planning, governance and the emerging middle class. Ideas for future exchange programs with students from Sweden and India were also discussed. SASNET was approached in the role of a potential collaboration partner from Lund University, and will also join the efforts of Gothenburg to explore the possibilities for running collaborations with the support of the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

### **Researcher from University of Baroda visited SASNET and Lund University**

On Monday 4 June 2012, Dr. Pushpanadham Karanam from the Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Education and Psychology, M.S.University of Baroda, India, visited Lund University on invitation from SASNET.

A programme was organised by SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund that included visits to Lund University's Department of Educational Sciences at Campus Helsingborg, and the Department of Sociology of Law in Lund. Dr. Karanam had come to Scandinavia to spend two weeks teaching at the Department of Education (DPU), Aarhus University, Copenhagen Campus, and also visiting the Institute of International Education (IIE) at Stockholm University, with which Dr. Karanam is involved in research collaboration.



### **Pakistani scholar from University of Oxford visited SASNET**

Dr Masooda Bano, leading Pakistani scholar based at Oxford University, UK, made a courtesy visit to SASNET's office in Lund on Thursday 14 June 2012. She came to Lund from Copenhagen, where she had been invited to meet scholars on Pakistan and Islamic studies.

At SASNET, Masooda Bano met Lars Eklund and Julia Velkova and discussed the extent of Pakistan related research at Swedish universities.

## JULY 2012

### Successful 22nd European Conference on South Asian Studies in Lisbon



The 22nd European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) was successfully held 25-28 July 2012 at the University Institute of Lisbon (also known as ISCTE-IUL) in Portugal.

SASNET was represented by both Anna Lindberg (who co-organised a panel on "Marriage in South Asia. Practices and Transformations") and Lars Eklund.

## AUGUST 2012

### Festive 65th Indian Independence day celebration in Copenhagen

India's 65th Independence Day was celebrated on a large scale in Copenhagen on Saturday 18 August 2012. The festivities were organised by the Indians in Denmark Association (IID) at Vibenshus Skole in north Copenhagen. SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund was invited to the event as a chief guest along with Mr. Steen Lassen, Chairman of the Holck-Larsen Foundation, who has initiated the ongoing cultural mega-project "India Today – Copenhagen Tomorrow".

## SEPTEMBER 2012

### Book launch seminar at CBS on Globalization and Economic Nationalism and Asia

The Asia Research Centre at the Copenhagen Business School (CBS) organised a public launch of "Globalization and Economic Nationalism and Asia", a new book edited by Professor Anthony D'Costa at the Asia Research Centre within CBS. The event took place on 11 September 2012, 15.00 – 18.00, at the ARC premises on Porcelænsøen in Frederiksberg, Copenhagen. SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the seminar.

### Sixth European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies successfully hosted by SASNET

SASNET and Lund University successfully hosted the Sixth European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies that took place at Falsterbo Kursgård, Höllviken from 17 to 19 September 2012. The workshop was jointly co-organised by the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS); Heidelberg University, Germany; Ghent University, Belgium; University of Edinburgh, UK; Le Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS), Paris, France; and SASNET/Lund University, Sweden. The workshop's format gave each PhD candidate the responsibility of introducing the paper of another participant and raising some preliminary questions.



A senior scholar then acts as discussant and provides feedback on the paper, prompting further debate. This format broadens perspectives on research methods, concepts, and theory by helping students consider questions from a variety of disciplines.

### **Welcome reception for new Erasmus Mundus scholarship holders from South Asia**

The section for Strategic Partnerships and Networks within Lund University's Division for External Relations organised a welcome reception for the new EU-funded Erasmus Mundus Action 2 scholarship holders coming from many countries on Monday 17 September 2012. SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the event in order to communicate specifically the scholarship holders from Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bangladesh, researchers and students coming to work and study at Lund University (LU) during the academic year 2012-13. They come to Lund within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Asia Regional mobility programme EMEA that is coordinated by Lund University. The programme includes universities in the above mentioned countries, but also China and from next year Thailand and Malaysia (whereas India will be excluded in the coming 2013-14 announcement).

### **SASNET Brown Bag seminar on Colonial Changes of Nature in Sri Lanka**

On Thursday 20 September 2012, the first SASNET Brown Bag lunch seminar for the fall semester 2012 was held. Dr. Mats Mogren, till April 2012 affiliated to the Lund University's Department of Archaeology and Ancient History talked about "Inbetween Rain Forest and Plantation. Understanding Colonial Changes of Nature in Sri Lanka", focusing on ecological footprints of cultural contacts during the colonial period (16th–20th centuries) in Sri Lanka. The changes in the landscape often came as a result of the establishment of new world systems. The presentation was based on a project that aims at a better understanding of the development of the cultural landscape of the Wet Zone of Sri Lanka (the southwestern quarter of the island that receives the rain from two monsoons).

### **Venkatesh Athreya lectured on Rural Transformation in India**

Professor Venkatesh Athreya from the Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai, India holds a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Friday 21 September. During the seminar, organised in collaboration with the Dept. of Sociology, he will talk about "Rural Transformation in India – Spill Over or Real Change?". While India is now projected as an fast emerging global giant in terms of economic, industrial, scientific and cultural development, there is another side of the coin of mostly slow and stunted development in the rural economy. This is not just a matter of an agricultural impasse but also that of a small scale industrial economy engaging more than half of rural households in labour intensive but highly exploitative working conditions.

### **Anindita Datta held SASNET/ACE lecture on Genderscapes**



Assistant Professor Anindita Datta from the Dept. of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, India, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on "Genderscapes and their link to Natural Landscapes in India" on Friday 21 September 2012. The seminar was organized in collaboration with the Centre for East and South East Asian Studies (ACE). Anindita Datta spent the month of September 2012 at Lund University as an Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder (through the EMEA Asia Regional programme). At Lund University she was hosted by the Centre for Gender Studies. In her presentation, Dr. Datta theorises the influence of natural landscape or terrain on the initial construction of feminine gender roles and eventually of the dominant 'genderscapes' in India.

## Lund University researchers meeting on Sustainable Sanitation solutions in India

More than 20 researchers and students turned up for an informal SASNET meeting on sustainable sanitation solutions in India that was held at Lund University on Monday 24 September 2012.

Researchers working on not only sanitation issues but also water supply, hygiene, human health, environmental health, development, disaster risk reduction and policy promotion had been invited to meet Cecilia Ruben, Research Fellow at Stockholm



Environment Institute (SEI), and Prakash Kumar, Executive Director for the Indian WASH Institute. They came to Lund on their own initiative in order to launch a dialogue with colleagues in Lund regarding the implementation of a Sida-financed Partnership Driven Collaboration research project on sustainable sanitation solutions in India, that is jointly run by SEI and WASH since 2010. The meeting at Lund University, planned in collaboration with SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund, was held at Lund University Centre for Sustainable Studies (LUCSUS). The audience consisted mainly of students from the Lund University International Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science (Lumes), plus researchers from LUCSUS and the Division of Water Resources Engineering. The local host was PhD Candidate Sara Gabrielsson.

## Nils Finn Munch Petersen held SASNET/UPF lecture on the Maldives Tragedy



Nils Finn Munch-Petersen, Senior expert at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, Denmark, held a SASNET/UPF lecture entitled "The Maldives Tragedy – A Small Nation losing its Culture and History" on Wednesday 26 September 2012. The seminar drew an audience of approximately 50 students and researchers. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF), and focused on the February 7th, 2012, events when the first democratically elected government of the Maldives was brought down by a coup d'état, engineered by groups linked to the former dictator Maumoon Abdul Gayoom; the primary actors being the National Security Forces and hired street gangs along with major investors within the tourism industry – backed by a corrupt judiciary.

## South Asia related books at Göteborg Book Fair 2012

SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund attended the 2012 Göteborg Book Fair (Bok- och Biblioteksmässan) to take part in the South Asia related presentations. Compared to 2008, when India was partly in focus at the fair (read Lars Eklund's report from the 2008 book fair), only few new South Asia related books were presented this year.

Most interesting was the latest production by Tomas Löfström, who has written a book on Torgny Sommelius, a travelogue writer who made adventurous journeys to South Asia in the late 1950s. The book is entitled "Den siste resenären" and was extensively discussed in seminars and debates during the book fair.

## OCTOBER 2012



### **Githa Hariharan lectured on India's living diversity at Lund University**

Indian writer Githa Hariharan held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Friday 5 October 2012. She talked about "Living Diversity, Living Many Indias", on Indian literature for an interested audience. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Nordic Centre in India (NCI), and the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR), Lund University. Githa Hariharan's published work includes novels, short stories, essays, newspaper articles and columns. Her fiction has been translated into several languages, but so far not Swedish. During the seminar she presented her literary works, from the first one, *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992) that won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1993.

While in Lund, Githa also visited SASNET's office at Scheelevägen, and was hosted by SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund.

### **Anna Lindberg held Brownbag seminar on Marriage and Dowry in Kerala**

On Thursday 11 October 2012, Dr. Anna Lindberg, SASNET's Director, held a well-attended lunch seminar on "Paradise Limited: Marriage and Dowry in Kerala". The South Indian state of Kerala is known to many for its green natural surroundings and beautiful beaches. It is advertised as "God's own country" – a paradise on earth. It is also reputed for its high social indicators in education and health care, including a higher status for women than elsewhere in India. However, Anna challenged the general view.

### **Third ICCR Professor successfully installed at Lund University**

On Friday 12 October 2012, Surinder S. Jodhka, Professor of Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, was installed as the third Visiting Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Professor at Lund University. He is hosted by the Department of Political Science during the academic year 2012/13, till June 2013. An installation ceremony was organised at Lund University's Palaestra auditorium, where



Professor Jodhka gave an inaugural lecture on the theme "Indian Village in the 'Neo-Liberal' Times: Changing Economies, Power and Identities". The informed presentation was based on field work he has carried out in the rural areas of Haryana state in north India. The audience consisted of an interested crowd of Lund University researchers, students and others.

His lecture was preceded by a presentation by the Indian Ambassador to Sweden and Latvia, Ms. Banashri Bose Harrison, who had come to Lund specifically to participate in the installation ceremony. Introductory speeches were also given by Professor Tomas Bergström, Dept. of Political Science, and by Dr. Anna Lindberg, Director, SASNET.

The seminar ended with a short cultural programme with the Indian Choir of Lund, led by Bubu Munshi Eklund.

### **Indian Ambassador met with Lund University researchers**

On Friday 12 October 2012, new Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison, made her premiere visit to Lund University. Besides participating in the installation seminar of the new ICCR Professor at Lund University, the Ambassador was invited to attend a meeting with prominent Lund University researchers working on India related projects.



The meeting was organized by SASNET, and was held at the Division of External Relations (ER). During her full day programme at Lund University, the Ambassador also met with the Vice Chancellor, Professor Per Eriksson.

### **Rina Sunder Sand from EnteringINDIA visited SASNET**

On October 23 2012, Rina Sunder Sand, founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organisation EnteringINDIA visited SASNET to discuss the possibilities for future collaborations. As a native Indian raised in Norway, fluent in Hindi, Punjabi and Norwegian, Rina is equally at home in the Indian culture as in Scandinavia. Her cross-cultural insights led her to found EnteringINDIA, through which she provides cultural workshops and coaching for Scandinavian companies wishing to do business in India.

### **SASNET Director Anna Lindberg visited University of Edinburgh**

On 25 October 2012, SASNET Director Anna Lindberg was invited to give a talk at the Centre for South Asian Studies at the University of Edinburgh, as part of their weekly seminar series. She spoke to faculty members and students on the topic, "Can There Be Dowry in Progressive Kerala?"

The illustrated talk was followed by a lively discussion session. Dr. George Palattiyil of the School of Social Work at Edinburgh University chaired the session. Professor Roger Jeffery, Chair of the European Association for South Asian Studies, also participated.



## NOVEMBER 2012

### Lars Eklund on South Asia tour during October–November 2012

During the period 20 October till 30 November 2012, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund was away from the SASNET office at Lund University. Lars set up a small SASNET office at his Sardar Sankar Rd residence in Kolkata, and interacted with SASNET networking partners at the prime universities in Kolkata – Calcutta University, Jadavpur University, and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta.



He also made a contact journey to Varanasi, Kanpur and Delhi, visiting the Swedish/Nordic study centres in Varanasi, the Banaras Hindu University (BHU), IIT Kanpur, the South Asian University in Delhi, and other networking partners. In Delhi, he also participated in the sixth Nobel Memorial Week, organised by the Swedish Embassy, and had meetings with the Ambassador Harald Sandberg, and the Growth Analysis representative Andreas Muranyi.

In mid-November, Lars also visited Kathmandu for five days, and meetings were organised at Tribhuvan University, and meetings with Nepalese networking partners.

### Surinder Jodhka held SASNET lecture on Agrarian Change in India

Professor Surinder Jodhka, Visiting ICCR Professor at Lund University during the academic year 2012/13 held a SASNET lecture on "What's happening to the countryside: Agrarian Change and the Social Order of Caste in Northwest India" on Thursday 1 November 2012. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Department of Sociology. In the lecture/seminar Jodhka focused on his panel study of two Haryana villages, first in 1988-89 and then in 2009. There are significant changes and transformations like generally higher income, a changed division of labour, a sharp increase in non-farm income, and exit of Dalit labourers from agriculture. This is then compared with other studies in the region.



### Jan Magnusson lectured on the Baltistan Movement and the Role of Pop Ghazals

Associate Professor Jan Magnusson, School of Social Work, Lund University, held an inspired SASNET lunch lecture on "The Baltistan Movement and the Political Power of Pop Ghazals", November 15, 2012 at Lunds konsthall.

Dr Magnusson talked about his research on the political role of pop ghazal music in Baltistan, a region in the western Himalayas characterized by its blend of Muslim Shi'ite and Tibetan culture, and its vernacular Tibetan dialect.

### **Successful SASNET seminar on Women, Peace, and Security in Afghanistan**

Former Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Ann Wilkens, held a well attended lecture on "Women, Peace, and Security in Afghanistan" at Domkyrkoforum in Lund on 14 November 2012. The seminar was organised by SASNET in collaboration with the Lund Afghanistan Committee and Sensus Studieförbund. Ann Wilkens is currently a member of the advisory panel of the Afghanistan Analysts Network and the author of a number of papers on the Pakistan/Afghanistan region, including "Missing the Target: A report on the Swedish Commitment for Women, Peace, and Security in Afghanistan", which had just been published online.

### **SASNET/UPF lecture on the Political Development in Nepal**



Dr. Andrea Nightingale from the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, held a highly interesting SASNET/UPF lecture on "'Naya' Nepal? The practices and challenges of local democracy in the Federal Republic of Nepal" on 21 November 2012. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF).

From 1 October 2012, Andrea Nightingale works at the Human Ecology section at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. In her presentation, she pointed out that Nepal is at a turning point as it emerges from violent conflict (1996-2006) to write a new constitution (2008-present) and establish a federated Republic.

### **SASNET lecture with Anders Fänge on Afghanistan**

SASNET, together with The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund, and Sensus studieförbund, organised a lecture on "Afghanistan: The current situation and the future beyond 2014", with one of Sweden's foremost experts on Afghanistan, Anders Fänge, on 29 November, at Lunds stadsbibliotek



(Lund City Library). Fänge, a journalist and long-standing manager of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, is among Sweden's foremost experts on Afghanistan. Recently returned from Afghanistan, Anders shared his thoughts and reflections on the current situation in the country, and how its development might look beyond the year 2014.

### **Indo-Swedish conference on Religion & Globalization at Jadavpur University**

A three day International Conference on "Religion & Globalization: A Changing Perspective" was held in Kolkata, India, 29 November – 1 December 2012. It was being organised by the Centre for the Study of Religion and Society (CSRS), a unique endeavor of the Dept. of Sociology at Jadavpur University established in 2011 (in collaboration with Swedish researchers at the universities of Gothenburg and Uppsala), the Department of Literature, History of Ideas and Religion, University of Gothenburg; and the Forum for South Asian Studies, Uppsala University. SASNET's deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the conference for the inauguration as a guest of honour.



**SASNET WISHES  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2013**

**Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund, and Jonathan Stoltz**

# SASNET Activity Report 2013

## JANUARY 2013

### SASNET invited Lund University researchers for discussion

On Tuesday 15th January 2013, SASNET held a lunch brain storming meeting where all interested researchers and other staff at Lund University working with South Asia related projects in any field were invited to discuss possible interdisciplinary South Asia related projects to launch, visions and future collaborations. SASNET's Director Anna Lindberg gave a brief



presentation of the history of SASNET and informed about the future purpose and role of SASNET now that Lund University has announced that it will allocate resources in support of SASNET for the period 2013–2015. Gunilla Carlecrantz, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Networks at the Division of External Relations at Lund University, talked about the division's work towards the South Asian region, emphasizing the importance of the region for Lund University and also of the contribution that SASNET provides regarding this work. Maria Lindblad from the International Marketing and Recruitment at Lund University, informed about joint efforts by Lund University, Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg and Linköping University to attract Indian students to Sweden.

### Srilankan Ambassador Oshadhi Alahapperuma visited Lund University

On Thursday 24th January 2012, H.E. Mr. Oshadhi Alahapperuma, Ambassador for the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in Stockholm, visited Lund University on an invitation by SASNET. The Ambassador was accompanied by Mr. L.G. Dissanayake, Third Secretary (Commercial). They first met Lund University researchers and academics involved in Sri Lanka related research and/or educational



collaboration projects. A meeting was organised by the Division of External Relations, where Lund University researchers with Sri Lanka projects presented their projects. Representatives of the Lund University Commissioned Education (LUCE) also presented the Sida-funded advanced international training programmes that are administered by Lund University. Every year, a number of Srilankan professionals participate in these programmes.

### Great South Asian films at 36th Göteborg International Film Festival

South Asia has been quite well represented at the 36th Göteborg International Film Festival (GIFF), this year held from 25 January till 4 February 2013. Several feature films from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were screened. Besides, a number of highly interesting documentary films on Afghanistan were included in the extensive programme, and also a documentary from Nepal. SASNET's Lars Eklund saw some of the highlights among the South Asian films. One of them was Mira Nair's latest film, "The Reluctant Fundamentalist",

based on Mohsin Hamid's novel with the same name. It is an extraordinary joint Indian/Pakistani/US film production.

He was also much impressed by "Filmistaan", a highly interesting comedy about an Indian film worker who accidentally is kidnapped by Taliban and brought over to Pakistan, where he however develops strong friendly links with the common village people. The film has a message that people on both sides the partition border are same, they sing the same songs, and enjoy the same Bollywood/Lollywood movies.

Among the many excellent documentaries, "No Burqas Behind Bars" stands out as a fascinating Swedish production by Nima Sarvestani on women's situation in Afghani prisons, which is less horrifying than one could expect. The prison actually provides a secure zone away from violent husbands from whom they have run away (and for that crime they have received long prison terms). Read more about the 36th Göteborg International Film Festival.

### **SASNET's role in promoting collaboration highlighted in Delhi**

In late January 2013, SASNET Director Anna Lindberg was on assignment in India, mainly visiting universities and institutes in connection with a research project about Asian students who travel to other Asian countries to seek higher education. As a representative of SASNET, she visited the Swedish Embassy in New Delhi on 30th January 2013, and had a fruitful meeting with Ambassador Harald Sandberg; Andreas Muranyi Scheutz of the Office of Science, Innovation, and Growth Analysis; Cecilia Rahm,



General Manager of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce, India; and Inderjeet S. Basra, Assistant Programme Manager at the Embassy. Their discussion concerned SASNET's role in promoting collaboration in higher education and research between Swedish and Indian universities. Ambassador Sandberg indicated that the report *Framtid med Asien: Förslag till en svensk Asienstrategi*, published by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998, is still valid: Sweden still lacks expertise about South Asia in many areas. He was pleased to hear of Lund University's willingness to finance SASNET, and that SASNET remains a national network. He emphasized the need for collaboration among Swedish universities in promoting educational opportunities for Indian students in Sweden, and the importance of working with Swedish companies who have a presence in India to create internships and scholarships.

Two days later, Inderjeet Basra and Andreas Muranyi Scheutz showed Anna the Management Development Institute in Gurgaon (MDI), a private business school that has been in existence for approximately 35 years and was the first internationally accredited such school in India. The possibility of arranging a joint symposium with MDI at Lund University on a topic such as "India as an international trade partner in the global economy" in the fall of 2013 was discussed.

## FEBRUARY 2013

### SASNET lunch seminar on child rights agents in Kerala

Professor Per Wickenberg, Division of Sociology of Law at Lund University, held the first SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the spring semester 2013 on Thursday 7 February 2013, 12.30–13.30. Venue: Lunds konsthall, Mårtenstorget 3, Lund.

Per Wickenberg gave a presentation entitled "SEE THE CHILD! Reflections on 10 years of Child Rights work in Education with 29 Change Agents in Kerala-India", based on work experiences from a Sida-funded training programme on "Child Rights, Classroom and School Management", in which his department has been involved since 2003. The programme has so far trained about 500 participants from 28 different developing countries all over the world to become agents of change. In his presentation, Per focused on the work that has been done by these Change Agents now active in the Kerala state in India. They work together supporting each other, and have also formed a national network.

### SASNET meeting with collaboration partners at NIAS in Copenhagen

On Friday 15 February 2013, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund and assistant webmaster Jonathan Stoltz visited the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in its new premises beautifully located within Copenhagen University's City Campus at Øster Farimagsgade 5, with a view over the lakes. The aim of the visit was to discuss the continued technical collaboration between SASNET and



NIAS in the field of web site management. Lars and Jonathan had a fruitful meeting with NIAS Chief Librarian Asger Juel Hansen and his colleagues Inga-Lill Blomkvist and Bernd Wunsch, to discuss common technical problems and find solutions.

The SASNET–NIAS collaboration consists both of organising joint conferences (the Falsterbo conferences for young Nordic researchers), and joint technical issues like synchronizing and exchanging web based information.

The collaboration was formally initiated in 2011, when SASNET launched its current Drupal CMS system based website, completely redesigned and restructured by Julia Velkova at SASNET, with full assistance from Bernd Wunsch at NIAS. Since then NIAS hosts the SASNET website, and recently a new maintenance agreement for 2013 was signed by the two directors, Dr. Geir Helgesen at NIAS, and Dr. Anna Lindberg at SASNET.

### Copenhagen seminar with Stephen P Cohen on the India-Pakistan dispute

On Friday 15th February, Lars Eklund and Jonathan Stoltz from SASNET also participated in a well-attended seminar with Stephen P Cohen, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, USA, in Copenhagen. The seminar on "The India-Pakistan Conundrum" was organised by the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) and Asia Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School (CBS).

### **Raj Sekhar Basu lectured on Ambedkar and his Buddhist Perceptions**

Associate Professor Raj Sekhar Basu from the Department of History, University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India, held a well-attended SASNET lecture at Lund University on Wednesday 27 February 2013. The theme for his lecture was "Ambedkar and his Perceptions of Karl Marx and Buddha". The seminar was co-organised by the Dept. of Sociology. During 2013, Raj Sekhar Basu served as an Visiting Indian



Professor at the Indian Studies Centre at Mykolo Romeris University in Vilnius, Lithuania. In his Lund University seminar, Basu focused on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar – renowned Indian political leader mobilizing the Dalits during the freedom struggle, besides being a jurist and economist and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He was also a revivalist for Buddhism in India, after leading his followers to convert from Hinduism to Buddhism in 1956. He discusses the interpretative models provided by scholars involved with the study of Ambedkar's brand of Buddhism. In fact, there would be attempts to deal with Ambedkar's own interpretation of Buddhism and to explore whether it was linked to his efforts to establish ethical foundations of the Dalit movement in postcolonial India. Prof. Basu is interested in explicating the reasons why Ambedkar decided to seek a conversion to Buddhism, since it was not only opposed to caste hierarchy but possibly provided a framework for a society based on the principles of non-discrimination, equity and respect. The main intention would be to establish the point that Ambedkar favoured Buddhism to Marxism, possibly for the matter that it was more liberal and flexible in mobilizing the socially deprived masses in favour of a more egalitarian socio-political system.

### **Jonathan Stoltz on SASNET tour to research institutions in Hyderabad and Chennai**

In late February 2013, SASNET Assistant webmaster Jonathan Stoltz visited a number of important research institutions in Chennai and Hyderabad in south India. He started out at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) and its beautiful campus in Kanagam, Chennai, where he met with Professor Ashok Jhunjunwala, research leader of the Telecommunications and Computer Networking (TeNeT) group within the Department of Electrical Engineering at IIT-M, who during the period 2007-09, was involved in a multidisciplinary research collaboration on e-governance with BTH. Jonathan also met with Professor M. Ramasubba Reddy, Head of Laboratory, Biomedical Engineering Group at the Department of Applied Mechanics, IIT-M, who spend a year at the Department of Clinical Physiology in Lund as a postdoc during the early 1990s, as well as with Swedish student Victoria Kalén from Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH) in Karlskrona, who was spending one year at IIT-M as an exchange student.



In Chennai Jonathan also visited the AMET Maritime University and met with its former Vice Chancellor, now Professor Emeritus, Captain S. Bhardwaj, who had just returned from a conference on Maritime Energy Efficiency at the World Maritime University (WMU) in Malmö, in which he represented India. In Malmö he had also signed a MoU between AMET and WMU regarding exchange of faculty, education, training and research.

In Hyderabad, Jonathan together with representatives from The Nordic Centre in India (NCI), its Director Dr. Kristina Myrvold and Ms. Christabel Royan, attended a meeting with Dr. John Varghese at the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) in Hyderabad to discuss possible strategies to assist in EFLU's plans to establish a Department of Nordic Studies. Along with the NCI representatives Jonathan also met with the Director of the Study in India Program (SIP), at University of Hyderabad (UoH), Dr. Aparna Rayaprol, as well as with two students from University of Bergen in Norway, Gjertrud Bøhn Mageli and Marianne Fuglestrand, who are studying for a year at UoH through the semester program organised by SIP and NCI. Jonathan finally paid a visit to the Hyderabad campus of the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) where he met with Joint Director E. Venkat Reddy and Assistant Professor Avinash Raipally.

## MARCH 2013

### **SASNET co-organised Workshop on Urbanization and Migration in Bangalore**

The Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET), the Nordic Centre in India (NCI), and the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) successfully organized an explorative workshop on "Urbanization and Migration in Transnational India: Work and Family



Life from a Welfare Perspective" in Bangalore, India, during the period 5–7 March 2013. SASNET was represented in Bangalore by Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund and Jonathan Stoltz. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together Nordic and Indian researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences to identify new areas of research on the ways in which work and family life in India are rapidly being transformed by urbanization, national and transnational migration, and new economic policies, especially with regard to welfare distribution and social security.

### **Lars Eklund visited research institutions in Bangalore and Mangalore**

In connection to the Bangalore workshop on Urbanisation and Migration in Transnational India, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund also visited a number of other research institutions in Bangalore, plus the Fisheries College in Mangalore in early March. On Monday 4 March 2013, Lars visited the prestigious National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) at its premises within the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) campus, meeting its Director, Professor V S Ramamurthy, well known Indian nuclear scientist, and a number of other distinguished fellow researchers working in various fields both in Social Sciences and Science/Technology. From there, Lars proceeded to Sriшти University of Art, Design and Technology, located in Yelahanka in north Bangalore. Shrishti has had fruitful collaboration with the School of Arts and Communication (K3) at Malmö University for eight years, and recently a collaboration has also been established with University of Gothenburg. A meeting was arranged with the key persons behind these initiatives.



Two days later, on Wednesday 6 March 2013, Lars made a tour to Electronics City, east of Bangalore, to visit two premier research institutions located there, namely the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB), and the newly established Azim Premji University. Finally, on Monday 11 March, Lars visited the College of Fisheries in Mangalore (part of the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University), involved in a strong collaboration with the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg and the School of Education and Environment, Kristianstad University in the field of Marine Ecology.

### **SASNET lunch seminar with Baboo Nair cancelled**

Professor Emeritus Baboo Nair, Department of Applied Nutrition & Food Chemistry at Lund University, was supposed to hold the second SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the spring semester 2013 on Thursday 14 March 2013. Prof. Nair's presentation was entitled "A story of my cooperation with SASNET/Lund University". The seminar was however cancelled. During the last decade, two of Baboo Nair's premier research initiatives have been supported by SASNET. The first one dealt with organising a meeting on Fermented Foods Health Status and Social Wellbeing. After getting initial SASNET support the South Asian fermented foods network being formed later received massive funding from the European Commission.

The second project dealt with organising a meeting on Sustainable Utilisation of Tropical Plant Biomass in South Asia. In his lunch talk, Baboo Nair was supposed to tell about the success stories of his projects and praise the connection with SASNET as well as all those with whom he has worked and still continue to work with.

### **SASNET/GADNET seminar on Queer Femininities in Indian Narratives**

Dr. Aneeta Rajendran, Department of English, Gargi College, University of Delhi, India, held an interesting SASNET/GADNET lecture at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), Lund University, on March 22, 2013. During the academic year 2012/13, Aneeta Rajendran was an Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder at Lund University, working as a postdoc at the Center for Gender Studies. She did a presentation about



"Queer Femininities in Indian Narratives", in which she showed clips from Indian movies and commercials, all with the common theme of lesbian relations in different, more or less traditional, and more or less realistic, cultural settings. The movie clips were then forming the basis for a very interesting presentation followed by a fruitful discussion about the differences and similarities in the ways that lesbian women and lesbian relations are presented on screen, both in a narrative sense as well as with regards to casting etc.

### **Lars Eklund met South Asian ambassadors in Stockholm**

On Tuesday 26 March 2013, Lars Eklund visited Stockholm to attend the National Day celebrations at the Embassy of Bangladesh in the suburb of Huvudsta. Many people from diplomacy, academia, media, business and other fields connected to Bangladesh in some way turned up to the event that also drew a massive crowd of Bangladeshis living in the capital region.



The Ambassador, Mr. Gousal Azam Sarker, held an inspired speech on the economic development in his country, and superb food was served. Among the academics present at the function were Dr. Kristina Nygren from the Department of Musicology and Performance Studies, Stockholm University; and Associate Professor Peter Sundin, Deputy Head of the International Science Program (ISP) at Uppsala University.

Lars also visited the Embassy of Pakistan to meet the new Pakistani Ambassador to Sweden, Mr. Sajjad Kamran, who came to Sweden only two weeks earlier. They discussed existing collaboration between Swedish and Pakistani academic institutions, and the coming visit of the Ambassador to the SASNET South Asia Symposium at Lund University on April 24th. Finally Lars visited the Embassy of India, to meet the Ambassador Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison and the Councillor (Political, Consular, Information & Press) Mr. J.P. Meena, to discuss future joint activities with SASNET.

## APRIL 2013

### Monteiro and Jayasankar seminar in Lund on Indian documentary film

Professors Anjali Monteiro and Kizhavana Jayasankar, researchers cum film makers from the Centre of Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Studies (TISS) in Mumbai, India, held a seminar at Lund University on "Indian Documentary: Diversity, Borders and Cultural Syncretism", on Wednesday 10 April 2013, 13–15. The



seminar was jointly organised by the Department of Media and Communication Studies, Lund University, in collaboration with SASNET. Venue: The Faculty Club, Centre for Languages and Literature (SOL-centrum). During the seminar, their documentary film "So Heddan So Hoddan" (Like Here Like There) was screened. This fascinating film focuses on the communities in Kachchh, Gujarat, India and across the border in Sindh (now in Pakistan). Many of their poems draw on the eternal love stories of /Umar-Marui/ and /Sasui-Punhu/, among others. Monteiro and Jayasankar spent the month of April 2013 in Lund as scholarship holders through the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programme EMEA, that is coordinated by Lund University. Both of them are involved in media production, teaching and research.

### Anette Agardh lectured on Improving Youth Friendly Health Services in India

Associate Professor Anette Agardh together with PhD candidate Devika Mehra, both from the Division of Social Medicine and Global Health at Lund University, held a SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk on Thursday 18 April 2013, 12.30–13.30 at Lunds konsthall. The presentation was about "Improving Youth Friendly Health Services in India", based on experiences and results from a National Training Programme on Improving Youth Friendly Health Services in India. The programme is a joint venture between Lund University, Mamta Institute for Mother &



Child, India and the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, India. It has been implemented at a national level with financial support from Sida since 2008. The programme aims to strengthen participants' capacity on delivering youth friendly health services to address the sexual and reproductive health concerns of young people. It has targeted around 120 medical doctors and programme managers from the public health system and has had most successful results with approximately 50 of the participants initiating adolescent clinics in their existing facility or opened new clinics. Because of the successful result, the Government of India agreed to take over and run the training programme from 2013.

### **SASNET visited Gothenburg researchers in Marine Ecology**

On Friday 19th April 2013, Lars Eklund visited the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg, as part of his regular visits to strong South Asia related research institutions at Swedish universities. The department is beautifully situated within the Botanical Gardens of Gothenburg. It is a merger between the former departments of Marine Ecology, Plant and Environmental Sciences and Zoology that took place on 1 January 2012. Anna Godhe used to belong to the Dept of Marine Ecology. Lars met Dr. Anna Godhe and PhD candidate Gurpreet Kahlon, both working on research within the field of Marine Ecology and involved in a major Indo-Swedish collaboration programme with the College of Fisheries in Mangalore – part of the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University. The visit to the department in Gothenburg was actually a follow-up to a visit Lars made to the Mangalore College in March 2013.



Later the same day, Lars also attend a symposium on Indian Culture and Society that was organised by the Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion (LIR) at University of Gothenburg.

### **SASNET lecture with Ann Jones on Life without Peace in Afghanistan**

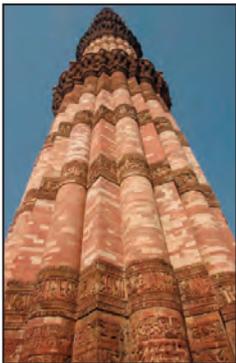
The American photo journalist Ann Jones held a highly interesting SASNET lecture on "War Is Not Over When It's Over. The Impact of War on Women in Afghanistan and Other Conflicts" at Lund University on Tuesday 23 April 2013. The seminar was being organised in collaboration between SASNET and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund, with support from Sensus studieförbund. Ann Jones is a journalist and author of a number of non-fiction books about her research into women's and humanitarian issues. She has also written and taken photographs for a number of publications including National Geographic Traveler and The New York Times. She is also a renowned authority on domestic violence, a startlingly original inquiry into the aftermath of wars and their impact on the least visible victims: women. One of her books – "Kabul in Winter" – dealt with Jones' experiences in Afghanistan in 2002 and her observations of a city utterly destroyed by war, warlords and the Taliban where she felt a need to try to pick up the pieces. In her writings, Ann Jones enters the lives of everyday women and men and reveals through small events some big disjunctions: between the new Afghan "democracy" and the still-entrenched warlords, between American promises and performance, between what's boasted of and what is.

### Indian Counsellor met Lund University students and researchers for meeting

In connection to his participation in the SASNET South Asia Symposium on April 24th, 2013, Mr. J.P. Meena – Counsellor (Political, Consular, Information & Press) at the Embassy of India in Stockholm, had invited Indian students at Lund University to meet him on the evening before, that is Tuesday 23 April. The meeting was held in the basement lounge of the university's Division of External Relations (ER), Stora Algatan 4. Mr Meena was accompanied by Lars Eklund, SASNET deputy director.

Students on all levels and from any discipline were welcome to the meeting, that had been planned for by SASNET and the Division of External Relations on behalf of the Embassy of India. Snacks were served, thanks to generous host for the evening, Mr. Henrik Hofvendahl, Program Officer at the Strategic Partnerships and Networks, Division of External Relations.

### High-profile SASNET 2013 South Asia Symposium at Lund University



The one-day 2013 SASNET South Asia Symposium at Lund University was successfully held on Wednesday 24th April 2013, 09.00–19.00. The theme for the Symposium was "The Wonder that is

South Asia", featuring eminent international scholars that held lectures on topics related to Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Venue: Palaestra, Universitetsplatsen, Lund.

The invited speakers were Professor Dina Siddiqi, BRAC University, Dhaka; Professor Surinder Jodhka, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India & ICCR Guest Professor 2012/13 at Lund University; Professor Michael Hutt, Chair, SOAS, University of London; Dr. Ayesha Siddiqi, Civilian Military Analyst and Political Commentator, Islamabad & previously Visiting Scholar at Johns Hopkins University, USA; and Professor Jonathan Spencer, University of Edinburgh. In a concluding panel discussion the Ambassadors and Embassy representatives of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in a dialogue with the speakers on the theme for the day – "The Wonder that is South Asia". The Symposium was followed by a cultural programme at the same venue featuring the Bamboo Flute player Shantala Subramanyam and her accompanying musicians. The symposium was recorded by Talat Bhat, and is available on SASNET's YouTube Channel.



### South Asian Students Association formally launched at Lund University

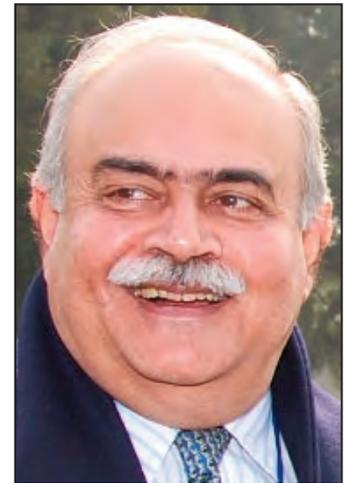


The South Asian Students Association (SASA) was formally launched on Wednesday 24th April 2013 in connection to the 2013 SASNET South Asia Symposium. Lars Eklund briefly introduced the association, and then Mr. S M Shakil, SASA student representative, held a speech that marked the formal inauguration. The new forum is open for students coming from the South Asian countries studying at Lund University, but also for Swedish and other International students/researchers with an academic interest in South Asia.

The decision to form SASA was taken at a meeting organised by SASNET on Tuesday 19th March 2013, when a group of international students at Lund University met to discuss the issue. On this occasion, Lars Eklund from SASNET informed about the Swedish South Asian Studies Network at Lund University, and its seminar programmes and web resources. The interim SASA coordinator Hawwa Lubna, student at the Bachelor of Science Programme in Development Studies (BIDS), and SASNET's Maldivian resource person at Lund University, then explained the purpose of the new forum to be the creation of a student community representing all nations of South Asia, that will organise meetings, film shows and cultural events by itself, and at the same time work closely together with SASNET. Around 15 students from different International Bachelors, Masters and PhD programmes at Lund University turned up for the meeting held at the Social Sciences Student Union building ("Samvetet"), Paradisgatan 5 S. The majority came from the Faculty of Social Sciences, but a considerable number also from the Faculty of Engineering. There was an overwhelming support for the proposal to form SASA, and to register it as a student body at Lund University.

### **SASNET attended Stockholm seminar on India's global role**

On behalf of SASNET, Dr. Olle Frödin from the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University, participated in a seminar on India's global role, increasing power, and foreign policy priorities at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) in Stockholm on Thursday 25 April 2013. H.E. Mr. Sudhir Vyas, Secretary (West) at the Ministry of External Affairs of India had been invited to the seminar, that was introduced by Anna Jardfelt, Director at UI. In his presentation, Mr Vyas described India's foreign policy priorities. Unsurprisingly, a main priority on the part of the Indian government is to safeguard the country's food and energy needs. He assured the audience that India does not view the simultaneous rise of China as a threat, and underscored that the two Asian giants enjoy good diplomatic relations. Disagreements between the two powers are few, according to Mr Vyas, and are dealt with separately such that a mutually beneficial relationship is maintained.



### **Lund University seminar on Aligarh School and the debate on Islam and science**



The Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) at Lund University organised a research seminar with Stefano Bigliardi, post-doc researcher at CMES, on Friday 26 April 2013, 13.15–15.00. Stefano, who defended his PhD in 2008 at the University of Bologna, has grown an interest in South Asian Islam, and in March 2013 he visited a number of universities in India including Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) with an intention to gather material for further research on Islam and science in India, and perhaps do a study in a comparative perspective with analogous debates in Hinduism. In the planning for his India tour, Stefano received considerable assistance from SASNET.

At the CMES seminar, entitled "Exploring the Contemporary Debate on Islam and Science in India", he explored the ideas and activities of the group of intellectuals known as Aligarh School, who, based in the university town of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh province, have been very active in the debate on Islam and science since the 1980s. Stefano illustrated how the Aligarh School worked and which ideas it endorsed, and he drew some parallels to contemporary Indian debates on Hinduism and science.

## MAY 2013

### SASNET lecture on the failed international intervention in Afghanistan

Dr. Astri Suhrke, senior researcher at the Chr. Michelsen Institute in Bergen, Norway, held a SASNET lecture on "The Failure of International Intervention in Afghanistan" at Lund University on Thursday 2 May 2013. The seminar was organised in collaboration between SASNET and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund, with support from Sensus studieförbund. Venue: Auditorium (hörsalen), Centre for Languages and Literature (SOL-Centrum).

On the same day, 2 May 2013, the regional daily Sydsvenskan published an article by Astri Suhrke, entitled "Fredsavtal måste omfatta alla inblandade".



### Copenhagen double lecture with Anna Lindberg and Surinder Jodhka

The Centre of Global South Asian Studies at the University of Copenhagen organised a double lecture with two researchers from Lund University, ICCR Visiting Professor Surinder S. Jodhka who spoke on "Indian Village in neoliberal times: Changing Economies, Power and Identities", and SASNET's Director Dr. Anna Lindberg who made a presentation on "Paradise Limited: Marriage and Dowry in Kerala" on 2 May 2013. Anna is SASNET director since 2007. She formerly taught history and gender studies at Lund University, and at the University of Pennsylvania and Penn State University in the US. In 2003 her dissertation, "Experience and Identity: A Historical Account of Class, Caste, and Gender among the Cashew Workers of Kerala, 1930–2000", was awarded the prize for outstanding academic achievement by the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History, and Antiquities.

Surinder S. Jodhka is a Professor of Sociology at the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India and was ICCR Visiting Professor at Lund University during the academic year 2012/13. His research interests include the dynamics of caste and community identities in contemporary India, rural/agrarian social change and social inequalities.

### SASNET lunch talk on production of postcolonial India and Pakistan



Dr. Ted Svensson from the Dept. of Political Science at Lund University held the final SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the spring semester 2013 on Thursday 16 May 2013 at Lunds konsthall. The presentation was entitled "What Kind of Independence? The Production of Postcolonial India and Pakistan", and revolved around his forthcoming book on the partitioning of British India and the ensuing state formation in the region.

In his presentation, he specifically focused on how we might allow ourselves to speak of the transition from the colonial to the postcolonial, and thus of independent India and Pakistan, in terms of novelty, rather than continuity. In his writing he engages with the Partition, the transfer of power, and the gained independence, accentuating how what occurred in 1947 might be described as a constitutive moment – a moment that represents a beginning much more than continuation or inheritance.

### SASNET seminar with Krishnan Srinivasan on Europe and Emerging Asia

Dr. Krishnan Srinivasan, Research Fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study (SCAS) in Uppsala during the academic year 2012/13, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 7 May 2013. It was organised in collaboration with the



Dept. of Political Science. Venue: Main university building, room 206, Universitetsplatsen, Lund. Former senior Indian diplomat and General Secretary of the Commonwealth Krishnan Srinivasan spoke about "Europe's engagement with Emerging Asia; reflections on a new roadmap". The learned presentation was based on a monograph on the future relationship between Europe and the emerging powers of Asia, that he was working on during his stay in Uppsala. Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison participated in the seminar, and held an introductory speech.

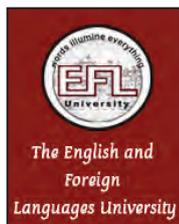
### Indian Ambassador on hectic visit to Lund University

Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison, visited Lund and Lund University for the second time on Tuesday 7 May 2013. She came to Lund on an invitation from SASNET to attend the academic seminar with Dr. Krishnan Srinivasan; and also attend a Rabindranath Tagore Nobel Prize Centenary celebration organised by the Association for Indo-Swedish Cultural Exchange (AISCE) at Theatre Sagohuset in the evening. At both occasions Mrs. Bose Harrison held inspired inaugural speeches.

While in Lund, the Ambassador also visited SASNET's office at Scheelevägen, and the Asia Library – part of Lund University Library, located in the same house. Mrs. Bose Harrison wanted to see its Karl Reinhold Haellquist donation of South Asian literature, part of which consists of a unique collection of Mahatma Gandhi literature. The librarian Anna Larsson showed the Ambassador around, and discussed possible additions of books for the Asia Library.



### Fruitful SASNET/NCI meeting on Nordic Studies in India



On Friday 17 May 2013, the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) university consortium and SASNET jointly organized a fruitful meeting to discuss possible academic collaboration with The English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) in India, in connection with the university's plan to launch a new Department of Nordic Studies. The meeting was held at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University, and convened by the NCI coordinator Dr. Kristina Myrvold. The invited participants included Monika Wirkkala from the Swedish Institute (SI); Clemens Cavallin from University of Gothenburg; Jyrki Kalliokoski from University of Helsinki, Anders Mortensen, Centre for Scandinavian Studies at Lund University; and Mattias Nowak from Centre for

European Studies, Lund University. SASNET was represented by Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund and Jonathan Stoltz.

EFLU is a Central University with campuses in Hyderabad, Lucknow, Shillong and Malappuram that offer education and research in a wide range of foreign languages and related subjects.

Since autumn 2012, NCI has arranged several meetings with representatives of EFLU to discuss their plans to launch a new Department of Nordic Studies that can provide teaching in Nordic languages and cultures. The meeting on May 17 is arranged to inform about EFLU's plans for this pioneer project and to identify and receive input from universities and departments who could be interested in being partners with EFLU. SASNET Assistant webmaster Jonathan Stoltz visited FLU on a visit to Hyderabad, along with Kristina Myrvold, in March 2013.

### **SASNET/Lund University seminar on Forest Access in Jharkhand**

PhD candidate Siddharth Sareen from the Department of Food and Resource Economics, University of Copenhagen's Faculty of Science, held a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 21 May 2013, 13.15–15.00. The seminar was held in

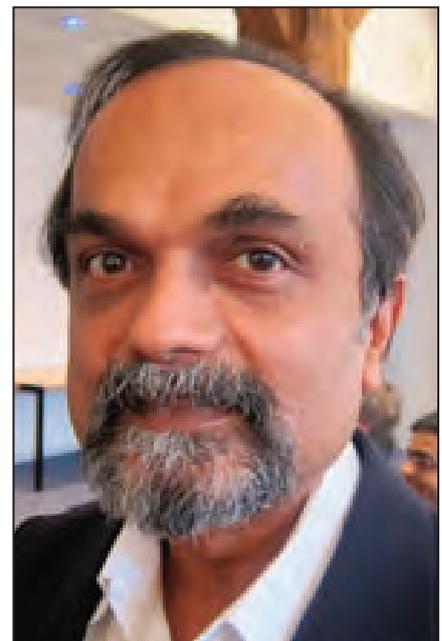


collaboration with the Dept. of Sociology. Siddharth spoke about "Forest access for indigenes during political transformation in a resource-rich region", focusing on the state of Jharkhand in eastern India. The state presents a resource-rich democracy-building context with 40 percent of the country's mineral wealth but high rates of poverty. Domestic and international mining companies have a large stake in securing land, while the state holds a monopoly over commercial timber even as it allows a significant tribal population access to minor forest produce. Progressive but hard-to-implement legislation safeguards the rights of indigenous, land-dependent peoples such as the Ho even as the regional political economy threatens them, creating what Anna Tsing elsewhere describes as a 'resource frontier'. The seminar aimed to examine what factors determine Hos' access to forests they have traditionally used as commons, in the post-1991 period of a liberalising-privatising-globalising national avatar that is coincident with decentralisation in natural resource governance.

### **SASNET seminar on the Gujarat Elections and their nationwide implications**

On the same day, Tuesday 7th May, Professor Sebastian Morris from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad, India, held a SASNET lecture entitled "The Gujarat Elections – Implications for the Political and Economic Development in India". The seminar was also organised in collaboration with the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University.

During the spring 2013, Prof. Morris was the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair Professor at the Copenhagen Business School (CBS). In his presentation, he focused on the third time victory in the Gujarat state elections of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Chief Minister Narendra Modi. To most especially the middle-classes the elections were campaigned and won on the dual planks of "development" and "leadership in command". During his visit to Lund, Prof. Morris also visited SASNET's office and had a discussion with Lars Eklund.



### **Mandolin and Tabla concert at Sagohuset in Lund**

SASNET supported a Mandolin & Vocal Recital concert programme with Sugato Bhaduri from Kolkata at Theatre Sagohuset in Lund on Tuesday 21 May 2013, at 19.00. The concert was organised by the Lund based Association for Indo-Swedish Cultural Exchange. Sugato Bhaduri is one of the most sought after Mandolinists in India today, and was initiated into the



field of music at a very tender age. Since 2005, Sugato Bhaduri has toured frequently both in India and Europe. He performs North Indian Classical Music on Mandolin, an instrument hitherto rarely known in Sweden for rendering the pure & ancient form of Indian classical music that is Dhrupad. The Lund concert was Sugato Bhaduri's first performance in Sweden. He was accompanied by the Indian Tabla musician Sandip Bhattacharya from the Netherlands.

### **Helarius Beck visited SASNET's office**

On Thursday 23 May 2013, Professor Helarius Beck, Dean at the School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India, visited SASNET's office at Lund University and met its deputy director Lars Eklund. Prof. Beck had come to Lund as a TISS representative in planning for the new Linnaeus Palme exchange programme between his school at TISS and the School of Social Work at Lund University. During a week-long stay at Lund University, Prof. Beck participated in a one-day seminar day focused on International studies and international assignments for Social Work students, but he also took part in teaching activities.

In his research, Helarius Beck focuses on the still prevailing practice of manual scavenging in India. In 2005, he published an article entitled "Socioeconomic status of scavengers engaged in the practice of manual scavenging in Maharashtra" together with TISS researcher colleague Shaileshkumar Darokar.

## **JUNE 2013**

### **Lars Eklund visited Chalmers University of Technology**

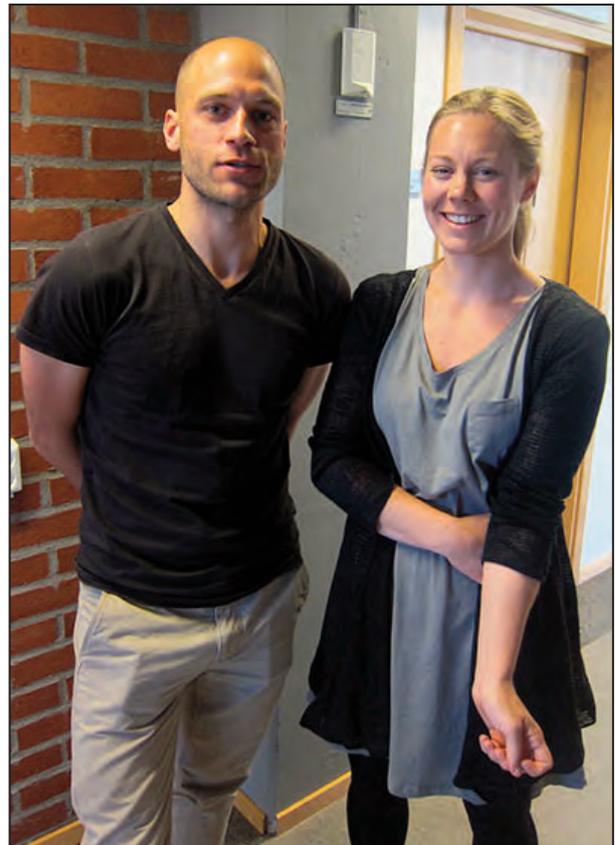
On Wednesday 5 June 2013, Lars Eklund visited Gothenburg and more specifically two important departments at Chalmers University of Technology involved in South Asia related research activities. He first visited the Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and met Professor Devdatt Dubhashi. CSE is actually jointly organised by Chalmers and University of Gothenburg. Professor Devdatt Dubhashi and his colleague Associate Professor K. V. S. Prasad have both strong Indian connections since long time back, with an extensive network of contacts in major institutions, universities and industry research centres in India.



Another researcher who recently joined the department is Dr. Chien-Chung Huang, who has a long-term collaboration relationship with India, especially with Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Mumbai.

Since 2007, the department collaborates on a major project related to Linguistics and Computation with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai. The project involves several faculty members, PhD and Masters students at Chalmers as well as at IIT Bombay, and on 4 June 2013 – a day before Lars' visit – a workshop was held to discuss the results of the joint research project. It coincided with the dissertation of Shafqat Mumtaz Virk, Pakistani PhD candidate who defended a thesis elucidating the development of computational grammars for six Indo-Iranian languages: Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Persian, Sindhi, and Nepali.

Lars proceeded to the Division of Physical Resource Theory, Department of Energy and Environment where he met Dr. Eskil Mattsson, who recently moved to Chalmers after defending his PhD on an India related thesis at the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Gothenburg. He also met Dr. Matilda Palm who also has done the same move. Both of them are partners in a major research programme entitled "Land use and forests within international climate policy – global and local possibilities and risks", led by Associate Professor Madelene Ostwald. This project is funded by the Swedish Energy Agency (STEM) and is carried out as a collaboration between the Division of Physical Resource Theory and a number of other research units in Gothenburg, Linköping (CSPR), Ås in Norway, Bangalore (IISc) and Peradeniya University in Sri Lanka. As part of the major programme, Eskil Mattsson is involved in a post-doc research project investigating the locally accepted land use system of 'homegardens' in in southern part of Sri Lanka, and its potential to mitigate the effects of climate change, increase productivity of the lands, and provide food security.



### **Farewell function for Anthony D'Costa before leaving for Melbourne**



On Friday 7 June Lars Ekund visited Copenhagen to attend a farewell party for Anthony D'Costa, Professor of Indian Studies, and Research Director for the Asia Research Centre at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) in Frederiksberg, Denmark. SASNET has had a close relation to the Asia Research Centre and Prof. D'Costa, who has been frequently invited to lecture at Lund University. Prof. D'Costa is leaving CBS after five years, and moves to Australia, where he has accepted a similar position at the University of Melbourne, to promote the study of contemporary India.

The Asia Research Centre at CBS was the first Nordic institution to host an ICCR Visiting Indian Professor already in 2009, and the initiative came from Professor D'Costa. This inspired SASNET to make a similar initiative in Sweden, which led to the ongoing scheme of ICCR Visiting Professors also at Lund University from 2010, and recently at University of Gothenburg as well (soon also at Uppsala University).

### **K R G and Ratnam Nair visited SASNET and Lund University**

K.R.G. Nair, formerly Professor of Business Economics at University of Delhi, India, visited SASNET and Lund University 10-12 June 2013, along with his wife Ratnam, Sanskrit scholar from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi. They came to Scandinavia mainly to attend the Asian Dynamics Initiative conference in Copenhagen on 13-14 June, but also took the chance to visit Joensuu University in Finland, and to fulfill a personal desire to visit SASNET in Lund.



This because of an admiration for the work done by SASNET. Prof. Nair informed that he, in the role of being Dean of the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and Humanities at Delhi University, for many years had been fascinated by SASNET's multi-disciplinary research efforts, and its newsletters. This conviction got further strengthened when Prof. Nair for over a decade functioned as the founder Director of the Centre for Canadian Studies at Delhi University. He is now retired, but is still active as Honorary Research Professor at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi, and recently he published the book "Road Not Taken: Memoirs of a University Teacher in the Newly Emerging Second World". During their stay in Lund, K.R.G. and Ratnam Nair had fruitful meetings with SASNET representatives Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund, and also with Prof. Neelambar Hatti from the Dept. of Economic History.

### **SASNET/Lund University seminar on Indian Cultures and Diasporas**

An open seminar on "Indian Cultures and Diasporas" was held at Lund University on Monday 17 June 2013, 15.00–19.30. It was jointly organized by SASNET, the Nordic Centre in India (NCI), and Lund University's Centre for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR). Venue: CTR, Room 118, Allhelgona Kyrkogata 8, Lund. Invited guest speakers were Professor Gurinder Singh Mann from the Center for Sikh and Punjab Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara, USA, who spoke about "The Sikh Panth: From Kartarpur to Anandpur (1500-1700)"; Dr. Amit Kumar Mishra from the Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora at University of Hyderabad, India, who gave a lecture on "Indians in Diaspora: A Social-Cultural Continuum?"; and Dr. Gibb Schreffler from Pomona College in Claremont, California, USA, who spoke about "The Punjab Dhol (Drum) Tradition and its Modernization in Post-Independence Indian Punjab". The seminar was arranged in connection with the conference "Young Sikhs in a Global World: Negotiating Identity, Tradition and Authority" held in Lund 18–19 June 2013 at CTR, Lund University.

## **JULY – AUGUST 2013**

### **SASNET contributes with South Asia books to Lund University's Asia Library**

For a couple of years, starting in 2007, the SASNET board set aside SEK 25 000 a year to buy and catalogue books on modern South Asian studies for Lund University's Asia Library at Scheelevägen 15 C, ground floor. In August 2013, SASNET again decided to contribute with South Asia related books to the Asia Library, and as a first symbolic gesture a number of books already available in SASNET's office books collection were donated to the library, among them Kaushik Basu's "The retreat of democracy"; Gunnel Cederlöf's "Landscapes and the law: environmental politics, regional histories, and contests over nature"; Irfan Habib's "To make the deaf hear: ideology and programme of Bhagat Singh and his comrades"; Ramachandra Guha's "Makers of modern India"; and Claude Markovits' "The unGandhian Gandhi: the life and afterlife of the Mahatma".

## SEPTEMBER 2013

### Lars Eklund on networking tour to London universities

During the week 9-13 September 2013, Lars Eklund visited universities in London, networking with researchers working on South Asia related projects. He first attended an international conference entitled 'Communicating Soft Power: Contrasting Perspectives from India and China' at Westminster University, on 9-10 September. On 11th September, Lars then visited London School of Economics (LSE), a vibrant research institution with many researchers working on South Asia projects. He was hosted



by Professor David Lewis from the Department of Social Policy, and Dr. Mukulika Bannerjee at the Department of Anthropology. Dr. Bannerjee is the key person behind an initiative to launch a South Asia Centre at LSE from January 2014, and she had an interest to discuss networking experiences with Lars Eklund. Lars was also introduced to Dr. Shakuntala Banaji, Dept. of Media and Communications, and Dr. Rajesh Venugopal, Dept. of International Development.

On 12th September, Lars visited the British Library and the Endangered Archives Programme (EAP), a programme being funded by Arcadia (formerly known as the Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund), that contributes to the preservation of archival material worldwide that is in danger of destruction, neglect or physical deterioration, not the least in South Asia. Lars was hosted by Cathy Collins, Grants Administrator for EAP.



Finally, Lars visited the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at University of London, one of most important research environments when it comes to South Asia related research in Europe. Lars was hosted by Professor Michael Hutt, Professor of Nepali and Himalayan Studies, and Chair for the Centre of South Asian Studies at SOAS, and Jane Savory, Office Manager for the

Centres & Programmes Office, that oversees the administration of the seven Regional Centres within SOAS – the Centre of South Asian Studies being one of them. They now informed about the decision convert the Centre into an Institute of South Asian Studies from January 2014. Finally, Lars met SOAS PhD candidate Najia Mukhtar, representative of the recently formed Muslim South Asia Research Forum (MUSA), a new cross-disciplinary initiative focused on bringing together PhD students and early career researchers working on any aspect of Muslim societies in the countries of South Asia.

### Great interest for SASNET/UPF seminar on Gang Rapes in India

A joint SASNET/UPF (Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University) seminar on "Gang Rapes in India" was held in Lund on Wednesday 11 September 2013, 19.00–21.00. Malin Mendel Westberg, Swedish public service television (SVT) correspondent in India shared her experiences from reporting on the violent December 2012 Delhi gang rape case, the recent Mumbai gang rape case involving a photo journalist, as



well as other cases concerning the safety or lack of safety for women in India. Venue: Café Athen, Akademiska Föreningen (AF), Sandgatan 2, Lund. The seminar drew a full crowd to the hall. The shocking gang rape incidents have generated widespread national and international coverage and has been condemned by various women's groups, both in India and abroad. Malin Mendel Westberg has been working for SVT as a reporter and video photographer since 2005. During the years she has covered lots of issues concerning women in India for the programme Korrespondenterna as well as for the news programmes Rapport and Aktuellt. She has recently released a book about India and Bombay ("Bombay Takeaway. Indien genom maten") where the situation for Indian women is highlighted in two of the chapters.

### Nepalese Erasmus Mundus programme scholarship holder visited SASNET

Anju Giri, Professor of English Education at the Central Department of Education, Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, Nepal, visited SASNET's office in Lund on Friday 20 September 2013. Prof. Giri came to Sweden on a scholarship under the Erasmus Mundus Asia Regional mobility programme EMEA, administered by Lund University, as an academic staff to spend one month at the Department of Educational Sciences at Lund University Campus Helsingborg. Her contact person was Dr. Sinikka Neuhaus. Anju Giri has taught English Education at Tribhuvan University for 33 years. In 2008 she became the first person from this field to defend a PhD, with a thesis entitled "Grammatical Errors and their Gravity". She is currently searching for possibilities to continue with post-doc research in Europe.

### Winnie Bothe lectured on Gendered Participation in Sikkim and Bhutan

Dr. Winnie Bothe from the Department of Political Science at Lund University held the first SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the fall semester 2013 on Thursday 26 September 2013, 12.30–13.30, at Lunds konsthall. The presentation was entitled "Gendered Participation in the Buddhist Himalayas. Sikkim and Bhutan: A comparative study on visions of female participation". In her presentation, Dr. Bothe focused on the Buddhist women from the Kingdom of Bhutan and the Indian state of Sikkim, sharing a similar cultural background rooted in Tantric Buddhism. Given this cultural similarity she set out to explore their political engagement under two different models of governance. The main questions asked is the extent to which these women are empowered to participate in local politics, in particular their subjective understanding of their ability to apply the room that is opened to gain influence at local village meetings.



### **Kickoff for Indo-European mobility programme coordinated by Lund University**

The new Indo-European Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programme EMINTE, coordinated by Lund University, was being launched at a kick-off meeting in Lund 25–26 September 2013. EMINTE is a consortium consisting of 20 universities – 10 European and 10 Indian. SASNET is an Associate partner in the consortium. The programme is open to Indian nationals who want to study or work at one of the ten European partner universities. It involves students on undergraduate, master, doctoral



and post-doctoral level as well as for university staff in academic or administrative positions. Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Banashri Bose Harrison attended the kick-off meeting and held an inspired introductory speech. The Ambassador also strongly emphasized the importance that the mobility programme between India and Europe should be running in both directions, not only one-way bringing scholarship holders from India to Europe. Her view was supported by several of the Indian university representatives present. Mr. Clivio Casali, Programme Manager at the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), was also present. He presented statistics on the impressive number of scholarship holders that have benefited from the India lots since 2008 and onwards (including Asia regional lots with Indian universities involved), and he also presented the outline for the Erasmus + programme that will be introduced in 2014, replacing current Erasmus Mundus and other programmes.

### **Successful seventh European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies in Amsterdam**

The Seventh European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies was held on 26–27 September 2013. This year it was hosted by the University of Amsterdam. SASNET was represented by Assistant Director Olle Frödin, and Lund University sent two participants – PhD Candidates Maria Tonini, Centre for Gender Studies, and Srilata Sircar, Dept. of Cultural Geography.



These European workshops are jointly co-organised by the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS); Heidelberg University, Germany; Ghent University, Belgium; University of Edinburgh, UK; Le Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS), Paris, France; University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands; and SASNET/Lund University, Sweden. Each university nominates a couple of PhD candidates and a senior Professor.

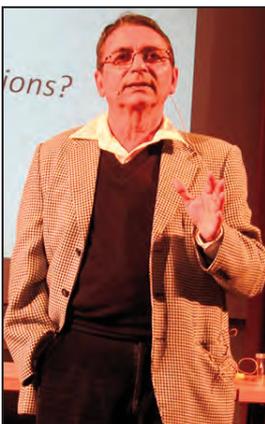
## OCTOBER 2013

### SASNET seminar on Health & Safety in the Bangladesh Ready Made Garment industry

SASNET successfully organised a seminar with Professor Emeritus Doug Miller from the School of Design at University of Northumbria in Newcastle on Tyne, UK, on Thursday 3 October 2013. His engaged presentation was entitled "Forcing Workers to Die – the State of Health and Safety in the Bangladesh Ready Made Garment industry". The textile and clothing industries provide the single most important source of economic growth in Bangladesh's rapidly developing economy. The backside is super-exploitation and repression of the workers who receive minimal wages, and an alarming lack of occupational health and safety due to corruption. Deadly fires and other incidents occur regularly, and the Rana Plaza garment factory complex collapse on April 24, 2013, when more than 1 000 textile workers were killed is the worst disaster ever in manufacturing (photo above). Swedish writer Helena Thorfinn acted as moderator and conversation partner during the seminar. The audience was also much involved in the discussions, with several well-informed students and researchers present, many of them Bangladeshi.



### Lund University ICCR Professor Kalyan Mandal held installation seminar



Professor Kalyan Sankar Mandal from the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM-C) in Kolkata held his installation lecture as Visiting Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) chair professor at Lund University, on Wednesday 9th October 2013, 13.00 –15.00. Venue: Kulturens Hörsal, Tegnérplatsen, Lund. The title of his presentation was "Regional Diversities in Indian Society", and focused on regional variations in the status of women in India and the social development situation in India. Prof. Mandal is the fourth ICCR Professor at Lund University, and he will stay for the full academic year 2013/14. Indian Ambassador Banashri Bose Harrisson was the guest of honour, and she held an introductory speech.

### Indian Ambassador met Lund University students

In connection to her participation in the Installation seminar of Professor Kalyan Mandal as the fourth Visiting Indian ICCR Professor at Lund University on October, 9th, 2013, Indian Ambassador to Sweden, H E Banashri Bose Harrison took the opportunity to meet Indian students at the University. A meeting was organised jointly by SASNET and the International Office at the Faculty of Engineering (LTH), since this is the largest faculty at Lund University, besides housing the maximum number



of Indian students. The meeting was held at Fakultetsklubben in Kårhuset, John Ericssons väg 3, and was hosted by Christina Grossman, Head, International Office. The participants – PhD candidates and masters students from various subjects – were all very eager to discuss with the Ambassador problems they have faced regarding Swedish visa troubles, failed job applications, and many other issues. Mrs. Bose Harrison showed great interest and promised full support from the Embassy.

After the meeting, the Ambassador was invited for a guided tour to the Department of Electrical and Information Technology in the E-building of LTH, accompanied by PhD candidate Rohit Chandra who is soon completing his thesis work at the department. He showed the Ambassador around in the laboratories and the department offices.

Among the people they met were Associate Professor Fredrik Tufvesson, who happens to be a member of SASNET's board. Lars Eklund from SASNET and Ulrika Qvist Mathiesen from the International Office, LTH, also took part in the guided tour.

### SASNET concert with Classical Indian song, dance and music at Sagohuset

The extraordinary talented North Indian classical singer Sudokshina Chatterjee Manna from Kolkata again performed in Lund along with her Tabla player husband Subrata Manna, and the Kathak dancer Sohini Debnath, on Sunday 13 October 2013. The audience was thrilled by the high standard of the performance, world class. Venue: Theatre Sagohuset, Revingegatan 8, Lund. The artists are all trained in North Indian musical traditions. Subrata was a student of Tabla maestro Pandit Shankar Ghosh and has learnt all the most important musical styles (gharanas). Both



Subrata and Sudokshina also have academic degrees from Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata. Sohini Debnath dances Kathak, the Indian original behind the Spanish Flamenco dance. They came to Sweden as part of a European tour, being invited to Lund by SASNET. The Lund concert, organised in collaboration with Theatre Sagohuset and Sensus, was unfortunately the only one in Scandinavia.

## Successful lunch seminar on common human dependence on living soil



Professor Håkan Wallander from the Division of Microbial Ecology, Department of Biology, Lund University, held the

second SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the fall semester 2013 on Thursday 17 October 2013, 12.30–13.30, at Lunds konsthall. The presentation was

entitled "Soil – the basis of our existence. Examples from Nepal, America and Amazonas", and attracted a large audience, many of them deeply interested in gardening. With examples from three different places on earth, two in America and one in Asia (Nepal), Håkan Wallander demonstrated how dependent we are on a living soil, and gave us a glimpse of the immense diversity we are stepping on every day.

Prof. Wallander is a professor in soil biology and environmental sciences. He works mainly with ectomycorrhizal fungi that form symbiotic relationships with trees. The lunch seminar presentation was based on his recent book "Jord – Funderingar kring grunden för vår tillvaro" (Soil – Reflections on the Basis of our Existence), published by Atlantis, 2013. This book has been widely praised and at the 2013 Göteborg Book Fair, it was given the award "Årets Trädgårdsbok 2013" by Gartnersällskapet.



## Lars Eklund on SASNET/Lund India Choir tour to Bengal and Odisha

During the period 23 October till 10 November 2012, Lars Eklund travelled to Kolkata along with other members of the Lund India Choir, specialized in singing songs by the Indian/Bengali Nobel Laureate poet and composer Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941). Lars however also visited a number of universities as part of his SASNET work, among them Indian Statistical Institute in



Kolkata, North Orissa University in Baripada – involved in a Erasmus Mundus collaboration with Lund University, and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, the highest ranked IIT in India located 120 km west of Kolkata.

In two weeks time the Lund India Choir completed a successful tour consisting of no less than seven concerts in Kolkata, Shantiniketan, Balasore, Baripada and Kharagpur, in order to commemorate the 100th jubilee year of Rabindranath Tagore's Nobel Prize in 1913. They had an amazing concert for students and professors at Sangheet Bhawan, the Music Department at Viswa Bharati University in Santiniketan, Tagore's own university. They also performed at the inauguration of a new Swedish-funded Shakuntala Rheumatology Hospital and Research Institute in Balasore, Odisha State on Thursday 31 October. Everywhere the choir performed it was widely covered by press and TV.



## NOVEMBER 2013

### Bollywood and Diaspora in focus for Karlstad researcher visiting SASNET

Assistant Professor Charu Uppal from the Department of Media and Communication Studies (MKV) at Karlstad University visited SASNET's office in Lund on her own initiative and had a fruitful meeting with Lars Eklund on Monday 11th November 2013. Dr. Uppal hails from India, but has a professional background from Penn State University in the US, and more recently University of the South Pacific in Fiji. Her research focuses on Bollywood and Diaspora, and about how girls, 8-15 years in different countries, including India and Fiji, perceive images of girlhood in Disney movies. At a recent London conference on "India China Soft Power", Dr. Uppal presented a paper on "Bollystan: An Expanding State (of Mind)", in which she claims that the international spread of Bollywood films to a large extent is connected to the fact that there are now 25 million people of Indian origin living in diaspora in 110 countries all over the world.



### SASNET assisted media departments in Lund and Thiruvanthapuram to collaborate



In early November 2013, lecturer Andreas Mattsson from the Department of Communication and Media at Lund University made a week-long visit to University of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram, India, to overview and investigate the possibilities of future collaborations within the field of journalism with the Dept. of Communication and Journalism at University of Kerala. The visit was facilitated by SASNET, and he was accompanied by SASNET director Anna Lindberg. The main purpose was to strengthen the relationships and seek the possibilities for future exchanges involving the teachers and researchers as well as students in both departments.

### SASNET Seminar on Fragile Peace in Kashmir and the way forward

SASNET organised a successful seminar entitled "Fragile Peace in Kashmir. Is there any way forward?" at Lund University on Thursday 14 November 2013. It was arranged in collaboration with the South Asian Students Association (SASA) at Lund University. The two invited speakers were Professor Sten Widmalm from the Dept. of Government, Uppsala University, and PhD Candidate Muhammad Farooq Sulehria from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, UK.

Sten Widmalm's presentation was entitled "How to build peace in the world's most dangerous place", and focused on the issue how peace in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir to a large extent depends on whether confidence in democracy can be revived on the ground. However, he also pointed out that stability is also decided by the development in other parts of India, and the political stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Muhammed Farooq Sulehria's presentation was entitled "The Kashmir Cauldron: Complexities facing the nationalistic political project" offered a lot of insights regarding the Kashmir national question. Sulehria argues that the Kashmir question remains a tripartite dispute whereby Kashmiris constitute the third elemental party to the dispute, and that India and Pakistan mutually want to maintain a status quo on the Kashmir dispute for strategic reasons.

The seminar was followed by a screening of "Lakeer", a feature film on Kashmir by British-Kashmiri film maker Ali Daalat, who was present and held an introductory speech about the film about people who have had to suffer great pain and separation because of India's partition in 1947. The film skillfully brings alive the pre- and the post-partition life in Jammu and Kashmir, and how the locals have coped with their lives after the Partition.



### SASNET lunch seminar on Violence against Women and Children in South Asia



Professor Helle Rydström from the Department of Gender Studies at Lund University held the final SASNET/ABF Thursday lunch seminar talk for the fall semester 2013 on Thursday 21 November 2013 at Lunds konsthall. The presentation was entitled "Jeopardizing the Security of Women and Children: Gendered Violence in Public and Private Spaces in India and Beyond", focusing on violence against women with special focus on the gang rape case in Delhi in December 2012. In unfolding the "logic" inherent to different kinds of violence, Helle Rydström examines how gendered and aged violence is informed by assumptions about masculinity, femininity, superiority, and not least male privileges. In so doing, she discusses how women and the girl children become included by exclusion of the social order and its promises about human rights and security.

### Ashok Jhunjunwala and Suma Prashant from IITM visited SASNET

Professor Ashok Jhunjunwala of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM), Chennai, made a courtesy visit to SASNET office in Lund on Tuesday 26 November 2013, and had a meeting with SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. Prof. Jhunjunwala, who is also a member of the Indian Prime Ministers Scientific Advisory Committee, was accompanied by Ms. Suma Prashant (photo to the left), Director for IITM's Rural Technology and Business Incubator (RTBI). This is a vital IITM initiative with a rural and social inclusive focus, established in 2006 with a mission to design, pilot and incubate scalable business models/ventures leveraging on Information Communication and Technology (ICT).

They had come to Sweden with the purpose to meet their main Swedish research collaboration partners at the School of Computing at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH), but they also took an opportunity to meet with a few contacts at Lund University. The visit to SASNET was actually a follow-up on a visit to IITM that SASNET assistant webmaster Jonathan Stoltz made in February 2013.



## Helsingborg workshop with Sheba Saeed on her film "Beggars in Lahore"



SASNET and the School of Social Work, Lund University jointly arranged a workshop with Dr Sheba Saeed, as a part of the conference "Social Work in an International Context" on the 28 November 2013. Venue: Lund University's Campus Helsingborg, Universitetsplatsen

2, Helsingborg. Dr Saeed's workshop was based on her documentary film about beggars in the streets of Lahore, Pakistan. What compels the beggars to beg and what measures have been taken by the government and non-governmental organisations to assist the beggars? The documentary examines the political, social, religious and economic reasons for begging as well as the growth of the beggar's mafia. Sheba Saeed's presentation along with the film was thought-provoking and the students attending the seminar were actively involved in the discussions. More information about the Helsingborg conference and workshop.

Dr Sheba Saeed, a solicitor by profession, holds a PhD from the University of Birmingham, UK. For her doctoral research she provided a critique on the regulation of begging in Mumbai using religious and secular laws in an audio-visual format with a written thesis. For her MPhil in History, Film and Television she produced and directed her debut documentary "Beggars of Lahore" as part of an audio-visual dissertation. The film has been screened at International Conferences and Film Festivals.



## Indian journalist Hindol Sengupta visited SASNET



Hindol Sengupta, Senior Editor for the Indian edition of the Fortune magazine, made a courtesy visit to SASNET's office in Lund on Friday 29 November 2013, and had an inspiring discussion with deputy director Lars Eklund. Mr. Sengupta has spent a week in south Sweden, visiting participants to Lund University's ongoing Social Innovation in a Digital Context (SIDC) academic scholarship programme. Besides writing on public policy, politics and the business of luxury and heritage for Fortune, Mr. Sengupta is also the founder of India's only open government foundation, the Whypoll Trust, which has worked closely with the United Nations Millennium Campaign and UNICEF. Whypoll created the first crowd-sourced listing of the 100 most unsafe places in the Indian capital New Delhi and launched the first women safety mobile app in India. He is the author of three books. His last book "The Liberals" on 20 years of Indian economic liberalisation and the "Manmohan's children" generation, as it is called, has won praise from some of the most important public intellectuals in India and the UK, and he was invited to speak at the prestigious Jaipur Literature Festival 2012.

## DECEMBER 2013

### Lars Eklund visited Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm

After a gap of many years, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund visited the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm on Monday 2 December 2013, and more specifically its International Relations Office, located in nice premises on the seventh floor in the new university administration building (that till recently was a building belonging to the Red Cross Hospital). There he met Ms. Alphonsa Lourdudoss, who is KTH's Regional Advisor for India related projects – India is considered to be one of four prioritized regions at KTH, the others being Brazil, China and South East Asia). Alphonsa is also main Coordinator for one of the recently concluded Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programmes with India, and current local coordinator for two other Erasmus Mundus programmes, Swagata (coordinated by Ghent University), and India4EU (coordinated by Politecnico di Torino). The reason behind Lars' visit was to update existing information about South Asia related research on SASNET's web site. Currently, about 20 departments are listed in the database, giving information about what research has been carried out during the past 10 years and details about individual researchers and their projects.



### SASNET film seminar on Chinese mining exploitation in Afghanistan

On Wednesday 4 December 2013, 19–21, US-based journalist and documentary filmmaker Brent E. Huffman participated in a seminar on Chinese mining companies involvement in the Mes Aynak project in Afghanistan, that threatens to destroy ancient Buddhist cultural artifacts located on top of the copper deposits, the largest untapped copper reserve in the world. Huffman's film "The Buddhas of Mes Aynak" was shown at the seminar that was jointly organised by SASNET, UPF (Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University) and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan in Lund. Venue: Café Athen, Akademiska Föreningen (AF), Sandgatan 2, Lund.



Brent E Huffman is working as Assistant Professor at the Medill School of Journalism, Media and Integrated Marketing Communications at Northwestern University in Illinois state, USA. After following China's international development in Africa for the last few years, he became interested in China's Mes Aynak project in 2011, and began documenting in volatile Taliban country the beginnings of the largest private investment in Afghanistan's history. Huffman later discovered that as a result of the Chinese copper mine, the entire region would be completely destroyed by open-pit mining. The fate of Mes Aynak hangs in the balance as the Chinese company begins creating their destructive open-pit copper mine.

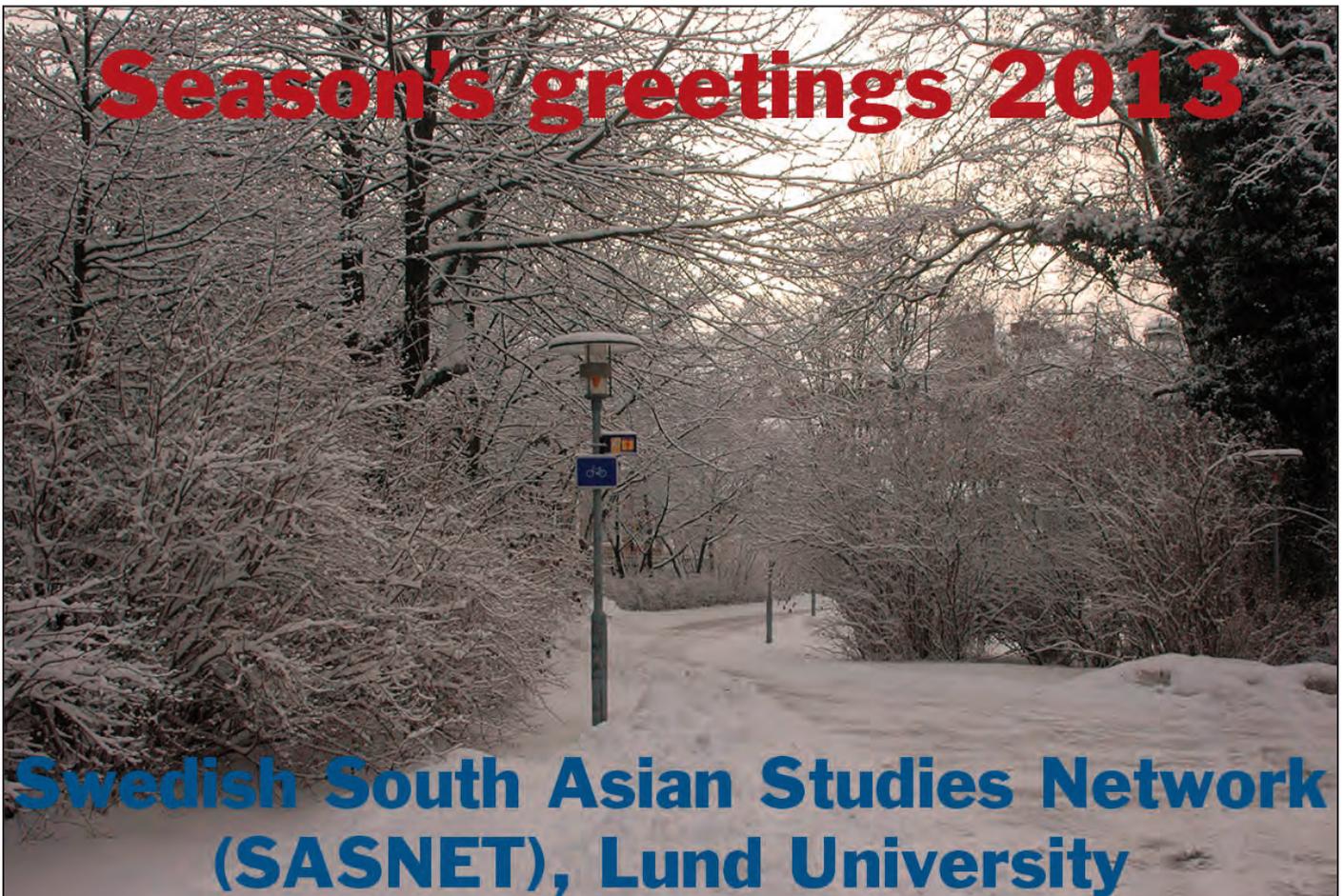
Earlier the same day – 4th December 2013 – Prof. Leif Stenberg at the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies at Lund University (CME) organised an academic seminar with Dr. Huffman. The seminar was held 13.15–15.00, in the seminar room at CME, Finngatan 16, Lund.

### **SASNET moved back to premises in central Lund**

After exactly 10 years, SASNET moved its office back to centrally located premises in Lund. From 10th December 2013, SASNET is accommodated at Paradisgatan 5, in the same G-building that houses the Department of Sociology, and very close to SASNET's first office at Gamla Kirurgen. The new address for SASNET and its staff, currently (January 2014) consisting of Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund, Olle Frödin and Hawwa Lubna,



is Box 114, SE-221 00 Lund, Sweden. E-mail and phone connections remain the same as before. From November 2003 till December 2013, SASNET was located at Ideon Science Park, in the Alfa 1 building that also houses the Department of Economic History and the Center for East and South-East Asian Studies.



# SASNET Activity Report 2014

## JANUARY 2014

### **Kalyan Mandal lectured on Indian experiences of Anti-poverty Programmes**

Professor Kalyan Sankar Mandal from the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM-C) in Kolkata, and at the time being Visiting Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair professor at Lund University, held a lecture on "Reaching Benefits of Anti-poverty Programmes to the Poor: The Indian Experience" at Lund University on Tuesday 21 January 2014 at 12.00. It was held at the Dept. of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5 G, the brand new location of SASNET.



Marginalised sections of the society

often remain deprived of the fruits of development. This fact necessitates governments to design special development programmes aiming at benefiting the poor. In his presentation, Prof. Mandal reviewed Indian experiences in this regard, and traced the origins, evolution and shaping of pro-poor programmes in India. He analysed how and why these programmes often fail to benefit the poor, by focusing on the outcome of one specific programme, the Small Farmers Development Agency programme (SFDA), and how this functioned in Hooghly district of West Bengal. However, Prof. Mandal also pointed out under what type of circumstances the poor really get benefitted from such programmes, and mentioned the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) programme and the Midday Meal scheme, both successfully run by the Government of India, as positive examples.

### **Andreas Mattsson develops collaboration with Media department at Kerala University**

In early November 2013, lecturer Andreas Mattsson from the Department of Communication and Media at Lund University made a week-long visit to University of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram, India, to overview and investigate the possibilities of future collaborations within the field of journalism with the Dept. of Communication and Journalism at University of Kerala. The visit was facilitated by SASNET, and he was accompanied by SASNET director Anna Lindberg. The main purpose was to strengthen the relationships and seek the possibilities for future exchanges involving the teachers and researchers as well as students in both departments.



In January 2014 Andreas paid another visit to the Dept. of Communication and Journalism. While discussing future exchanges with his Keralan colleagues Dr Harikumar, Dr Maggi and Dr Subash (head of the Department) he also took the opportunity to lecture about the role of being a journalist. The audience was the first year students of the Masters' program in Journalism and Communication. During his stay in Kerala he was also invited to the talkshow Videsha Vicharam on Asianet News-channel where he discussed the future of journalism together with the host T.P. Sreenivasan.

## FEBRUARY 2014

### Olle Frödin visited universities in Kerala and Delhi

Dr Olle Frödin, SASNET deputy director in charge of research collaboration, visited India during the period 2–7 February 2014. His first stop was Kerala University, where he met Professor Sobha B. Nair, Head of Department of Sociology, and Professor Shaji Varkey, Head of Department of Political Science, to discuss student, teacher and research exchanges with Lund University. He also met Professor Jayakumari Devika at the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram.

Olle then went to Delhi, where visited Professor Surinder Jodhka at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Jodhka was ICCR guest professor at Lund University in 2012/13. On 7th February, Olle attended a conference entitled "Punjab Today" at Delhi University. Here he also had a meeting at the Department of Sociology with Professor Satish Deshpande, Head of department, and Professor Ravinder Kaur. Finally, he met Assistant Professor Rukmini Sen, Head of Department of Sociology at Ambedkar University in Delhi.



### Bengalis in Denmark celebrated Rabindranath Tagore's Nobel Prize



The Bengalis in Denmark association held a Rabindranath Tagore celebration event on Friday 7 February 2014 at Kulturhus Indre By, Charlotte Ammundsens Plads 3 in central Copenhagen. H.E. Niraj Srivastava, Ambassador of India to Denmark was the Chief Guest. To commemorate 100 years of Tagore winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, the association organised a grand evening garlanded with famous works of the Bard. SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the Copenhagen event, mingling with the

crowd, including Mr. Sarbajit Deb, Larsen & Toubro Vice President for Nordic Region, and Dr. Bente Wolf, Curator at the National Museum of Denmark, and coordinator for its Serampore project.

### SASNET seminar on Reporting from Maldives – Lost Paradise in the Indian Ocean

Australian journalist John James Robinson held an appreciated SASNET seminar on "Paradise Lost. Beyond the Beach, Booze and Bikinis: Reporting the Dark Side of the Maldives" in Lund on Tuesday 25 February 2014. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET, the South Asia Student Association (SASA), and the School of Social Work, Lund University.

J J Robinson has worked in Maldives since 2007, and being the Editor of the Minivan News, the first independent English-language news service service in the country, he has covered extensively about the democratic transition in Maldives and the recent 2013 election crisis. Robinson reported on Islamic extremism, xenophobia, political turmoil, environmental disaster, economic catastrophe and social malaise. The seminar was moderated by Hawwa Lubna from Maldives, at the time being working at SASNET Earlier in the day, JJ Robinson visited SASNET's office in Lund and had a meeting with deputy director Lars Eklund and Hawwa Lubna. Danish researcher Nils Finn Munch-Petersen also attended the meeting.



### SASNET interaction with regional business promotion agency

On Friday 28th February 2014, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund had a meeting with Ms. Therese Lindsley, Head of Business Development, Services Industry & Cleantech at Invest in Skåne, the official regional business promotion agency for Southern Sweden. It is part of the marketing organisation called Business Region Skåne, which is owned by the regional council – Region Skåne – and the municipalities of Skåne. Invest in Skåne has a dual role, to connect international (including South Asian) companies with business opportunities in Southern Sweden, and to help Swedish companies to internationalise their business. Lars and Therese discussed how SASNET with its focus on academic research and education, and Invest in Skåne with its focus on business promotion, can interact and collaborate on specific issues in the future.



## MARCH 2014

### SASNET seminar on Democratic Struggle in South Asia from a youth perspective

A seminar entitled "South Asia's Democratic Struggle – Youth Perspectives" was held at Lund University on Monday 3 March 2014, 16.00–18.00. This well-attended event was jointly organised by SASNET, the South Asian Students Association (SASA), the School of Social Work, and South Asian participants in the ongoing Social



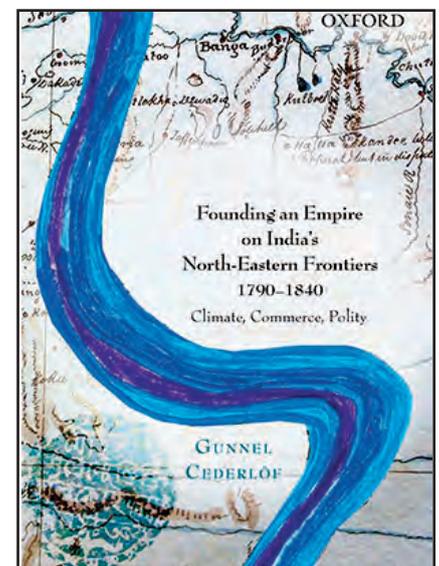
Innovation in a Digital Context (SIDC) programme at Lund University. The purpose of the seminar entitled was to provide a platform for the young voices from the region. South Asian students and social activists at SIDC program coming from different countries including India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan explored the democratic struggles of their respective countries and what young people are doing to fight social and economic injustices as individuals and organised movements.

### Gunnel Cederlöf lectured on India's North-Eastern Frontiers 1790-1840

Professor Gunnel Cederlöf visited Lund University on Friday 21 March 2014 to give a seminar talk on the topic of "Founding an Empire on India's North-Eastern Frontiers 1790-1840" The seminar was organised by SASNET.

The theme was connected to the launch of her recently published book with the same title. The book is a richly detailed historical work of the unsettled half-century from the 1790s to the 1830s when the British East India Company strove to establish control of the colonial north-eastern frontiers spanning the River Brahmaputra to the Burmese border. It offers a much-needed reframing of regional histories of South Asia away from the subcontinental Indian mainland to the varied social ecologies of Sylhet, Cachar, Manipur, Jaintia, and Khasi hills.

Prof. Cederlöf is closely connected to SASNET, being chairperson of the board during the period 2007–2010.



### Great interest for SASNET collaboration from South Asia researchers in Vilnius

On invitation by Raj Sekhar Basu, the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) Visiting Professor in Contemporary Indian Studies at Mykolo Romerio University (MRU) in Vilnius, Lithuania, SASNET deputy director Lars



Eklund visited the Lithuanian capital 23–25 March 2014. During his visit, he met researchers and administrators not only at MRU's Asian Studies Centre, to which Prof. Basu is affiliated, but also researchers at the Center of Oriental Studies at Vilnius University, the other major university in the city. At both places, the SASNET willingness to extend links with South Asia related researchers in Lithuania, which is a neighbouring country of Sweden, was met with enthusiasm, and Lars was able to pick up much valuable information about recent initiatives regarding South Asian studies in the Baltic republics, that also include Estonia and Latvia. .

### IGNOU Professor on month-long contact journey to Sweden and Finland



Dr. Chandra B. Sharma, Professor of Education at the School of Education, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), based in Delhi, India, made an extensive study tour to Sweden and Finland during the period 24 March – 20 April 2014. He was invited by the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) consortium, and the Linnaeus University in Växjö and Kalmar, but has also been a guest to SASNET/Lund University. The objective of his visit has been to understand the Nordic education system and find experts/institutions who would like to collaborate with Indian scholars and institutions (especially in the areas of school education, in-service teacher training, inclusive education, research). At Lund University, he visited not only SASNET and Lund University's Division of External Relations, but also the Dept. of Social Work, and the Dept. of Educational Sciences at campus Helsingborg.

## APRIL 2014

### SASNET/UPF seminar on India's Democracy in a South Asian Perspective

Subrata Mitra, Professor of South Asian Politics at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, Germany, held a joint SASNET/UPF seminar entitled "Beyond Exceptionalism: On India's Democracy in a South Asian Perspective" at Lund University on Tuesday 1 April 2014, 19.00–20.45. The seminar was as usual recorded by Talat Bhat.

The seminar was well-attended and much appreciated by Lund University students, researchers and others interested, who came to hear Prof. Mitra's arguments regarding the specific character of Indian democracy, explaining how similar origins lead to dissimilar outcomes? Asked broadly of the successor states of British colonial rule in South Asia, the question puts the Indian way, consisting of regular, free and competitive elections, full citizenship, secularism and federalism as the only appropriate path of transition from colonial to democratic rule. During his visit to Lund, Professor Mitra being invited by SASNET naturally also visited its office at Paradisgatan, and had fruitful discussions with deputy director Lars Eklund and assistant research communicator Linda Hiltmann.



### **Linnaeus University seminar on Education and Entrepreneurship in India**

The Linnaeus University in Växjö/Kalmar organised a one-day seminar entitled "Education and Entrepreneurship in India – New challenges, new opportunities" in Växjö on Thursday 3 April 2014, 09.00–16.00. The purpose was to highlight, inspire and learn more about India and collaboration possibilities in India. The event focused on education and entrepreneurship in the belief that both perspectives could learn from each other, but also on business opportunities.

The speakers included the SASNET Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg, who spoke about the fifteen years of SASNET networking on South Asia.



### **Well-attended SASNET/UPF seminar on good and evil effects of tourism**

Nils Finn Munch-Petersen gave a SASNET/UPF seminar entitled "Who benefits from Tourism? Tourism as modern colonialism – while provider of employment and protector of nature and history" at Lund University on Tuesday 8 April 2014. Venue: Auditorium, Eden, Dept. of Political Science, Paradisgatan 5 H, Lund. The lecture was popular and well over 70 people came to listen. Munch-Petersen gave a broad picture of all the different forms of tourism one can identify, ranging from the more commonly used leisure, business, visiting friends and family, to health/medical, nature tourists, ecological tourists, historical tourist, groups tourists, religious tourism as well as bragging tourism.

### **Susan Visvanathan lectured on Gandhi and the business of weaving**



On invitation by SASNET, Susan Visvanathan, Professor of Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, held a lecture at Lund University on Friday 11 April 2014, 14.15–16.00. Venue: Dept. of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5 G, Lund. Her presentation entitled "Romain Rolland and Gandhi", focused on the way in which Khadi or homespun cloth became the symbol of the Indian Freedom Movement. Romain Rolland, who was a close friend of Madeleine Slade, sent her to Mahatma Gandhi in India.

### **Stockholm seminar on remarkably successful health care in Bangladesh**

Karolinska Institutet workshop on impressive health gains in Bangladesh. Fazole Hasan Abed, BRAC, Abbas Bhuiya, ICDDR,B, Zarina Kabir, KI. Mushtaque Chowdhury, BRAC.

The Strategic Research Programme of Care Sciences at Karolinska Institutet (KI) in Stockholm organised a high-profile seminar on "Social Justice through Health: Impressive Health Gains in Bangladesh despite Multiple Inequalities", on Monday 10 March 2014. The event was held in order to highlight the remarkable success story that characterizes the health care system in Bangladesh – despite low spending on health care, a weak health system, and widespread poverty. In November 2013, the Lancet – the world's leading general medical journal and specialty journal in Oncology, Neurology and Infectious Diseases – published an exclusive series on the issue. SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the seminar.



### **Nepal in focus for first SASA/SASNET/ABC Fika without borders event**

In the spring 2014, the South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University – the student body of SASNET – launched a new series of what is called Fika Without Borders South Asia. In collaboration with SASNET and the voluntary organisation ABC Sweden, SASA successfully organised its first Fika Without Borders gathering focusing on Nepal, on Wednesday 16 April 2014, 17.00–19.00, at the Social Sciences Students Union building, Paradisgatan 5 S, Lund (close to SASNET’s office). The programme was being planned for by Sharmin Rashid from SASA and Lars Eklund from SASNET, and included a skype onversation with a documentary film maker in Kathmandu, presentations by Rebecca Palmer from ABC on their projects in Nepal; by Leif Bjellin from the Dept. of Biology, Lund University with 40 years of experience of working in Nepal; and Hawwa Lubna from SASNET, on her Nepalese travel experiences. Nepalese food was served to the audience of about 30 people.



### **SASNET/SASA seminar on the struggle for Azadi in Kashmir**

Assistant Professor Farrukh Faheem from the South Asia Centre for Studies in Conflict Peace and Human Security, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, India, held an interesting SASNET lecture at Lund University on Tuesday 22 April 2014, 15.15–17.00. He spoke about "Understanding Struggle for Azadi in Kashmir: Interrogating the Ordinary", based on his own research and fieldwork in Kashmir. The seminar was co-organised by the South Asian Students Association (SASA) and the School of Social Work, Lund University. Venue: Room 12, School of Social Work, 1st floor, Bredgatan 26, Lund.

Dr. Faheem’s research mainly focused on Identity politics, Political Mobilization, Religious Nationalism, and Community Development, with a focus on Jammu and Kashmir. In his presentation, he discussed the fact that Kashmir as a disputed territory presents itself as a space and the site of contestations between India, Pakistan and its inhabitants.



### **Report from LSE workshop on Inequality and Poverty in South Asia**

The Inequality and Poverty Research Programme in the Department of Anthropology at London School of Economics



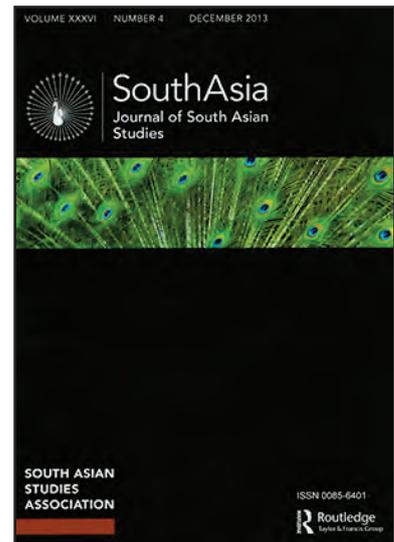
(LSE) organized a workshop on 'Inequality and Poverty in South Asia' on 24–25 April 2014. The workshop marked the research that is about to be carried out, over the next three years, by a team of researchers on the persistence of poverty amongst Adivasis and Dalits in India. The Research Programme is funded by major awards from the UK Economic and Social Research Council and the EU European Research Council Starting Grant. SASNET was represented in London by its former director Professor Staffan Lindberg.

## Anna Lindberg articles on dowry practices in Kerala published in South Asia journals

SASNET director Anna Lindberg analyses the hotly-contested issue of dowry in a recently published article in the peer reviewed magazine *Journal of South Asian Studies*, No 1/2014. In the article, entitled "The Historical Roots of Dowry in Kerala", she traces the dowry practices over a century from traditional explanations to its current rationale in Kerala.

Anna Lindberg defended her doctoral dissertation, "Experience and Identity: A Historical Account of Class, Caste, and Gender among the Cashew Workers of Kerala, 1930-2000" at Lund University in 2001, but has later focused her research on changing marriage traditions in South India, especially dowry traditions. In the new article, Anna describes how dowry payments from the family of the bride to that of the groom were rarely encountered in Kerala during the early twentieth century, but are now almost universal.

Soon after, another scholarly article by Anna was published by the *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)*, in its April 26, 2014, issue. The article is entitled "Child Marriage in Late Travancore. Religion, Modernity and Change", and examines the child marriage system in Travancore – a princely state in Kerala before Independence – in the 1930s and 1940s finds that advocacy of child marriage has not been limited to communities considered traditional.



## Swedish MD behind Indian IT Software company visited SASNET



On 30 April 2014, Mikael Gislén, Managing Director of Chennai based Gislén Software Pvt. Ltd, visited SASNET's office in Lund, meeting with deputy director Lars Eklund. Mikael has been living in India since 1994, when he established his IT business company that works with Swedish/Nordic clients such as Sifo, Scandinavian Airlines, ABB and Swedish Match. The company now has 50 employees, out of which 40 p.c. are women.

## MAY 2014

### Nordic Centre in India consortium general assembly meeting in Gothenburg

On Monday 19 May 2014, the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) consortium held its yearly general assembly meeting in Gothenburg.



The consortium consists of 17 member universities in the Nordic countries (6 in Sweden, 2 in Norway, 3 in Denmark, 5 in Finland, 1 in Iceland, plus NIAS in Copenhagen), with an aim to promote cooperation in research and higher education between the Nordic countries and India. SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund attended the meeting as a representative of Lund University.

### SASNET involved in discussions on Lund/Copenhagen collaboration

On 13 May 2014, Olle Frödin, SASNET deputy director in charge of research collaboration, and Axel Fredholm from the Department of Sociology, Lund University, went to Copenhagen to meet with Assistant Professor Manpreet Kaur Janeja at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, Copenhagen University. Their aim was to discuss various cooperation strategies with regard to teaching and seminar activities.

### Meeting on NIAS and SASNET technical collaboration

Since 2011, SASNET collaborates with the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen on web site maintenance and development, both partners using the same technical content management system (CMS) entitled Drupal. The collaboration facilitates exchange of news material and development of new functions. On 20 May 2014, Inga-Lill Blomkvist, NIAS Librarian & Web coordinator, and Bernd T Wunsch, student assistant at NIAS library and a Drupal expert, visited SASNET's office in Lund. They met with Lars Eklund and Linda Hiltmann, being in charge of the web portal at SASNET, to discuss joint technical issues, with a clear intention to continue the formal collaboration for the coming year.



### Indian culture in focus for second SASA/SASNET Fika without borders event



The South Asian Student Association (SASA at Lund University – the student body of SASNET – successfully organised its second informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Wednesday 21 May 2014, 17.00–19.00.



More than 40 people came to participate and take part of the varied programme, that included a presentation by Inayar Singh Kakar, M.A in Social Work & Public Health on "The impact of culture on the reproductive health of women", based on fieldwork in Vijaynagar slums in Mumbai.

This was followed by three Scandinavian students, Laura Heiberg, Maria Hansson Aspman and Malin Olofsson, board members of the Landskrona based NGO named Nimba, that supports development projects in India. After these presentations, focus for this second event shifted over to culture.

Bharata Natyam dancer Shivapriya Bagchi from Kolkata on a short Sweden tour gave a performance; Mr. S M Shakil and Annwesh Mukherjee sang a couple of songs by Lalou Fakir; and finally the International Tagore Choir led by Bubu Munshi Eklund gave an appreciated programme of popular songs by the Indian/Bengali Nobel Laureate.

### Doctoral dissertation about working unmarried women in Sri Lanka

Malin Jordal from International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), Department of Women's and Children's Health, Uppsala University, defended her doctoral dissertation on "Living Up to the Ideal of Respectability: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Implications for Unmarried Migrant Workers, Single Mothers, and Women in Prostitution in Sri Lanka" on Friday 23 May 2014.

Since SASNET has had frequent contacts with the IMCH at Uppsala University for many years, including co-organising a workshop on Women and Migration in Sri Lanka in 2009, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund attended Malin's dissertation. There he met so many networking partners not only from IMCH itself and Uppsala University – including Pia Olsson, Birgitta Essén, and Marie Klingberg Allvin – but also researchers within the field of health at other Swedish universities such as Katarina Swahnberg from Linnaeus University campus Kalmar. The guests of honour included Prof. Kumudu Wijewardena from University of Colombo, Malin's supervisor in Sri Lanka, and former member of SASNET's South Asian Reference Group that existed till 2010. Besides, Lars also met many of the international PhD candidates affiliated to IMCH on sandwich programmes, not the least from India. Among them Mandira Paul, Paridhi Jha and Soorej Jose Puthoopparambil.



### SASNET Seminar on Caste-based sexual violence in India

On 26 May 2014 Asha Kowtal, the General Secretary of the All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (All India Dalit Women's Rights Forum), and Thenmozhi Soundararajan, documentary filmer, gave a SASNET seminar on the struggle to demand accountability and justice for the victims of caste-based sexual violence in India.



### Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences Swedish representative visited SASNET



On 27 May 2014, Emelie Mahanandia von Schedvin visited SASNET's office in Lund, and met Lars Eklund and Linda Hiltmann. Being the Swedish representative and Programme Manager of the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in Odisha State, India, Emelie is responsible to build up cooperation with external partners such as universities and other organisations and educational institutions such as SASNET.

### SASNET seminar on the Future of Afghanistan after 2014

On Tuesday 27 May 2014, 17–19, Anders Fänge held a SASNET seminar about the present situation and future challenges in Afghanistan. It was co-organised by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA). The seminar was entitled "Will Afghanistan be forgotten by the world?", and dealt with what will happen in Afghanistan after 2014, when the international military combat forces have left the country; the civil war continues; the development assistance decreases; and a new president is elected? It is certainly bound to be a future with many severe problems for an ill-fated Afghan people, but Fänge also pointed out some possible signs of hope.



## JUNE 2014

### Dige Pedersen and Kenneth Nielsen held SASNET seminar on India under Modi

SASNET organized a seminar on "Uncertain Future for Modi's India", in Lund on Tuesday 3 June 2014. It focused on Narendra Modi's victory in the Indian elections, and what the political and economical outcome will be of the election results. These two



aspects were discussed by two leading Scandinavian scholars in the field, namely Jørgen Dige Pedersen from University of Aarhus, and Kenneth Bo Nielsen from the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) in Oslo. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Dept. of Political Science, Lund University, and was chaired by Prof. Catarina Kinnvall. Venue: Edens hörsal, Paradisgatan 5 H, Lund.

### Third SASNET/SASA Fika without borders event focused on Pakistan

The South Asian Student Association at Lund University (SASA) – the student body of SASNET – organised its third informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Thursday 5 June 2014, 17.00–19.00. The theme country for this month's event was Pakistan, and the event drew a mixed crowd of Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Nepalese and other international Lund



University students and researchers. Presentations were given by Haseeb Tariq, who participated in the Social Innovation in a Digital Context (SIDC) programme at Lund University last year, and now runs a non-profit business promoting Pakistani products; and by Fatima Tanveer, Gender Studies student who introduced the audience on Pakistani popular music from Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's Qawwali to the modern pop scene of recent decades. Hafiz Abdul Azeem, PhD candidate in Analytical Chemistry, sang a few Pakistani songs with a clear voice, and Zubair Warsi from the Urdu Academy in Lund made the evening complete by reciting beautiful Urdu poetry.

### Long-time Bangladeshi and Swedish research partners visited SASNET

On 10 June 2014, Professor Shariff Enamul Kabir, former Vice Chancellor at Jahangirnagar University in Savar, Bangladesh, visited SASNET's office in Lund, together with his research partner at Lund University – Professor Ebbe Nordlander at the Division of Chemical Physics, Department of Chemistry to update SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund on their plans for continued collaboration projects. Kabir and Nordlander have been involved in research collaboration since 2003, and are focusing on hydrodesulfurization processes. In 2009 they were awarded a SASNET planning grant for a research project titled "Modelling of hydrodesulfurization reactions and development of new molecular hydrodesulfurization catalyst".





### **SASNET June 2014 Research Workshop on Culture, Technology and Development**

SASNET successfully organised an inter-disciplinary research workshop on "South Asia: Culture, Technology and Development 13 – 15 June 2014 in Höllviken, south of Malmö. Young scholars and researchers presented their papers in this workshop bridging the gap between Nordic researchers in various disciplines working on South Asia. The workshop was co-organized by the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) university consortium, and the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, and was divided into three main thematic sessions: Session A: Methods, Fieldwork and Ethics in the South Asian context; Session B: Culture, Religion and Technology in South Asia; and Session C: Theory, Practice and Development in South Asia.

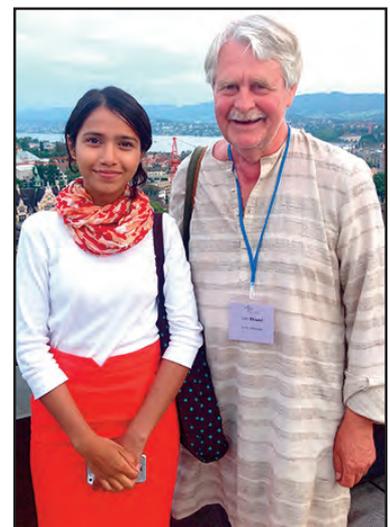
Three eminent South Asia researchers gave keynote speeches at the workshop, namely Prof. Kirin Narayan and Dr. Assa Doron, both from the Australian National University (ANU) (photo to the right); and Prof. Ursula Rao, Director of the Institute of Anthropology at University of Leipzig, Germany. A clear goal of the workshop discussions was to create strong academic cooperation on South Asia between different disciplines in the form of joint publications or new research projects. Around 40 applicants whose abstracts were accepted participated in the workshop.

## **JULY – AUGUST 2014**

### **SASNET reports from 23rd European Conference on South Asian Studies in Zurich**

The 23rd European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) was successfully held 23 – 26 July 2014 at the University of Zurich in Switzerland. It consisted of 51 panels, focusing on diverse issues ranging from "Video varieté: the cultures and forms of new visual media in South Asia", to "Mafia(s) and politics in South Asia".

The hosts for the 23rd ECSAS were the Department of Geography and the University Research Priority Program (URPP) Asia and Europe, both at the University of Zurich, operating under the auspices of the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS). SASNET was represented at the 2014 conference in Zurich by Lars Eklund and Hawwa Lubna. Lars Eklund wrote a detailed personal report from the four-day conference, and Hawwa Lubna made a complimentary conference report.



### **Ravinder Kaur lectured at 27th Nordic Sociology conference in Lund**

The Nordic Sociological Association held its 27th conference in Lund on 14–16 August 2014. The conference, entitled "Exploring Blind Spots", was organized and hosted by the Department of Sociology at Lund University. It focused on the present age of accelerating and transforming social change, and one plenary session was dedicated to the theme "Asian Encounters – Exposing or Creating Blind Spots?", including papers dealing with South Asia. SASNET was partly involved in the conference planning through the invitation of one of the eminent international plenary speakers, Professor Ravinder Kaur from the Department of Humanities and Social Science at Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD).



### **TISS Programme Coordinator scholarship holder to Lund University**

On 20 August 2014, Jennifer Mujawar, Programme Coordinator at the International Students Office, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India, visited SASNET's office in Lund. She was accompanied by Henrik Hofvendahl, Program Officer at the Strategic Partnerships and Networks, Division of External Relations, Lund University, and they met Lars Eklund, Anna Lindberg and Linda Hiltmann from SASNET.

Ms. Mujawar was staying for a month at Lund University as a scholarship holder through the EMINTE (Erasmus Mundus India To Europe) Scholarship Programme, one of the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 Partnership programmes decided upon by the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in July 2013. EMINTE is a consortium consisting of 20 universities, 10 European and 10 Indian, and being coordinated by Lund University. The European partners include Uppsala University, and SASNET is an Associate partner. The mobility programme is now running, and altogether 10 scholarship holders are coming from India to Lund during the academic year 2014/15 (two each for masters programmes, PhD programmes and postdoc fellowships, plus four academic staff)..



### **SASNET attended breakfast meeting with Swedish Ambassador to India**

In collaboration with the Swedish Embassy in New Delhi, and Business Sweden, Sweden India Business Council (SIBC) organised a series of breakfast seminars with Sweden's Ambassador to India, Mr. Harald Sandberg, together with Ms. Fredrika Ornbrant, Swedish Consul General in Mumbai; and the Trade Commissioner Ms. Anna Liberg.

The seminars were entitled "Narendra Modi – the first 100 days", and were held in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö (on Friday 22 August).

SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund attended the Malmö seminar, along with a fairly big crowd of Swedish business people involved in India related business, and members of the Indian community in Malmö/Lund. The main attraction was of course the speech by the Ambassador, who happens to be Sweden's high representative not only to India but also to Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka. Harald Sandberg has a good knowledge of the economic and political development in India, and his presentation about the new government in India and its policies was most informative.



#### Fourth SASNET/SASA Fika without borders event focused on Maldives

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its fourth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Tuesday 26 August 2014.

The theme country for this month's event was Maldives, and included a talk by Ushau Mohamed, COO at Commerce, Development and Environment (CDE) consulting firm in Maldives. His talk focused on the economy of Maldives, with an analysis of recent economic growth trends and existing challenges. Ushau's talk was complimented by SASA's Chairperson Hawwa Lubna, who is also from Maldives and studying Development Studies at Lund University (and also working as communications assistant at SASNET). She explained the political economy of the country, where few rich businessmen from the tourism sector is heavily involved in running the state and legislative body. She pointed out the segregation of resort islands and local islands, which have deprived the locals from sharing the tourism wealth.

Although the presentations from the two Maldivian touched on serious issues, the energy at the fika remained positive with lively discussions, some music and Maldivian food. The programme also included a slide show by SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund with photos from his official visits to the country in 2002 and 2009.



## SEPTEMBER 2014

#### Indian film studies researcher scholarship holder at Lund University

On 1 September 2014, PhD candidate Sanchari De from the Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University in Kolkata, India, visited SASNET's office in Lund and met Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund. Sanchari spends the full academic year 2014/15 at Lund University's Department of Communication and Media (KOM), being an Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder through the EMINTE Indo-European mobility programme.

Her research interest is related to digital media, political mobilization and information aesthetics, and during her mobility period in Sweden she will give guest lectures related to Indian media and film, digital media and political engagement, and write two chapters of her thesis focusing on the Shahbagh movement in Bangladesh, in particular on how the activists make use of new digital media.



### SASNET organized Sarod concert with Somjit Dasgupta at Lund Culture Night



On invitation by SASNET, Sarod musician Somjit Dasgupta from Kolkata, India, performed at the Lund Culture Night 2014, on Saturday 20 September in the Auditorium, Main university building, Universitetsplatsen, Lund. He gave a lecture with photos and drawings on old traditional Indian musical instruments. He then gave a much appreciated concert of Sarod recitals.

### SASNET meeting with researchers at Lund University's Faculty of Engineering

Since SASNET is fully funded by Lund University, the focus for its activities rests a bit more on promoting South Asia related research and education in Lund. As part of this strategy, the SASNET staff members currently organise informal meetings with researchers in various fields to discuss what they would like SASNET to do for them. One such meeting was held at the Faculty of Engineering (LTH) on 22 September 2014 where Lars Eklund and Hawwa Lubna from SASNET met a number of researchers within technology and natural sciences – researchers strongly involved in South Asia related research and/or research collaboration. They were Prof. Gunnar Lidén, Department of Chemical Engineering; Dr. Santosh Jagtap, School of Industrial Design; Professor emeritus Baboo Nair, Division of Applied Nutrition and Food Chemistry; Professor Ebbe Nordlander, Division of Chemical Physics. The meeting was kindly arranged with support from the International Office at LTH.



### Presentation by Thomas Bibin at SASA/SASNET seminar on Sri Lanka

The South Asian Student Association at Lund University organised its fifth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Tuesday 23 September 2014. The theme country for this month's event was Sri Lanka, and featured a presentation by Thomas Bibin, well-known Swedish Radio journalist now living in Halmstad, with 40 years experience of Srilankan politics and development and with a unique



insight regarding the Tamilian issue. His presentation was entitled "Some aspects to the problem of Monotheism in a Multiethnic and Multilingual Country". Another journalist, Kenneth Carlsson, who is the editor of the Lund University students union newspaper Lundagård, also participated with a presentation focusing on the issue of identity, drawing on his personal experiences growing up in Sweden with a mixed origin, as a half Swede, half Srilankan.

In connection with the Sri Lanka seminar, a new board for SASA was elected for the academic year 2014/2015. The new board consists of the following three Lund University students: Jacco Visser, Rubana Mussharat Priyanka and Noshan Bhattarai.

### **Nishi Mitra discussed extended collaboration between Lund University and TISS**

On Monday 29 September 2014, SASNET arranged a networking meeting between Associate Professor Nishi Mitra from the Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, India, with a number of Lund University representatives. Dr. Mitra had come to Lund as a scholarship holder through the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 programme EMINTE, coordinated by Lund University, to stay for one month, being affiliated to the Law and Vulnerabilities research group at the Faculty of Law.

The meeting discussed the possibilities to establish an extended academic partnership between Lund University and TISS for developing a Gender and Human Rights International Certificate or Diploma programme through the Linneaus Palme exchange programme, as well as organizing joint conferences on the theme of domestic violence. This latter theme is an

international issue with growing attention, both noticed within the human rights field as well in the interest of the students.

Besides Anna Lindberg, Linda Hiltmann and Lars Eklund from SASNET, the meeting was attended by Ulrika Andersson from the Faculty of Law; Rolf Ring from the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI); and Jan Magnusson and Cecilia Heule from the School of Social Work. The meeting agreed to aim to hand in an Linneaus Palme application later this year. During her stay in Lund, Nishi Mitra also met with Prof. Helle Rydstöm from the Dept. of Gender Studies, and Prof. Catarina Kinnvall from Political Science to discuss the possible cooperation from these departments as well.



## **OCTOBER 2014**

### **Stockholm University researcher in International Education visited SASNET**

Khaleda Gani Dutt from the Institute of International Education (IIE) at Stockholm University visited SASNET on Monday 6 October 2014. Khaleda is a PhD candidate at IIR, one of the few institutes in the Nordic countries specializing in International and Comparative Education, and had been granted a one-month NIAS-SUPRA scholarship to spend time at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies in Copenhagen. Being so close by Lund, she also used the opportunity to visit SASNET, where she had a meeting with deputy director Lars Eklund. Khaleda with a background from Jadavpur University in Kolkata, is working on a thesis project entitled "Education for Rural Transformation – Gender Equality Matters! Comparative Case Studies in India", focusing on inaccessibility to primary education arising out of poverty, accentuated by gender constraints manifest in societal constructs.

Khaleda participated in SASNET's first Falsterbo conference for young Nordic South Asian studies scholars, held in August 2009.



### Excellent interview with Hawwa Lubna on her Maldivian background

"During her childhood she longed to go somewhere else. Today, she is working to change the place she once tried to get away from. The journalist Lubna Hawwa from The Maldives is studying in Lund with a set goal to be able to return home." This is the introduction to an excellent interview with SASNET's communications assistant Lubna. The article, entitled "A One-Way Ticket from Paradise" was written by Tove Nordén and was published in the Lund University Students Union magazine Lundagård on 5 October 2014. Photo by Daniel Kodipelli.



### NCI chairperson Rupali Bhalerao visited SASNET to discuss collaboration

Dr. Rupali Bhalerao, analyst at Umeå University's Planning Office, and chairperson of the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) university consortium, visited Lund University and SASNET on 8 October 2014. A meeting was organised with Lars Eklund, Anna Lindberg, Olle Frödin and Linda Hiltmann of SASNET, to discuss possible forms of strengthening the already existing collaboration between NCI and SASNET. Joint conferences, and collaboration on educational programmes in South Asia were issues on the agenda.



### SASNET event to promote Surinder Jodhka's new book on the Indian caste system

SASNET organized a book release function at Lund University on Wednesday 8 October 2014, launching the latest work by eminent Indian sociologist Surinder S. Jodhka from the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. The new book is entitled "Caste in Contemporary India" and deals with contemporary realities of caste in rural and urban India. A large gathering of Lund University professors and students attended the function. Prof. Jodhka was introduced by Prof. Thomas Bergström, Dept. of Political Science, and Dr. Anna Lindberg, SASNET.



### **SASA/SASNET Fika without borders seminar on Afghanistan**

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) successfully organised its sixth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Friday 10 October 2014, 17–19. The theme country for this month's event was Afghanistan, and it drew a large audience. At the Afghanistan fika, the focus lay on the question of Afghanistan's future, and included talks by Fawad



Sultani, deputy programme director for the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) based in Kabul, and former Manager of SCA Anders Fänge. They gave excellent overviews of Afghanistan's political development from 1977 onwards up to the recent presidential elections. SASA's former chairperson Hawwa Lubna and the new chairperson Jacco Visser were the hosts for the evening, and as usual the event included socializing in a friendly atmosphere and eating good food from the the region, this time Punjabi Restaurant in Lund.

### **David Satterthwaite held SASNET lecture on Urbanisation and Environment**

David Satterthwaite, Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in London, UK, held a SASNET lecture on "Urbanisation and Environment" at Lund University on Thursday 16 October 2014. The first part of the seminar, a formal lecture, was held at Palaestra auditorium, but for the last half an hour the seminar was shifted over to the Dept. of Sociology building not far off for a more informal discussion. Around 50 people turned up for the seminar, students and professors from several Lund University departments. The lecture was the first in a new international seminar series introduced by SASNET. The series is entitled Structural Transformation, Urbanisation and the Challenge of Sustainability. The seminar series focuses broadly on issues relating to contemporary transformations in South Asia with specific reference to urbanization.



### **SASNET/UPF seminar on Exclusive or Inclusive Human Rights in India**

Professor Asha Mukherjee from the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan, India, held a joint SASNET/UPF seminar on "Human Rights in India: Exclusive or Inclusive?" in Lund on Thursday 16 October 2014, 19–21. Venue for the seminar: Café Athen, Akademiska Föreningen (AF), Sandgatan 2, Lund. Asha Mukherjee was at the time being a guest professor at the University of Gothenburg, that has a partnership relation to Visva Bharati University in Santiniketan.



### Winnie Bothe and Johan Westman participated in SASA/SASNET Bhutan seminar

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its seventh informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Thursday 30 October 2014, 17–19. Venue: Basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. In this Fika Without Borders Bhutan's development model of 'Gross National Happiness' and the nation's political order were explored with the help of Dr. Winnie Bothe from the Dept. of Political Science, Lund University. She provided insights in the Bhutanese development model by illustrating how local governance does not necessarily promote empowered citizens which Western donors imagine, rather the model may function as a channel for disciplining citizens to become bearers of an imagined civilizational culture.

In addition there was a cultural programme. A live Skype connection was established with Swedish ethnomusicologist Johan Westman, living permanently in Thimphu. He introduced a number of Bhutanese musicians who gave samples of their traditional folk music on various instruments and representing different parts of the country.



### Anna Lindberg lectured at CREST in Kozhikode

On Friday 31 October 2014, SASNET Director Anna Lindberg visited the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation (CREST) in Kozhikode – a city formerly called Calicut – in Kerala state,



India. CREST has a mission to train Indian students who already have Masters degrees in various academic disciplines, and they also learn practical and social skills that will help them enter the job market.

Anna lectured to the students on Globalization and Migration, with examples taken from Europe, the Gulf countries, and India. Her talk was attended by 33 Indian students, as well as two interns from Argentina and the Czech Republic, and staff of CREST. Since students selected to the CREST program are always keen and alert, they took part in the discussion and showed what an engaged group they were.

On the following day, staff from CREST accompanied Anna to a village in the mountains of the neighbouring Wayanad district. Here an organisation named Kabani has worked with eco-tourism and rural development for the past ten years.

## NOVEMBER 2014

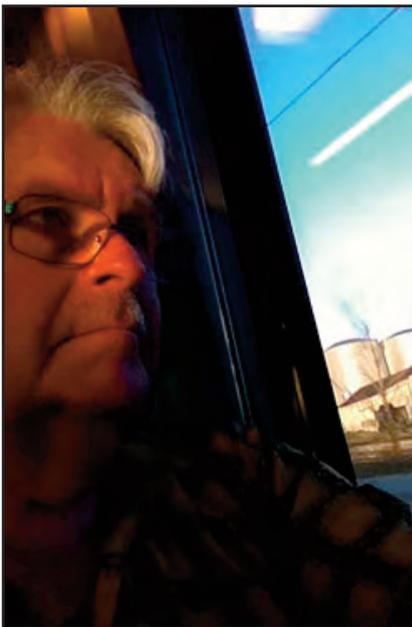
### European Association for South Asian Studies Council meeting in Vienna

On 3 November 2014, the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS) Council met in Vienna, Austria. It was the first meeting for the new board that was elected during the 23rd European Conference on South Asian Studies in Zurich, Switzerland, 23-26 July 2014.

The new EASAS council has been elected for the period 2014-2016. The President is Professor Martin Gaenzsle from the Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna, and the Vice-President is Professor Alessandra Consolaro from Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici at Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy. The third and final office bearer position, as Treasurer, is held by Lars Eklund, and he was of course participating in the meeting. At the November 2014 meeting in Vienna, it was formally decided that the 2015 EASAS PhD workshop will be hosted by SASNET/Lund University.



### SASNET report from South Asia institutes in Vienna, Prague and Heidelberg



In the first week of November 2014, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund made a tour to visit three European South Asia institutes – in Vienna, Prague and Heidelberg. The first stop was the Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies (ISTB) of the University of Vienna, where he met Martin Gaenzsle, Professor for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Modern South Asia, being in charge of the South Asia section of the Institute. Lars also met the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Professor Anirudh Deshpande from the Dept. of History at Delhi University, staying at the University of Vienna during the fall semester 2014. Deshpande is a well-reputed and knowledgeable researcher focusing on Indian colonial history.

Next stop was the Institute of South and Central Asia at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, where Lars met Professor Jaroslav Vacek, a well-known researcher of Indology and Indian languages, and Dr. Zdeněk Štipl. The

institute has been deeply affected by the political changes during the 20th century. After the Soviet invasion 1968, most prominent professors left the country for exile and repressive measures were introduced at the institute. However, after another 30 years the situation again changed with the 1989 velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia. Prof. Jaroslav Vacek was again allowed to build up the institute to retain its former glory. The research work today focuses on South Asian languages, literatures and rituals.

Final stop was the South Asia Institute (SAI) at University of Heidelberg, for a long time being Europe's leading research centre for South Asian studies. SAI has seven separate departments, each with a strong research profile, and with professors that are internationally well-recognised authorities in their respective fields. The host for the visit was Professor Subrata Mitra at the Department of Political Science, a leading specialist on South Asian politics, just about to retire. Lars was also introduced to Dr. Martin Giesselmann, the person in charge of the web site of SAI and its newsletters.

### SASNET seminar on Child Labour and Child Protection in India

Mr. Vidyasagar Ramamurthy from the UNICEF Office for the Indian states of Tamil Nadu & Kerala in Chennai, held a SASNET guest lecture on Friday 7 November 2014, 13.15–15.00. He spoke about "Child protection in India – with a focus on Child



Labour". The seminar was co-organized by the School of Social Work and the Dept. of Sociology at Lund University. Venue: Room M 128, Allhelgona Kyrkogata 14 (the Gender Studies building), Lund. Vidyasagar has been working on the issues of child protection for the past 25 years with various organizations, including ILO, UNICEF, Ministry of Labour (V V Giri National Labour Institute), and the National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, run by Government of India and the state Government of Tamil Nadu. He has worked with UNICEF for more than 15 years including service in the South Asia Regional Office, Bangladesh, and in different states of India. In addition to this he has also worked on agrarian issues in various Indian and Swedish research projects.

### Ursula Rao held SASNET lecture on Urban Spaces in India

Professor Ursula Rao, Director of the Institute of Anthropology at University of Leipzig, Germany, gave a SASNET lecture entitled "Local Bodies/Global Cities" on Thursday 13 November 2014, 13.15–15.00. The lecture, based on case studies in Delhi, was held at the Department of Sociology, Lund University. The lecture was the second in a new international seminar series introduced by SASNET. The series is entitled Structural Transformation, Urbanisation and the Challenge of Sustainability. In her SASNET presentation she used data from case studies carried out in Indian metropolis of Delhi to discuss acute negotiations about the meaning and experience of urban citizenship in a post-2010 environment, when investment friendly politics meets a growing concern for social welfare and inclusive growth.



### Anna Lindberg lectured at partner university in Thiruvananthapuram

In mid-November 2014, SASNET Director Anna Lindberg visited University of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram, holding seminars and meeting students and faculty from the departments of Political Science, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Bio-informatics, and Journalism. Among others, she met with Professor Meena Pillai from Cultural Studies; Professor J. Prabash from Dept. of Political Science; Professor Sobha B. Nair and Dr. Pushpam from Dept. of Sociology; and Dr. Harikumar from Dept. of Journalism.



Anna held a lecture on "Gender and Kerala Modernity" that resulted in a lively discussion among the many students and staff members from different departments in attendance. In 2008, Lund University and University of Kerala became partners in the first Indo-Swedish Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programme, and since then the two universities have worked closely together on a number of projects.

## SASNET report from Delhi conference on Geographies of Resistance

The Department of Geography at University of Delhi organised an International Conference on "Re Orienting Gender: Geographies of Resistance, Agency, Violence and Desire in Asia" with support from the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Gender and Geography on 19–21 November 2014. The convener was Dr. Anindita Datta. SASNET also provided some support, and was



represented at the conference by Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg, and strategic coordinator Ms. Linda Hiltmann. SASNET also supported the participation of two Lund University representatives, namely Prof. Helle Rydström from the Dept. of Gender Studies, and Prof. Catarina Kinnvall from the Dept. of Political Science.

## SASA/SASNET Fika without borders Bangladesh seminar

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its eighth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Thursday 20 November 2014.



The main speaker was Sanchari De, a PhD student from Jadavpur University in Kolkata. She spoke about the Bangladeshi protest/mass movement, Shahbagh, and the role of digital media and political mobilization in this movement that demands capital punishment for the war criminals of 1971.

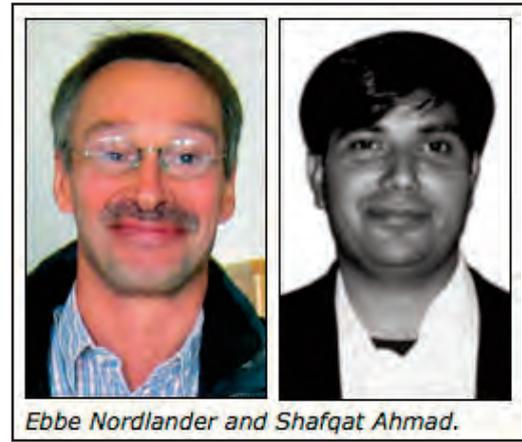
One of the SASA Board members from Bangladesh, Rubhana Mussharat, then gave a personal account of experiences from being close to the Shahbagh movement, and explaining the historical and emotional reasons behind young people in Bangladesh demanding capital punishment. This issue caused intense discussion since several people in the audience questioned the use of death penalties.

In addition, S.M. Shahriar Shakil, Research Assistant at the Faculty of Engineering, Lund University, spoke about interesting research collaboration in the field of Biotechnology between Sweden and Bangladesh. Mr. Shakil is also an excellent interpreter of traditional Baul music, and sang a number of songs by the legendary Lalon Fakir. Finally, the winner in the SASA competition for a new logotype – Aravin Chakravarthi – was given his prize. It was handed over to him by SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund.



## SASNET supports Lund University research applications with South Asia focus

In November 2014, SASNET introduced a new scheme to promote more South Asia related research at Lund University. Researchers from all faculties and all disciplines within the university can apply for a special one month position at SASNET, a position dedicated to write a research application with a South Asia focus. The first call for applications was sent out in November 2014, and the general response to this offer for researchers to get time off for writing an application ("ansökningsmånad" in Swedish) was very positive, and the following two researchers were granted SASNET research application months:



*Ebbe Nordlander and Shafqat Ahmad.*

• Professor Ebbe Nordlander from the Division of Chemical Physics, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Lund University; and • PhD Candidate Shafqat Ahmad, from the Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology (GAME) Unit at the Department of Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, Lund University. A new call for SASNET one month position to write a research application will be sent by late Spring 2015 (with a deadline for the fall semester 2015).

## India Media Project to be launched by SASNET during 2015

Funded by SASNET, Andreas Mattsson, lecturer in journalism at Department of Communication and Media at Lund University, visited several Indian media organizations and media departments during the month of November. The aim was to discuss future collaborations within the India Media Project, planned for by Andreas and Indian senior journalist Hindol Sengupta. Lars Eklund and Anna Lindberg from SASNET are also strongly involved in the project.

Andreas had a positive meeting with Mr Daniel Wolvén, Minister Counsellor & Deputy Head of Mission at the Swedish Embassy in New Delhi. He also met with Dr. Samrat S. Kumar, Director for the Nordic Centre in India university consortium, as well as a large number of journalists during his India tour.



## DECEMBER 2014

### SASNET meeting with Swedish government Expert Group for Aid Studies



On Wednesday 10 December 2014, SASNET deputy directors Olle Frödin and Lars Eklund met representatives for the Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA), set up by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early 2013.

This group has a mandate to evaluate and analyse Sweden's international development cooperation in order to improve development cooperation and to build up a long-term, high-quality knowledge-base. EBA Managing Director Sonja Daltung, and two of her colleagues – Mats Hårsmar and Jesper Sundewall visited Lund University as part of their work to find qualified academics at the Swedish universities willing to prepare analytical reports on Swedish development assistance. In Lund they visited the departments of Economics, Economic History, Political Science and Sociology, and they also set aside time to learn about SASNET and its role as a Swedish national network on South Asia related research during the past 15 years.

### SASNET student seminar on field work in South Asia

On 10 December 2014, SASNET organized an informal fieldwork seminar for bachelors and masters students at Lund University who are doing fieldwork in South Asia during the spring semester 2015. At the seminar, held at the SASNET office, Anna Lindberg gave a brief lecture on fieldwork and shared her personal experiences on doing fieldwork in South Asia. In addition, information was provided on issues such as travelling, insurance, visas and housing. Among the participants were Sixten Lundqvist, bachelors



student in Developments Studies, who will travel to Namche Bazaar in Nepal where he will do research among Sherpas and examine welfare structures, focusing particularly on the risks of being a mountain guide and the economic and social consequences may have on individuals injuries and family. Another participant, Anna Berggren is also a bachelors student in Development Studies. She will go to Mumbai, India, to do fieldwork on women's empowerment and will investigate the barriers for empowerment in micro-credit organizations. Furthermore Jacco Visser, masters student in Asian Studies, will go to Dhaka, Bangladesh to look at how rural-urban migrants are included in the global economy and how this affects how they relate to local, national and global imaginaries. SASNET will continue to provide support for these students and other students from Lund University that go to South Asia through its network in the region and with SASNET's staff experiences in the region. In addition, several students have received a travel grant through SASNET's student body SASA.

### Stockholm reception event for Nobel Peace Prize winner

To felicitate Indian child rights campaigner Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, the winner of Nobel Peace Prize for 2014, the Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison hosted a reception on Friday 12 December 2014. About 125 invited guests including prominent members of the Indian community, political and business personalities, government officials,



members of the media, and academic representatives attended the reception, among them SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. Mr. Satyarthi arrived in Stockholm from Oslo, where a few days earlier, on Wednesday 10 December, Mr. Satyarthi and Pakistani child education activist Malala Yousafzai were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2014.

# SASNET Activity Report 2015

## JANUARY 2015

### SASNET visit to University of Gothenburg

On Friday 23 January 2015 afternoon, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund visited Sahlgrenska Academy, as the Faculty of Medicine is called at University of Gothenburg, to meet some of the researchers there who are involved in South Asia related research. It was a kind of belated follow-up meeting of a SASNET visit to Sahlgrenska Academy in April 2008 (read the report from that visit).

The participants were Professor Alexandra Krettek from the Department of Internal Medicine and Clinical Nutrition, Institute of Medicine; Associate Professor Anna Lundgren from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology; and Associate Professor Sukanya Raghavan from the same department. The reason behind the visit was to present what SASNET stands for today, being a network fully funded by Lund University but still keeping the national databases on South Asia related research at all Swedish universities, and to learn from the Gothenburg researchers their current activities in order to update information on SASNET's extensive web site.



## FEBRUARY 2015

### SASNET seminar on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Sri Lanka

Dr. Malin Jordal from the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at the Department of Women's and Children's Health, Uppsala University, gave a SASNET lecture entitled "Living up to the Ideal of Respectability. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Implications for Unmarried Migrant Workers, Single Mothers, and Women in Prostitution in Sri Lanka" on Wednesday 4 February 2015. The lecture, based on her June 2014 doctoral dissertation, was held at the Department of Sociology. Dr. Jordal's PhD thesis aimed to gain a



deeper understanding of relationships and sexuality of women at risk of social exclusion in Sri Lanka and the risk of violations of their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) that they might face.

### SASA launched 2015 spring semester with Nepal fika seminar

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University held its first 2015 Fika without borders seminar – dedicated to Nepal – on Thursday 5 February 2015, at the usual venue: The basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. The event was hosted by Noshan Bhattarai and Rubana Musharrat from the SASA board, and Lars Eklund from SASNET. Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel from Kathmandu University, during the early spring 2015 based in Copenhagen as a Danida scholarship

holder and being connected to the Dept. of Education, Aarhus University, was the chief guest. 35 people came to listen to his presentation entitled "Politics of Education & Marginalized Community in Nepal". Lund University student and SASA board member Noshan Bhattarai also held an interesting presentation about his way from studying in Nepal to doing research in Sweden.

Dr. Neil Webster from Danish Institute of International Studies (DIIS), but previously for three years working as regional technical advisor with the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in Kathmandu, who happened to be in Lund on this day – invited by SASNET – made some extremely relevant comments and summaries to the two Nepalese speakers presentations. Finally the Swedish NGO ABC with work being done in Nepal presented themselves, and they also catered for the food being served.



### **NIAS meeting on the future management of SASNET's web site**



On 9 February 2015, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund visited the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, and met Inga-Lill Blomkvist, NIAS Librarian & Web coordinator, and Bernd T Wunsch, student assistant at NIAS library and its Drupal expert, The aim was to discuss joint technical issues regarding the SASNET web site management (on photo). Since 2011, SASNET collaborates with NIAS on web site maintenance and development, both partners using the same technical content management system (CMS) entitled Drupal. The collaboration has been

most fruitful and facilitated exchange of news material and development of new functions. The contract will however terminate on 31 December 2015, due to the fact that University of Copenhagen will incorporate NIAS' web site into its standardized framework which does not allow for including external partners such as SASNET.

### **Meeting at Swedish Embassy and four universities in Bangladesh**

On behalf of SASNET, Lars Eklund visited the Swedish Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 22 February 2015, and had a fruitful meeting with Ambassador Johan Frisell and the rest of his staff. There was a genuine interest from the Embassy to learn from SASNET experiences, and for SASNET an equally strong desire to connect closer to the Embassy and learn about the ongoing Swedish strategy for international development cooperation with Bangladesh for the period 2014–2020, with the following four targets: • Human Rights; • Economic Growth; • Environment and Climate Change; and • Health.

While in Dhaka, Lars also had a chance to meet a few Swedish researcher, e g Ashok Nath, at the time being a visiting senior research fellow at Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), and Roshni Kapoor, former Lund University masters student in Public Health at the Division of Social Medicine and Public Health in Malmö, now working for UN Women Bangladesh Country Office in Dhaka.



In spite of the volatile political situation in Bangladesh, with an almost continuous hartal issued by the main opposition party the BNP for over a month, and with acts of violence frequently

appearing, Lars Eklund also visited Dhaka University on Monday 23 February 2015. He was invited to participate in a Seminar on Nordic-Bangladeshi collaboration in higher education, with several of the participants connected to Lund



University, but also met the Sociology first year students. Afterwards Lars also visited three other universities in the city – Daffodil, Eastern and National universities.

## MARCH 2015

### **IIT Kharagpur hydrologist seeks to expand Swedish collaboration**

On Sunday 1 March 2015, Dr. Abhjit Mukherjee from the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur visited SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund at his Kolkata office. He came with a specific mission from Professor Siddhartha Mukhopadhyay, Dean of International Affairs at IIT Kharagpur, to discuss possibilities of finding Swedish partners for new collaboration ventures, as well as strengthening the already existing and successful Indo-Swedish collaboration project on Arsenic in Groundwater led by Prof. Prosun Bhattacharya at the Department of Land and Water Resources Engineering, KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. This project recently got a boost with a signing of an MoU between KTH, IIT Kharagpur and the West Bengal government

### **University of Manipur in search of international collaboration partners**

In early March 2015, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund visited the Indian state of Manipur, one of the landlocked northeastern Indian states, till recently restricted area for foreigners. He met researchers most interested to establish collaboration with Swedish partners. The general impression was that Manipur University is starving from a lack of international collaboration, and there is now a genuine desire to increase contacts with universities in Europe, and not the least with Sweden. It has altogether 30 departments plus a number of research centres, and with seven affiliated colleges in Manipur state.



### **Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata, and Viswa Bharati University in Shantiniketan**

While in Kolkata, Lars Eklund visited Rabindra Bharati University, founded in 1962 to mark the birth centenary of Rabindranath Tagore, and with the specific task to work for the advancement of learning and culture particularly in the branches of music, dance and drama. There he met the Vice Chancellor Professor Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury both at the university's original Jorasanko campus in central Kolkata, and at its main BT Road campus in north Kolkata. The university has three faculties, the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty

of Performing Arts and the Faculty of Visual Arts, and 29 departments on both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. 120 foreign exchange students are registered at the university, most of them coming to Kolkata through MoUs with universities in primarily Italy, China, Japan, Canada, and Germany. They discussed possibilities to establish collaboration with Swedish universities, and especially the home university of SASNET, Lund University. Besides the obvious choice to focus on the key areas within performing arts – instrumental music, sculpture, and painting – other disciplines taught at Rabindra Bharati University with a profile that easily could involve international collaboration are Political Science, Philosophy, Literature, and History.

Lars also visited the Viswa Bharati University in Shantiniketan, where he focused on Sriniketan and its Centre for Adult, Continuing Education and Extension (ACEE); and Rural Extension Centre, hosted by Prof. Asha Mukherjee.

### **SASNET visit to Jadavpur University & Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science**

Lars Eklund revisited Jadavpur University in Kolkata, a partner university in the European Commission funded Erasmus Mundus mobility programme coordinated by LU from 2008 onwards. Lars also visited the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS), a research institute located just across the road from Jadavpur University. IACS stands out being not only the oldest research institute in India but also one of its most renowned, of world class standard. It is an autonomous institute funded by the central government and devoted to the pursuit of fundamental research in the frontier areas of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Energy, Polymer and Materials. In each field, IACS nurtures young and innovative research fellows in their doctoral programmes. A total number of 400 researchers, including PhDs and Post-docs, work at IACS. Lars Eklund had been invited to visit IACS by Professor Samaresh Bhattacharya and Dr. Reena Singh, who are connected with Professor Ebbe Nordlander at the Dept. of Chemical Physics at Lund University. This collaboration has grown out of the Erasmus Mundus programme mentioned above, and is progressing.



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### **Aradhna Aggarwal lectured at Fika without borders India seminar**

The second SASA 2015 Fika without borders seminar was held on Thursday 19 March 2015. It was dedicated to India, and the main presentation was delivered by Aradhna Aggarwal, new Chair professor in Indian Studies at the Asia Research Centre (ACR) within the Copenhagen Business School (CBS). Her presentation was entitled "From SAFTA to South Asian Economic Union: Prospects and Challenges" and was highly appreciated by the audience. The programme also included a cultural programme in the form of a rabindrasangheet session by Bubu Munshi Eklund. Besides delicious home-made Indian food – aloo dum, ghugni chaat and fried rice was served.



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### **Neil Webster and Pamela Price present SASNET external evaluation report**

In order to plan to plan for its future activities after 31 December 2015, and deliver a budget, 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 – carried out an Evaluation of SASNET activities and operation from January 2013 till March 2015.



During one month, February-March 2015, they 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 argued 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 suggested 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.

### **SASNET research seminar on Governance of Nepal's Labour Migration**

SASNET held an open research seminar Monday 23 March with Dr. Uddhab Pd. Pyakurel from School of Arts, Kathmandu University, Nepal, and Professor Catarina Kinnvall from the Department of Political Science at Lund University. The researchers discussed a paper titled Governance of Nepal's Labour Migration that Dr. Pyakurel is currently working on during his guest research at Copenhagen University. The seminar was held at the Department of Sociology.

## **APRIL 2015**

### **SASNET lecture on changing food traditions among Bengali middle-classes**



Dr. Manpreet K. Janeja, Assistant Professor at the Department of Cross-Cultural Studies and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen gave a SASNET lecture entitled "Anxious Hearths and Risky Meals – Re-imagining Domesticity in a South Asian Worlding City" on Wednesday 8 April 2015. The lecture was held at the Department of Sociology. This lecture focused on re-imagining domesticity in contemporary urban formations through the aesthetics of food in a 'worlding' city. Taking the meal as the fulcrum of much activity in Bengali Hindu daily life in Kolkata in the Indian state of West Bengal, it traces the vicissitudes of what emerges as constantly negotiable but contested normal home food.

Manpreet examines the relatively new phenomenon of cooks from cooking bureaus working in households in the upper echelons of the Bengali middle-classes, and highlights how food mediates the strategic and ambivalent negotiations they all engage in.

In the process, it renders visible the dynamics of (dis)trust, risk, and uncertainty in which these contextual culinary engagements are entangled. In doing so, it illuminates the manner in which food-ways in a state of flux are reconfiguring forms of domesticity and belonging in a South Asian city caught in the throes of redefining itself.

### 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 Medicon 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.



### Thomas Blom Hansen lectured 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. 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.

### SASNET co-organised Bangladesh workshop in Copenhagen

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. 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'.



*Willem van Schendel and Lotte Hoek*

## MAY 2015

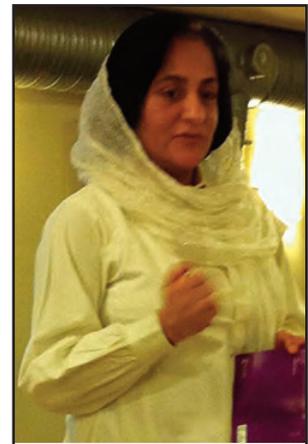
### SASNET lecture on remixed histories and smart images in post-exotic India



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. She talked about "Post-exotic India On Remixed Histories and Smart Images". Venue: Department of Sociology. 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.

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

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University organised its third 2015 Fika without borders seminar on Thursday 7 May 2015. It was dedicated to Pakistan, and two interesting presentations on Sufi tradition in South Asia were 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. Besides, Talat Bhat made a short presentation about his new film on Kashmir, "Bring him back". Delicious South Asian food was also served.



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

SASNET, in collaboration with Lund University's Human Geography Department organised a seminar with renown development scholar Dr. Vandana Desai on the topic of her recent paper entitled "Slum Speculation and Ageing in India". The lecture was held on Tuesday 19 May 2015 at Geocentrum 1 (room: Världen on the ground floor), Solvegatan 10. Dr. Desai is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at the Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London. Her presentation was based on 64 ethnographic interviews with older women in a north-east Mumbai slum.

### SASNET participated in student seminar on Indian film at Lund University

In early May 2015, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund and former director Staffan Lindberg were involved in a seminar series on Indian film at the Lund University Film Studies department, part of the Centre for Languages and Literature. They were invited by Professor Lars Gustaf Andersson and Associate Professor Anders Marklund to engage with the

students at the department and talk about their experiences of Indian film over a century, and explain cultural phenomena interwoven into both mainstream Bollywood film as well as the highly sophisticated parallel Indian cinema. A number of films had been selected as examples to study, including Rajkumar Hirani's "3 Idiots" from 2009, Deepa Mehta's "Fire" from 1996, and Mrinal Sen's "Ek Din Achanak" from 1979.

### **SASNET hosted Ninth EASAS PhD workshop in Falsterbo**

On behalf of the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS), SASNET successfully hosted the Ninth European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies in Höllviken, south of Malmö, Sweden, on 18–19 May 2015. This was 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. The workshop was divided into three parallel sessions. Dr. Jayakumari Devika from Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram, India, held a keynote speech on "The 2014 Kiss of Love Protest", and how this non-violent protest against moral policing which started in Kerala, later spread to other parts of India .

### **Successful three-day conference on Structural Transformation of South Asia**

More than 70 researchers from Europe and South Asia turned up for a successful SASNET three-day international conference on the structural transformation of South Asia being held in Lund 20–22 May 2015. The conference was entitled "South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, labour, and family changes in a dynamic region", and consisted of seven panels, each one led by eminent researchers.



The theme of the panels varied 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".

The networking was intense with a large contingent of young, promising researchers from South Asia – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan – presenting their papers along with Scandinavian colleagues. SASNET had given travel grants to no less than 30 young South Asian researchers.

The purpose of the conference was 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.

### Public SASNET keynote lectures at May conference

During SASNET's three-day international conference the four keynote lectures were open to the public. They were held in Nya Festsalen at the Academic Union Building (AF) in central Lund. 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 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 gave a SASNET lecture at Lund University on Monday 25 May 2015. The seminar, entitled "Life skills education and livelihoods trainings for girls in Afghanistan: What difference do they make in their lives?" was organised in collaboration with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in Lund. The Adolescent Reading Centres (ARCs) is a programme 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. Dr. Echavez came to Sweden primarily to attend the SASNET conference on South Asia in Transformation, where she chaired one of the seven panels.

### China based researcher on EU-India relations visited SASNET

Dr. Madhusudan Chaubey from the School of International Studies at Renmin University of China in Beijing made a courtesy call to SASNET on Tuesday 26 May 2015. He was accompanied by Prof. Staffan Lindberg, former SASNET director, with whom he has a long-standing academic relation since the early 1990s. After studying Political Science at Delhi University, Madhusudan Chaubey moved to China 20 years ago to complete his PhD at Renmin University, and he has remained there ever since. Currently Chaubey is doing research on EU-India relations, and the reason for his ongoing tour to Europe is to do some fieldwork. At SASNET, Madhusudan Chaubey met with acting director Lars Eklund, and discussed the issue of doing India related research in China.

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

The South Asian Student Association organised its fourth and final for the spring semester 2015 Fika without borders seminar on Thursday 28 May 2015. It was dedicated to Sri Lanka. The first speaker was 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 was 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.



### SASNET hosted Devika as an Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder

Professor Jayakumari Devika from the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram, India, spent five weeks as a Erasmus Mundus scholarship holder at Lund University during May-June 2015. Officially she was hosted by SASNET as an academic staff, but she was provided a workplace at the Department of Gender Studies.

Devika was selected for this exchange programme as a candidate for the India lot No. 13 in the 2013 round of the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 – Strand 1 – Partnership programme, EU's flagship programme aimed at promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education system and third country cooperation and partnerships. The India lot was coordinated by Lund University and the consortium was entitled EMINTE (Erasmus Mundus India To Europe), in which also Uppsala University has been a partner, with SASNET being an Associate partner. Prof. Devika described her stay at Lund University a remarkably exciting intellectual break. "The opportunity to engage with the work of others, from senior academics to young students, in a range of forums, was a centerpiece of sorts, not to mention the considerable progress I was able to make in my writing based on fieldwork recently completed. I loved Lund: no disrespect to Lund is intended, but it is indeed dream-academic-Europe – as pretty as Cambridge, and with solid socialist public values on top!"

While in Lund, Devika was also engaged as a keynote speaker at the EASAS workshop in Höllviken and a panel chairperson in the SASNET international conference on Structural Transformation of South Asia.



### SASNET South Asian short-term fellowship holders spend time at Lund University

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:



*Anindita Majumdar, Shveta Soam, P R Nisha, Mashiur Rahman and Kanica Rakhra.*

- 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 Kanica 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 from Dhaka University. He arrived on 15h May and stayed for two months, and during this period participated in the SASNET May conference and lectured at the Dept. of Sociology.

Shveta Soam and P R Nisha both arrived at Lund on 31 August 2015, whereas the remaining two researchers are expected to come to Lund in the spring 2016.

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).

## JUNE 2015

### Mashiur Rahman lectured on Democratization: Utopia for Bangladesh

Professor Mashiur Rahman from the Department of Sociology at Dhaka University, Bangladesh, held a guest lecture at Lund University on Thursday 11 June 2015. Prof. Rahman who defended his PhD at the Dept. of Sociology, Lund University in 2011, was back at this department on a two-months postdoc fellowship funded by SASNET (more information). At the seminar, entitled "Risk-minimized Welfare Society through Democratization: Utopia for Bangladesh?", he presented results from his current research hoping to receive useful feedback from the audience. Venue: Conference room 1, Dept. of Sociology, Paradisgatan 5 G, Lund.



## AUGUST 2015

### SLU researcher on courtesy visit to SASNET



Associate Professor Sadhna Alström from the Department of Forest Mycology and Plant Pathology at BioCenter, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala made a courtesy visit to SASNET office at Lund University on Thursday 27 August 2015. Sadhna, with 30 years of experience in different aspects of plant/microbe interactions in presence and absence of plant pathogens and biological control in agriculture and horticulture, met with her long-time friend deputy director Lars Eklund to update information about the South Asia related research at SLU, and especially the two projects that received SASNET planning grants in 2008 and 2009, in which she has been involved.

## SEPTEMBER 2015

### Malmö symposium on Cardiometabolic Disease Risk for people from South Asia

The Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology Unit at the Department of Clinical Sciences (CRC), Lund University, organised a mini-Symposium on "Cardiometabolic Disease Risk for people from the Middle-East and South Asia" on 3 September 2015 in Malmö.

The symposium was sponsored in part by SASNET. It aimed to offer a comprehensive update on the cardiometabolic risk



in South Asians and immigrants from the Middle East. Four distinguished national and international faculty, including Professor K.M. Venkat Narayan from Emory University Atlanta, Georgia, USA, gave lectures that gave good insight in the field. Jacco Visser attended the symposium for SASNET.

### **G K Karanth revisited SASNET and Lund University after three years**

G.K. Karanth, Professor of Sociology at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) in Bangalore made a courtesy visit to SASNET and Lund University in mid-October 2015. Prof. Karanth spends the fall semester 2015 as Visiting Professor through an Erasmus programme at the School of Culture and Society/Department for Indology at Aarhus University in Denmark. There he is involved in teaching at the Master's degree programme in Asian studies that was launched in September 2014. Karanth was previously Visiting ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) Professor at Lund University during the accademic year 2011/12, hosted by the Department of Sociology. On Thursday 15th he visited SASNET's office where he met Lars Eklund

### **SASNET networking tour to Stockholm and Örebro**

During four days in late September 2015, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund made a networking tour to Stockholm and Örebro. His main mission was to meet the participants attending the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme arranged by the Swedish Institute (SI) for the third year in a row. Lars was partly involved in the planning. Besides, Lars was invited to meet the Rector for the University College of Music Education in Stockholm (SMI) and its collaborating partners from Bangladesh representing the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) and the Classical Music Academy of Dhaka (CMA), at the time visiting Sockholm to discuss their ongoing Linnaeus Palme programme.



Finally, Lars attended one day of a 3-day international conference entitled "Virtual Learning Sites as Languaging Spaces"(ViLS-2), hosted by the School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (HumEs) at Örebro University, mainly in order to meet the convener, Professor Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta, and three Indian professors – Biswajit Das from Jamia Milia in Delhi, Panchanan Mohanty from Hyderabad University and Mathew Martin from AAJNIHH and Mumbai University – participating in the conference.

## **OCTOBER 2015**

### **Big crowd attended Fika without borders seminar focusing on Maldives**

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University organised its fifth 2015 Fika without borders seminar, this time focusing on The Maldives, on Thursday 1 October 2015. It drew a record crowd of more than 70 people. The first presentation was given by Nils Finn Munch-Petersen (on photo), Senior expert at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, Denmark. He spoke about the Maldives before the advent of tourism, perceptions of climate change, Maldivian Islam and the erosion of journalistic freedoms. The second presentation was given by Nashfa Hawwa, Maldivian student in the Master's programme in Environmental Management and Policy at Lund



University. She illustrated how tourism on the islands is adopted to increasing climate change risks. The third presentation was given by Axel Vikström, a student of journalism at Lund University. His talk was based on his experiences in the Maldives for a study project on reporting on the democracy crisis in the Maldives, a decline in human rights, decreasing religious tolerance and disappearing journalists.

### **Andreas Johansson discussed area studies with Columbia University representatives**

Research coordinator Andreas Johansson made an official SASNET visit to New York city, USA, on 6–11 October 2015. He met with Alison Busch of the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies (MESAAS) at Columbia University, and discussed the possibilities of successfully merging different fields of area studies into one center, something MESAAS has been able to do. The advantages for a big area studies center are that the trans regional conversation educates the graduate students and undergrads to thinking beyond one narrow region. This is very useful, for example, when it comes to understand transnational features such as religion. The MESAAS center also has several courses that focus on building bridges between the different areas of study. For example, some of the courses deal with trades in the Indian Ocean therefore covering a larger region in the study. Andreas also discussed possibilities to start an exchange program between MESAAS and SASNET in the future.



### **SASNET seminar on sex selected abortions in India**

Dr. Sabu George from the Centre for Development Studies, New Delhi is one of India's leading campaigner against female infanticide. He gave a public SASNET lecture at Lund University on Friday 9 October 2015. The seminar, entitled "Sex selected abortions and infanticide in India" focused on sex selected abortions, and it was organised in collaboration with the Lund based NGO The Swallows India Bangladesh.



### **Well-attended SASNET seminar on denial of self-determination in Kashmir**

SASNET organised a seminar on "Kashmiris caught in India-Pakistan Conflict: Denial of Self-Determination and Human Rights" on Thursday 8 October 2015. The main speaker was Dr Dibyesh Anand, Associate Professor in International Relations and the Head of the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster in London.

Talat Bhat, film maker based in Lund, was the second participant. His documentary film on Kashmir, "Bring him back" was screened. The event was held at the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, in its seminar room which was packed with people.

After the movie the main speaker Dibyesh Anand who is the author of monographs "Geopolitical Exotica: Tibet in Western Imagination", "Tibet: A Victim of Geopolitics", and "Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear", talked about his current research on colonial practices by China and India, with special reference to Kashmir.

In his presentation he focused on the fact that while Kashmir is known primarily as a site of territorial dispute between India and Pakistan, there are conflicting narratives around the dispute.

### SASNET seminar on the Social History of Indian Circus

On Thursday 22 October 2015, SASNET organized a seminar in Lund on "The Social History of Circus in India". The speaker is Dr. P. R. Nisha from the Department of History, University of Delhi, India, holding a short term SASNET fellowship during two months at the Department of Human Geography, Lund University. In her presentation, Dr. Nisha focused on the Malabar coast region in North Kerala, an area that has been of interest to social scientists principally for the matrilineal system and performative arts and martial forms. Malabar has provided the greater part of artists, trainers, managers and entrepreneurs to Indian circuses during the 20th century.

### SASNET seminar on Biofuel Development in India

PhD candidate Shveta Soam from the DBT-IOC Advanced Bioenergy Research Centre in Faridabad, India, held a public SASNET lecture focusing on biofuel development in India on Friday 23 October 2015. Venue: Lecture hall G, Chemical Centre, Sölvegatan 39, entrance B.

Shveta, basically a botanist and environmentalist, is currently a guest researcher at the Division of Environmental and Energy Systems Studies, Lund University, funded by a SASNET South Asian short-term fellowship (more information).

Her presentation was entitled "Life Cycle Assessment of Biofuels in India and its Impact on Indian Biofuel Programme", and took its starting point in the decision by the Government of India in 2009 to mandate a 10 p.c. ethanol blending target across 20 states and four union territories, and its proposal to replace fossil based gasoline and diesel by using 20 p.c. biofuels by 2017.



### Japanese India Area Studies Institutes want to collaborate with SASNET

On Thursday 22 October 2015, Associate Professor Minoru Mio – Director for the Center for Contemporary India Area Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan – made a courtesy visit to SASNET and Lund University. It was a very special visit,



since Dr. Mio came to Sweden and Lund for the first time ever with the sole and specific aim to visit SASNET in Lund and discuss possible Swedish-Japanese collaboration between the India Area Studies institutes in Japan – six in all, under the joint umbrella of the National Institutes for the Humanities of Japan (NIHJ) Program for Advancing Area Studies – and SASNET. It turns out that SASNET is well-known and has a high reputation among Japanese researchers in the field, and Dr. Mio had a mandate from the NIHJ board to present concrete suggestions for building up collaboration, and if feasible sign an MoU with SASNET. At SASNET, he had discussions with deputy director Lars Eklund and research coordinator Andreas Johansson.

### Success for SASA/SASNET Fika without borders Bangladesh seminar

The South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its eighth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Thursday 22 October 2015 focusing on Bangladeshi food and music. It was a grand success. More than 70 people came to attend.

The main presentation for this edition was given by Manpreet Janeja, assistant professor at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She discussed how food plays a prominent role in variegated trajectories of imagining Bangladesh. Food figures in visual art, music, religious rituals, as well as literary tropes, development discourses, and the political economy of hunger. The talk focused on the aesthetics of normal food in imagining Bangladesh.

After the presentation there was delicious Bengali food served – food being prepared by the SASA board members assisted by Bubu Eklund and Jacco Visser.

The programme ended with a music performance by Lund Baul's, a music group interpreting Bangladeshi Baul music. The event was held at Kårhusets Hörsal, LTH, John Ericssons väg 3, Lund.



### SASNET workshop on future media landscape in Sweden and India

On 19–20 October 2015, SASNET held its first explorative workshop within its Sweden–South Asia Media Project. It was held in Lund, and the focus for this first workshop was India. It will be followed by a mirror workshop in Delhi in



December. The aim is to highlight the future media landscapes in India and Sweden. The two-day workshop in Lund brought up questions related to the following topics: • Working Condition of Journalists; • Political Influence on Media; • Online Ethics; • Gender in Media; and • Innovation in Media. Indian media researchers and journalists presented their experiences and outlooks on the future media landscape during panel talks, presentations and seminars. Among the participants should be mentioned Vibodh Parthasarathi, media researcher from the Centre for Culture, Media & Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi; Professor Anjali Monteiro and Professor K P Jayasankar from Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) in Mumbai; Dr. Devika Jayakumari from Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram; and Divya Rajagopal, Financial reporter at Economic Times newspaper in Mumbai.

Hindol Sengupta, Editor-at-Large for Fortune India, being one of the key persons involved in planning for the Sweden-South Asia Media Project from the beginning, took part in a highly interesting panel discussion on What are our Future Challenges for Journalism in Sweden and India? along with Heidi Avellan, Political Editor in Chief at regional newspapers Sydsvenskan and Helsingborgs Dagblad; and in another highly relevant panel discussion, Priyanka Borpujari – independent reporter based in both Mumbai and Guwahati – talked about Journalists' Working Conditions in Sweden and India together with Jonas Nordling, President of the Swedish Union of Journalists.

## NOVEMBER 2015

### **Lund Seminar on Resistance against Rape Culture and Sexism in Globalizing India**

SASA, the South Asian Students Association, in collaboration with SASNET, organized a highly interesting seminar on “Rape culture and sexism in globalizing India” with Dr. Radhika Krishnan on the 5th of November 2015 at 17.00 at the External Relations Desk at Lund University, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. The lecture took its starting point in the horrific and gruesome gang-rape of a 23 year-old woman in Delhi in December 2012, which was followed by massive protests in different parts of India. A vivid discussion followed her presentation, with inputs by both students and faculty in the audience.

Dr. Krishnan is currently guest researcher at Linnaeus University in Växjö/Kalmar where she is connected to the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies during the entire 2015. She has a PhD from the Centre for Studies in Science Policy at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi.

### **Well-attended SASA/SASNET Fika without borders seminar on Afghanistan**

On Thursday 26 November 2015, the South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its final 2015 edition of its informal Fika Without Borders South Asia series. This time the country in focus was Afghanistan. At the well-attended event, organized in collaboration with SASNET, Anders Fänge, one of Sweden's foremost experts on Afghanistan, gave a talk entitled Afghanistan's Classical Problem – A Functioning State, about Afghanistan's history focusing on the problems which have been faced by different Afghan governments which have tried to build a state.

After the lecture, Afghani home-made snacks were served. The delicious food items has been prepared by SASA board members and a couple of Afghani friends the night before in

the kitchen of SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund and his wife Bubu.



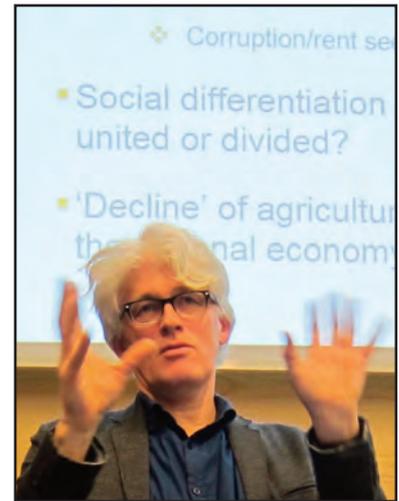
### **SASA Travel Grants awarded to three Lund University students**

On 21 October 2015, decisions were taken regarding the latest round of the South Asia Student Association (SASA) Travel Grants for Lund University students. For the Spring semester 2016, SASA awarded travel grants to three Lund University students in order to undertake a field study in relation to a thesis in any of the eight South Asian countries. One of them has however decided to do fieldwork outside South Asia, so two successful candidates remain: Otso Harju and Sanchari De.

- Otso Harju, Masters student in Asian Studies at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, with an application dealing with female domestic servants employed by middle class, young unmarried metropolitan women in India.
- Sanchari De, PhD student at the Department of Communication and Media, regarding a project on the connection on social media and social movements against the backdrop of the Shahbag movement in Bangladesh.

### **Peter Molinga drew record crowd for seminar on Politics of Irrigation Reform in India**

Professor Peter Mollinga from the Department of Development Studies at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, held a SASNET seminar at Lund University on Tuesday 24 November 2015. He spoke about "The Politics of Irrigation Reform in India", and drew a record number of audience for any general SASNET seminar, a major portion consisting of students from Lund University's Bachelors programme in Development Studies (BIS). Venue: Auditorium (nedre salen), LUX building, Helgonavägen 3, Lund. Prof. Mollinga, who actually lives in The Hague, Netherlands, even though he is working in London, spent the day also visiting SASNET, meeting Lars Eklund and Anna Lindberg, and had also a chance to visit the Centre for Societal Resilience, and the Dept. of Sociology.



### **SASNET visit to South Asia Centre at the London School of Economics**



SASNET Assistant Communications Officer, Jacco Visser, made an official SASNET visit to London, UK, on 26-27 November 2015. He met Mukulika Bannerjee, Head of the South Asia Centre at the London School of Economics (LSE) to discuss strategies for promoting South Asian Studies at the university, national and European level. Jacco also explored possible collaborations, exchange best practices and attend South Asia related seminars at the institute.

In addition, Jacco attended a book discussion by author Sanchita Saxena, Executive Director at the Institute for South Asia Studies and Director of the Chowdury Centre for Bangladesh Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. The seminar discussed the different ways in which garment sectors and workers in these respective countries organize domestic collaborations to improve labour conditions among workers.

## **DECEMBER 2015**

### **Successful SASNET Media Workshop in New Delhi**

After successfully organizing a first explorative workshop in the SASNET South Asia Media Project at Lund University in October, SASNET again arranged a similar explorative workshop this time in New Delhi, India during 7–9 December 2015. Venue: India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. A large crowd of Indian media researchers, journalists and students attended the three-day conference.



SASNET was represented by Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund and Andreas Mattsson. The aim of the

workshops is to bring Indian and South Asian media researchers and journalists together to seek new ways of working with future challenges and also to highlight possible projects. The Delhi workshop was formally inaugurated with a speech by the Swedish Ambassador to India, Mr. Harald Sandberg.

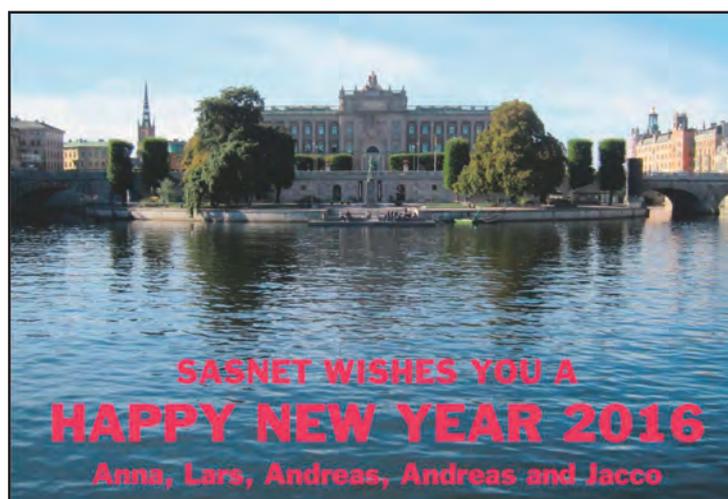
The third and final day of the Delhi workshop was co-hosted by the Centre for Work, Technology and Social Change (WTS) and Lund University Commissioned Education (LUCE), and was devoted to panel discussions, lectures and workshops about how social innovations and technology creates change.

### **SASNET visit to Lund University's Indian collaboration partners in biofuel research**

After attending the SASNET Media Workshop 7–9 December 2015, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund also made a visit to the Indian Oil Corporation's Research & Development Centre at Faridabad, outside Delhi. He was invited by researchers at the Centre for Advanced Bioenergy Research, involved in a fruitful research collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering at Lund University. The collaboration with Lund focuses on Bio-



mass pre-treatment, Enzymatic Hydrolysis, and Biomass Manufacturing and Process Development. The idea is to explore the ongoing biofuel energy research of different kinds in Lund and Faridabad, and exchange expertise. Several senior Indian researchers have visited Lund, and vice versa. During the Fall 2015, SASNET also funded a two-months fellowship at Lund University for PhD candidate Shveta Soam. During his visit to the Faridabad R&D Centre, Lars met Dr. D.K. Tuli, Executive Director and Coordinator for the Centre for Advanced Bioenergy Research, in charge of the Swedish collaboration, Dr. A S Mathur, and the entire staff (photo). Dr Ravi Gupta, Senior Research Manager at the Centre, organised a study tour for Lars, visiting the well-equipped labs and demonstrating the intricate processes used for converting agricultural waste products such as rice straw into biofuel in the form of Ethanol.



# SASNET

detaljerad aktivitetsrapport 2016

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...sammanställd av Lars Eklund

### SASNET participation in Thiruvananthapuram seminar on Access to Justice

• The Department of Law at University of Kerala, India, organized an International Interdisciplinary Seminar on "Access to Justice: Trends and Issues" on 7–9 January 2016 in Thiruvananthapuram. The three-day seminar was partly sponsored by SASNET, and its Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg participated along with another Lund University researcher, Associate Professor Ulrika Andersson from the Law and Vulnerabilities research programme at the Faculty of Law. The target group was academicians from Law studies and other social science disciplines, but also to students, social activists and the representatives of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.



### Winnie Bothe lectured on successful Fika Without Borders event

• The South Asian Student Association (SASA) in collaboration with SASNET organised its first Fika Without borders lecture of 2016 on Thursday 21 January 2015. As usual in the basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. Dr. Winnie Bothe from the Dept. of Political Science at Lund University gave an initiated presentation of the democratization process in Bhutan. A record crowd of students turned up for the event, not the least to try the delicious Bhutanese food prepared by the SASA committee. In her talk, Winnie explained the problems facing a country that is often called the world's youngest democracy. The notion of democracy raises deeper questions of what a 'democracy' entails. It is not simply a reified set of institutions. It is as much about how we imagine these institutions. Drawing legitimacy from European constitutional tradition, the Bhutanese constitution is imagined as a system where the monarch is the guardian of sovereignty. In practice democracy has entered Bhutan, but it mainly engages the interests of the educated elite, whilst the rural citizens are still viewed as too immature to take responsibility for the constitutional rights they are given.



### Linnaeus Palme exchange programme students good ambassadors for Lund University

• On 26 January 2016, four enthusiastic Indian students recently came to visit SASNET, two of them from University of Delhi and the other two from University of Kerala. They were all beneficiaries of ongoing Linnaeus Palme collaboration programmes between Lund University and their respective home universities. Lars Eklund took an interview with them to hear about their experiences of staying in Lund and studying at Lund University.

Shinjini Bhattacharjee and Rupsa Ghosh, Delhi University MPhil students in Geography, had become extremely fond of the Lund atmosphere after spending two months in the middle of winter at the Dept. of Gender Studies. Their expectations had been more than fulfilled. The two Kerala University students, Anju Jacob and Parvathy Vijayan, had just arrived in Lund through a collaboration programme between their Department of Journalism at University of Kerala and the Dept. of Communication and Media (KOM) at Lund University, and they were equally happy with what they had experienced so far. Better ambassadors for the beneficial effects of this great Swedish mobility programme are hard to find.

SASNET has been instrumental in applying for both these ongoing Linnaeus Palme programmes, as well two other India related programmes that Lund University has managed to get funding – between the School of Social Work and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India; and between the Law and Vulnerabilities research programme, Faculty of Law, Lund University and TISS.



### SASNET attended 39th Göteborg Film Festival

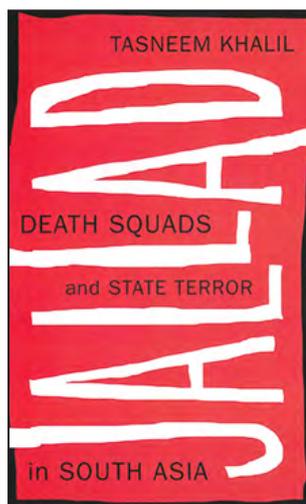
• The 39th Göteborg International Film Festival (GIFF), being held from 29 January till 8 February 2016. This Year, South Asia was represented by four extremely interesting films, two from India, one from Pakistan and one from Bangladesh. As usual, Lars Eklund was there to see the South Asian films: *Mor Thengary* (My Bicycle) – a remarkable Bangladeshi film in the sense it is the first film where the running language is Chakma; *Chauranga* (Four Colours) made by Hindi film director Bikas Ranjan Mishra focusing on two brothers, Bajrangi and Santu, belonging to the lowest caste of 'untouchables'; *Song of Lahore*, a Pakistani/US co-production by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Andy Schoccken, on the difficulty to preserve the rich musical tradition in Pakistan; and finally *Kothanodi* (River of Fables), the debut feature film by Assamese director Bhaskar Hazarika, a film highlighting the cruelty meted out to girls by their own mothers by re-telling four traditional folk tales, raising awareness about female infanticide that persists in India.

## SASNET seminar on Social Media and Democratic Participation

• Dr. M.S Harikumar from the Department of Communication and Journalism at University of Kerala, India, held a well-attended SASNET lecture at Lund University on Wednesday 3 February 2016. The seminar, organised in collaboration with the Department of Communication and Media at Lund University, was entitled "Social Media and Democratic Participation: An Indian Experience". Venue: Centre for Languages and Literature (SOL), Helgonabacken, Lund. The seminar was recorded by Talat Bhat and is (as all SASNET seminars) available to watch on Youtube. Dr. Harikumar is a media professional turned academician with close to two decades of experience in the Indian newspaper industry. He was earlier chief sub-editor and chief reporter working for the Mathrubhumi daily, which is one of the most circulated newspapers in India. His PhD thesis in Mass Communication was a seminal explorative study on the reader-editor gap with a special emphasis on the gate-keeping theories of Mass Communication.



## Book launch seminar on Jallad: Death Squads and State Terror in South Asia



• On Friday 12 February 2016, SASNET organized a book launch of the book JALLAD: Death Squads and State Terror in South Asia, by Tasneem Khalil, Sweden based editor and publisher of Independent World Report, a journal of human rights and global politics. The book launch took place at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Finngatan 16, Lund. Extrajudicial execution, enforced disappearance and torture – these are the tools used by death squads across South Asia. The Rapid Action Battalion of Bangladesh, the 'encounter specialists' of India, army units of Nepal, the Frontier Corps of Pakistan and 'the men in white vans' of Sri Lanka are specialists on violence deployed by the state in campaigns of state terror. They are shielded by black laws and emergency acts. Their targets are the political opponents of the state and socioeconomic troublemakers. Khalil argues that Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are national security states, connected to an international system of state terror patronised by sponsors like the

Tasneem Khalil was declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International in 2007, following his detention by the Bangladeshi military intelligence agency. In 2008, Swedish PEN conferred him with an honorary membership for his journalism. The new book by Khalil is an excellent work.

## SASNET/SASA event with young connectors from Afghanistan/Bangladesh/India/Pakistan

• On Monday 15 February 2016, SASNET, along with its student organisation SASA, organised a Fika without borders event in Lund for the participants attending the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme being arranged by the Swedish Institute (SI). 29 dynamic young individuals from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan – eight from India, nine from Pakistan and six each from Bangladesh and Afghanistan – spent three weeks in Stockholm during September 2015. Most of them now came back for a follow-up week in Malmö during the period 15-19 February 2016. SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund has been involved in the planning of the 2015 programme, and had invited the group, led by Ulrika Rosvall from SI to the Lund event.



The gathering was held in the auditorium of Lund University's External Relations building, Stora Algatan 4 in central Lund. The YCF programme participants presented themselves and the work they are involved in back home in South Asia, nice vegetarian food was served, and the Lund based International Tagore Choir performed, a much appreciated performance.

Many Lund University students turned up for the event, mingled with the YCF participants and established new contacts. Lars Eklund presented SASNET and its activities, and Daniel Gunnarsson from Lund University's External Relations division presented Lund University. The documentary photographer Danial Shah from Pakistan showed his film "A Daughter's Lament – Borders that Separate", a very touching and excellent production screened in Kashmir.

## Successful SASA/SASNET film screening of Sara Singh's film on Partition

• On Friday 19 February 2016, the South Asian Students' Association (SASA) in collaboration with SASNET screened the award-winning film *The Sky Below* by Indo-American film director Sara Singh, specially invited to Sweden for this event. The film deals with the Partition of India, and was screened at Edens Hörsal, House Eden, Paradisgatan 5 H in Lund. The event was well attended by students and scholars from Lund University. After the film a constructive discussion took place about Partition, the obstacles arisen when shooting a film on both sides of the India-Pakistan border while Singh's upcoming movie projects were also discussed. Sara was born in India into the Patiala royal family in Punjab, now spending her time primarily between New York and South Asia. Her work has been exhibited all over the world including the Victoria & Albert Museum in London; the Asian Civilizations Museum; the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; and at universities such as Oxford and Stanford. This was the first screening in the Nordic countries.



## Seminar on Hindu/Perso-Arabic connection with Jainism



• Professor Olle Qvarnström and Associate Professor Martin Gansten, researchers in History of Religion at the Centre of Theology and Religious Studies (CTR), Lund University, held a SAS-

NET/CMES lecture at Lund University on Thursday 25 February 2016. The seminar was organised in collaboration with the Center of Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), and was entitled "Hindu Reception of Perso-Arabic Traditions of Knowledge and the Role of Jainism in Cultural Transmission".

The seminar was based on an ongoing research project carried out by Qvarnström and Gansten, in a field where, till now, almost no research has been done. They focus on Sanskrit-language reception of Islamic divination/astrology. The few studies which have been made generally relate to Jaina-Muslim relations in later periods in history. The Lund University project therefore constitutes vital foundational research. The research work, dealing chiefly with medieval textual sources and based on philology and historical criticism, is related to the areas of previous research and specialist competence of the applicants, with regard both to reception history and interreligious relations. Research results will be published as English-language articles and at least one monograph. Qvarnström and Gansten will also participate in international research networks focussing on Persian-Indian cultural exchanges, history of astral disciplines, and Jainology.

## MARCH 2016

## Bangladesh in focus for third SASA/SASNET Fika Without Borders seminar



• The South Asian Students' Association (SASA) at Lund University organises its third Fika Without Borders lecture of 2016 on Thursday 10 March. Around 30 people gathered for the seminar. Morten Koch Andersen, researcher at Dignity, the Danish Institute Against Torture in Copenhagen lectured on how human rights documentation and reporting is a dangerous and difficult practice in Bangladesh. A key challenge in human rights work is how to identify victims and document violations. In his presentation Andersen investigated how human rights activists in Bangladesh assist survivors of human rights violations and document violations and show how human rights activism and documentation unfold at the intersection of global discourses, national politics and local power configurations. Each level condition and circumscribe the ways in which human rights documentation is carried out, set the limits for gathering of information and delimit what is made public. As usual, SASA provided fika consisting of South Asian snacks during the event, this time rajma (kidney beans) and potato curry.

## SASNET/CMES seminar on migration of South Asian women workers to the Gulf

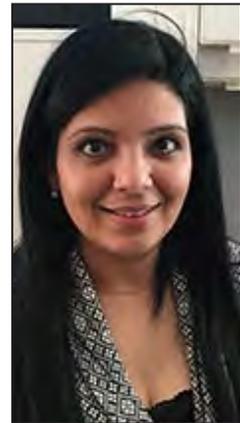
• Dr. Rakhee Timothy from the V V Giri National Labour Institute in Pune, India, held a SASNET/CMES lecture at Lund University on Thursday 15 March 2016. The seminar, organised in collaboration with the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies at Lund University, was entitled "Migration of Women Workers from South Asia to the Gulf".

Rakhee Timothy is an economist by training with a Ph.D. from the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning (CESP) at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi. She secured M.Phil in Applied Economics from Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. Her research interests include changing structure of employment generation, linkages between economic growth and employment, labour migration and skill development.



## Lars Eklund attended Zehra Sayed dissertation defense in Jönköping

• On Thursday 17 March 2016, Zehra Sayed at the Media Management and Transformation Centre (MMTC) within Jönköping International Business School (JIBS), Jönköping University, successfully defended her doctoral dissertation entitled "Postcolonial Perspective on International Knowledge Transfer and Spillover to Indian News Media: From Institutional Duality to Third Space". SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund attended the dissertation. The faculty opponent was Senior Lecturer Michal Frenkel from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. The chairperson at the defense and also Zehra's main supervisor was Professor Robert G Picard from Reuters Institute at University of Oxford, UK. In her thesis, Sayed examines how knowledge transfer from foreign media firms play out within the local media sphere. Field work has been carried out mostly in Mumbai and Bangalore. Zehra's main case study is on Reuters, and how its practices and code of conduct has spilled over to the Indian news media industry. The local firms which participated in the project are Press Trust of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, Times of India, Afternoon, Midday, Inquilab, and Vayapar.



## APRIL 2016

### SASNET offers one month position to prepare research application at Lund University

• For the second year, SASNET invited researchers at Lund University to apply for a one month position ("ansökningsmånad") at SASNET in which to prepare a research application with a South Asian focus. The purpose is to promote more South Asia-related research at Lund University. Members of all faculties and disciplines at the University were invited. Deadline for applications was 31 March 2016, and decisions taken in early April.

The Lund University researchers selected for 2016 were Dr. Maria Tonini, Dept. of Gender Studies; and Dr. Ted Svensson, Dept. of Political Science. Dr. Tonini's plan is to write an application entitled "*A new Lesbian Visibility? Queer Women and Social Media in Contemporary India*".

Dr. Ted Svensson's plan is to write an application entitled "*Divine Ganges, Profane Development: Governing Pollution, Flood, and Well-Being*", revolving around the basic tension between notions of the river Ganges that stem from religious and secular conceptions of its meaning. Ted intends to carry out the project in collaboration with Dr. Sammyh Khan, Lecturer in Social Psychology at Keele University, United Kingdom.

The previous call for applications in 2015 received a very positive response. One of the granted applications, by Ebbe Nordlander at the Division of Chemical Physics, Department of Chemistry, later resulted in a Swedish Research Links (SRL) grant from the Swedish Research Council for a three-year project entitled "Development of Bio-inspired Catalysts for Oxidative Degradation of Organic Pollutants in Wastewater".



### SASNET moved to Villa Norlind

• After 2,5 years being hosted by the Department of Sociology at Paradisgatan 5 in the city centre of Lund, SASNET again shifted locality in early 2016. This time the move was to Villa Norlind, a rather small building located at Biskopsgatan 5, a house that used to accommodate the Dept. of Musicology, but recently was taken over by the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES). SASNET rents three rooms in Villa Norlind, and moved in gradually during the spring 2016, the final shift was taken by Lars Eklund on 5 April. By December 2016, the SASNET office houses three staff members, Acting Director Andreas Johansson; Deputy Director Lars Eklund; and Communications Officer Elina Vidarsson. Previously SASNET has been located at the following addresses:

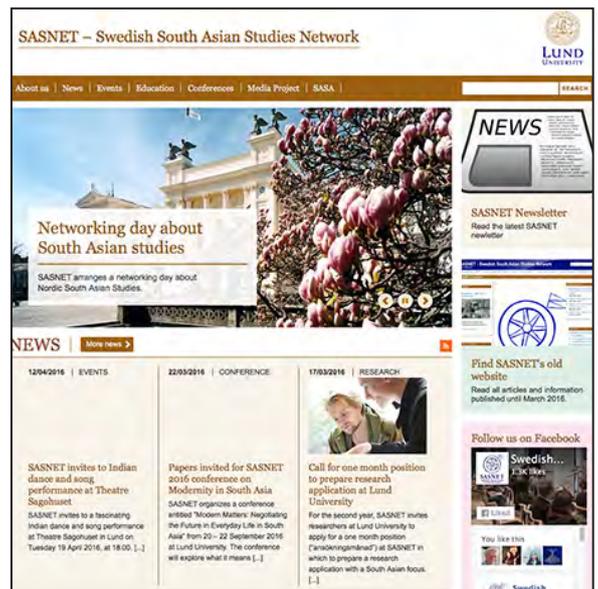


- Gamla Kirurgen/International Office, January 2001 – November 2003.
- Ideon Science Park/Alfa 1 building, shared by the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, November 2003 – December 2013.
- Paradisgatan 5 G/Department of Sociology, December 2013 – March 2016.

## SASNET launched new Lund University based web site

• On 15 April SASNET a new web site, based at Lund University, replacing the previous web site run in technical collaboration with the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, but sharing the same cms web solution – drupal. The agreement with NIAS however lapsed on 31 December 2015, and SASNET had to integrate into Lund University's (LU) web system, and adjust to the graphic profile that all LU units are obliged to follow. Also the newsletters format had to be changed, focus more on Lund University news and events, and follow the standard layout for other newsletters produced by LU departments.

Soon after the inception of SASNET in January 2001, the network launched its web site and introduced monthly newsletters, that gradually became richer and richer on information about South Asia related research not only at the hosting university of Lund and other Swedish universities, but also in the rest of Scandinavia, Europe and even in South Asia itself. By April 2016, the newsletter had more than 3,300 subscribers worldwide. A total number of 186 Newsletters were produced by Lars Eklund, still available on the old web site.



## SASNET organized Indian dance and song performance at Theatre Sagohuset

• SASNET organized a fascinating Indian dance and song performance at Theatre Sagohuset in Lund on Tuesday 19 April 2016. The two artists Parvathy Vijayan Roshini and Anju Jacob gave a traditional Keralite performance, through song and dance. Snacks and soft drinks were served after the performance. The event was jointly organised by SASNET and Theatre Sagohuset. The dance performed by Parvathy was "Mohiniyattam", the classical dance form of Kerala, which was taught to her by the "guru" (teacher) Aswathy Nair, who herself is an exponent of Mohiniyattam.

Anju and Pavathy are students of Journalism at Kerala University in Thiruvananthapuram, at the time being exchange students at the Dept. of Communication and Media (KOM) at Lund University through a Linnaeus Palme collaboration project with their department at University of Kerala. SASNET was instrumental in this ongoing Linnaeus Palme programme.



## SASNET/UPF seminar on India's and China's roles in Tibet



• SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund (UPF) jointly organized a seminar on "Tibet as an (Inter)National Problem" – focusing on China's and India's respective roles in Tibet, on Wednesday 20 April 2016. The speaker was Dr. Dibyesh Anand, Associate Professor in International Relations and the Head of the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster in London, UK. Venue: Café Athen, Sandgatan 2, Lund.

In his presentation, Dr. Anand described the failed negotiations between Beijing government and the Dalai Lama; the change of leadership in China; the advancing age of the Dalai Lama; and the democratization process in the exile. He also pointed out the desire of foreign powers to work with China due to its growing economic might, the unresolved border dispute between India and China, and other factors adding to the acuteness of the contested question of politics and geopolitics of Tibet.

## SASNET/CREST scholarships for two Lund University masters students

• In late April, Ms. Dea Busk Larsen, Masters student in Social Anthropology at Lund University; and Ms. Nashfa Hawwa, Masters student at the Environmental Management and Policy programme, also Lund University, were selected by SASNET for a scholarship to be carried out in South Asia with the assistance of CREST, Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation, in Kozhikode, Kerala, India.



Dea will carry out her masters thesis work during early 2017, on a project entitled "Living Caste: Educated Rural Dalit Women's Lived Experiences in Urban South India", focusing on the informal sphere of young educated dalit women's lived experiences especially the aspect of migrating from rural to urban India. Dea has previously lived in the Indian states of Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu for 16 months in total.

Nashfa Hawwa carried out her field work during the summer 2016. After a few weeks staying at

CREST in Kozhikode, she spent time in Male, the capital city of the Maldives, working on a project entitled "Establishing a Deposit-Refund System in the Maldives – an ex-ante Evaluation",



The project deals with the management of polyethylene-terephthalate (PET) plastic waste, a complex issue for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as the Maldives. This is because of the geographical complexity, small landmass, and lack of infrastructure and resources. Furthermore, changes from subsistence lifestyles to increased consumerism, increased imports, and population growth has escalated the number of PET bottles in the waste stream. While PET is deemed as the most optimal plastic for beverage bottles, and for recyclability, the Maldives lacks vital technical infrastructure to manage the PET waste in an environmentally sound manner.

## Lund meeting resulted in formation of new Nordic South Asian Studies network

• More than 50 Nordic researchers and academics from 20 universities in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland participated in the Networking Day on South Asian Studies, that SASNET organized in Lund on Monday 25 April 2016.

They are all working on South Asia-related issues, and were invited to discuss ways to expand collaboration on education and research.

The meeting addressed the question: How we can

strengthen a South Asian perspective across all faculties at Nordic universities? The objectives could include a commitment to hold collaborative workshops and other joint events; circulate information about visiting scholars for the benefit of Nordic partner institutions who may wish to invite them; and creating a common Nordic newsletter on South Asian Studies and a joint website focusing on South Asia.

At the end of the day it was decided to form a Nordic Network, but the title has yet to be finalized upon. The Network will have its first conference next year in Stockholm. Lars Eklund was given the task to create a new web page for the Nordic network, based upon the old SASNET web site, that was closed down in mid-April 2016.

The Networking Day was organized in collaboration with researchers at University of Copenhagen, and it opened with an introductory address by David Ludden (photo), Professor of History at New York University and former President of the Association for Asian Studies. Professor Ludden is well-known for his extensive writings on South Asia. His talk was entitled "Why do we need South Asian Studies? What are the Challenges?", and was followed by short presentations by representatives of Nordic universities on their current South Asian activities. The afternoon was devoted to formal and informal discussions on how to strengthen collaboration. The planning committee for this event consisted of Lars Eklund and Anna Lindberg of SASNET at Lund University, and Ravinder Kaur and Peter B. Andersen at the University of Copenhagen.



## SASNET/Gender Studies seminar on Conflicted Kinship in a Transnational World



• Dr. Anindita Majumdar, Assistant Professor of Sociology in the School of Liberal Arts at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad, was awarded a two months short-term fellowship by SASNET, to spend time at the Department of Gender Studies, Lund University during April till June 2016. On Wednesday 27 April, she held a SASNET seminar entitled "Conflicted Kinship in a Transnational World".

Dr. Majumdar was previously connected to the Manipal Centre for Philosophy and Humanities, Manipal University. It was an ethnographic study of the practice of commercial gestational surrogacy in a transnational context, focusing on the different participants who enter the arrangement to produce a baby (or babies). Such as: the commissioning couples/ intended parents; the doctors and surrogacy agents who help couples and individuals navigate the assisted reproductive technologies, such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF); and the Indian commercial gestational surrogate mothers who help incubate an artificially fertilized pregnancy. A second Indian researcher, PhD candidate Kanika Rakhra from the Center for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi, was also awarded a two-months fellowship by SASNET to be affiliated to the Dept. of Political Science. Rakhra however returned back to India after one month only, and failed to hold a planned SASNET seminar on "India's Nuclear Behaviour", scheduled for 12 April.

## Seminar on Sustainable Development in Asia and South America

• On Wednesday 27 April, our student organisation SASA welcomed representatives from Future Earth and The Swallows India Bangladesh for a talk on sustainable development. Future Earth (Framtidsjorden) and Swallows India Bangladesh (Svalorna Indien-Bangladesh) are two organizations both working for a socially just and ecologically sustainable development and are doing so by supporting and collaborating with local organizations in Asia. During this afternoon session, interns from the organizations shared their experiences and knowledge of working with issues related to sustainable development in Asia and South America. Some of the topics were “food sovereignty”, “the adaptation to organic farming and its challenges” and “development paradoxes”.

## MAY 2016

### SASNET/CMES seminar on Sufism

• Professor Dennis B. McGilvray from the University of Colorado, Boulder held a SASNET/CMES lecture at Lund University on Monday 2 May 2016. The seminar, organised in collaboration with the Center of Middle Eastern Studies, at Lund University, was entitled “Sufi Transnational Networks – South Asia and Middle East connection”. Venue: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, seminarie room 1, Finngatan 16, Lund.

Professor McGilvray ethnographic interests are in South Asia, with a research focus on the Tamils and Muslims of south India and Sri Lanka. His book, *Crucible of Conflict* (Duke 2008), examines matrilineal Hindu and Muslim kinship, caste structure, religious ritual, and ethnic identities in the Tamil-speaking region of eastern Sri Lanka, an area that was deeply affected by the island’s civil war. The fieldwork that he currently undertaking explores transnational Sufism and matrilineal marriage patterns in Sri Lanka and southern India.



### SASNET/UPF seminar on Buddhist-Muslim Tensions in Sri Lanka

• SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund (UPF) jointly organized a seminar on Buddhist-Muslim Tensions in Sri Lanka on Tuesday 3 May 2016. The speaker was again Professor Dennis B. McGilvray, and he focused on the recent violent events between Buddhist and Muslims groups in Sri Lanka. Venue: Palaestra Auditorium, Universitetsplatsen, Lund. In his illustrated presentation, he reviewed the recent anti-Muslim incidents in Sri Lanka in the context of Sinhala Buddhist ethno-nationalism, and discussed the long-term dilemmas of Muslim minority identity in Sri Lankan society.

### SASNET seminar on Governing of Sexuality: Indian Police enforcing the Anti-Sodomy Laws



• On Thursday 12 May 2016, SASNET organized a seminar with Professor Jyoti Puri from Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, on the Criminalization of Homosexuality in India. The seminar was entitled “(Un)Making Sexual States: Antisodomy Law and Racialization in India”, and was a joint event with the Global Gender Matters network within the Department of Gender Studies, Lund University. Venue: Room M 221, Dept. of Gender Studies, Allhelgona Kyrkogata 14, Lund.

Professor Puri is an interdisciplinary scholar who writes and teaches at the crossroads of Sociology; Sexuality and Queer studies; and Postcolonial Feminist Theory. In her presentation, Prof. Puri argued that governing sexuality helps constitute states. Drawn from fieldwork among police in Delhi, she explores how enforcing the controversial anti-sodomy law is mediated by racialized discourses. Prof. Puri had come to Lund also to be the faculty opponent for the doctoral dissertation by PhD candidate Maria Tonini the following day – a thesis entitled “The Ambiguities of Recognition – Young Queer Sexualities in Contemporary India”

### SASNET seminar on Neoliberal Nationalism in India

• On Thursday 19 May, SASNET organised a seminar with Assistant Professor Nitasha Kaul from the University of Westminster, UK, on Neoliberal Nationalism in India. The seminar was co-organised by the Department of Political Science at Lund University. Dr. Nitasha Kaul is a Kashmiri novelist, academic, economist and poet. At Westminster University, she teaches postgraduate courses on 'State, Politics and Violence' and 'Postcolonial International Relations'. She has previously been a tenured academic in Economics at the Bristol Business School and in Creative Writing at Royal Thimphu College in Bhutan.

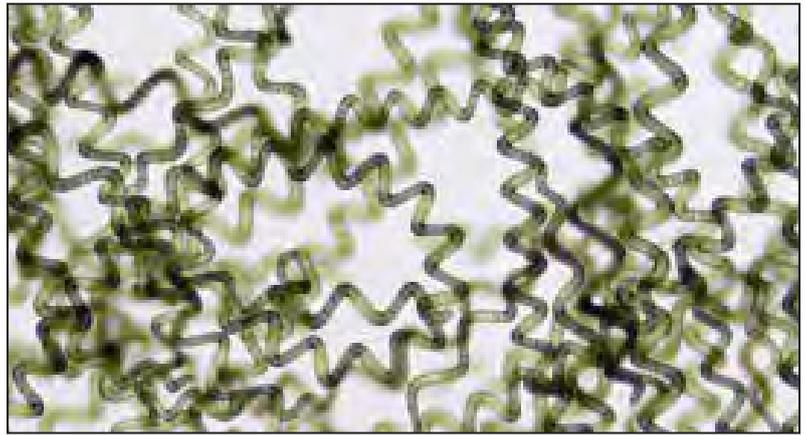


### SASNET seminar on successful Indian microalgal biotechnology research

• Two visiting Indian researchers – Dr V. Sivasubramanian and Professor N Thajuddin, held an appreciated SASNET lecture at Lund University on Monday 23 May 2016. The seminar, organized in collaboration with the Division of Environmental and Energy Systems Studies, Department of Technology and Society at Lund University, was entitled “Mic-

roalgal Biotechnology and Phycoremediation technology research in India”.

The two researchers are in the forefront when it comes to research on Phycoremediation technology, dealing with how micro algae can take up nutrients and clean up waste water more efficiently than any other organisms. This quality of micro algae has been successfully exploited in cleaning industrial effluents during the last 14 years, and PERC has implemented small scale and large scale treatment plants based on algal technology in a variety of industries in India and abroad. The main advantage of this technology is it is ecofriendly and cost effective.



### **Camilla Orjuela lectured at Fika Without Borders Sri Lanka seminar**

• On Thursday 26 May, SASA continued its Fika Without Borders series with a lecture by Camilla Orjuela, Associate Professor in Peace and Development Research at University of Gothenburg. She held a lecture entitled: Struggles about justice in post-war Sri Lanka. It is now seven years since the long and brutal civil war in Sri Lanka ended. Many questions remain about how to deal with the country's violent past.

In September 2015, the Sri Lankan government co-sponsored a resolution in the United Nations Human Rights Council in which it committed to investigate human rights violations during the war. This lecture looked into how the process of transitional justice in Sri Lanka is proceeding, and the challenges for reconciliation and the new and old conflicts that emerge in the struggles about post-war justice.

### **Andreas Johansson defended thesis on Muslim Politics in Sri Lanka**

• The incumbent SASNET Director Andreas Johansson defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "Pragmatic Muslim Politics. The Case of Sri Lanka Muslim Congress" at Lund University on Friday 27 May 2016.

He has been affiliated to the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR) in Lund, but also connected to the Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University in Växjö/Kalmar, and has therefore had double supervisors, Prof. Olle Qvarnström in Lund and Associate Professor Stefan Arvidsson in Växjö. The faculty opponent was Professor Susanne Olsson from the Department of Ethnology, History of Religions and Gender studies at Stockholm University. In his thesis, Andreas investigates the use of religious terms and symbols in politics, and more specifically Muslim politics. Its aim is to analyze the role of religious terms and symbols within a non-fundamentalist political party, namely the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), a Muslim political party that has been part of the democratic process in Sri Lanka since the 1980s. Andreas' research is based upon three field work trips in 2006, 2011 and 2013 respectively, both of them completed with the help of the American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies.



### **Jacco Visser participated in Bangladesh workshop in Lisbon**

On 26 and 27 May 2016 the Bangladesh Studies Network organized its second annual meeting at the faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FCSH) at the New University of Lisbon. The meeting, a follow up on the first Bangladesh Study Network meeting held in Copenhagen with SASNET support in April 2015, consisted of three panel with presentations by scholars in the field of Bangladesh Studies presenting their latest work. Jacco Visser represented SASNET at the workshop.

## **JUNE 2016**

### **Khalid Wasim from TISS visited SASNET in Lund**



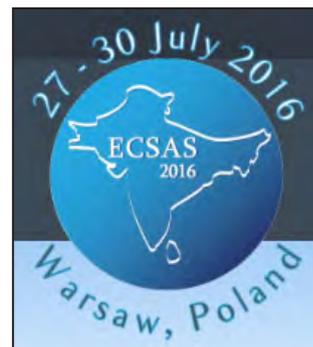
• On Monday 20 June 2016, Assistant Professor Khalid Wasim from the School of Rural Development at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai, India, met with SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. Wasim had come to Europe for a month long stay at University of Münster in Germany, but took a chance also to visit SASNET with an aim to search for research collaboration. His focus area is Violent conflicts and Ethnic Movements in South Asia.

At TISS, he teaches courses on Political Theory, Identity Politics in South Asia and State, Polity and Democracy in South Asia. His 2012 PhD thesis in Political Science was completed at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) in Bangalore. It was entitled "Kashmir Conflict: A People-centric Study" and was based on fieldwork undertaken in the conflict prone areas of Kashmir. More recently, Dr. Wasim has completed a research project in collaboration with London School of Economics (LSE) on "Violence against Women in Conflict Zone: A Study of Rapes by Military in Kashmir".

## JULY 2016

### Lars Eklund reported from 24th European conference on south Asian studies in Warsaw

• The 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies – ECSAS 2016 was successfully held at the University of Warsaw, Poland from 27 to 30 July 2016. The biannual conference, organised by the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) was hosted by the Faculty of Oriental Studies at University of Warsaw. A total number of 49 panels and 480 papers were accepted, including interesting panels on Mediating South Asian religious traditions; Politicizing Hunger: Famine, Food security and Political Legitimacy in South Asia (19th & 20th century); Print journalism in modern South Asia; Security challenges in contemporary India-Pakistan relations; and Policing the city – how public order and security are conceptualised and delivered in contemporary South Asia. Lars Eklund, also treasurer for the EASAS, participated in the conference and networked with SASNET partners.



## AUGUST 2016

## SEPTEMBER 2016

### Tribhuvan University representatives visited Lund University

• On Tuesday 6 September 2016, Dr. Bal Mukunda Bhandari, Director, International Office, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, made a courtesy visit to Lund University, along with Hari Maya Sharma, Lecturer at Tribhuvan University and also a PhD Student connected to Aarhus University, Denmark. The visit was made in connection with a week-long stay in Denmark. Dr. Bhandari is in charge of the different collaboration programmes and MoUs that TU has with foreign universities, including several Danish universities, especially Aarhus, Aalborg and Roskilde.

In Lund Bhandari and Sharma met with Elisabeth Axell, Regional Coordinator for South and Central Asia at the Division for External Relations, Strategic Partnerships and Networks, Lund University, and SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund, both old acquaintances of Bhandari, who was involved in the 2012 Erasmus Mundus Action 2 Asia Regional mobility programme EMEA coordinated by Lund University (with TU being a partner university).



### 31 young South Asian promising leaders came for 2016 SI programme

• The 2016 edition of the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) leadership programme initiated by the Swedish Institute had 31 participants, three from Afghanistan, and seven each from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund is involved in the programme, as a member of the selection committee, and on 15 September 2016 he attended the final session of the three-week long Stockholm programme, establishing contacts with several interesting people.

The second module will take place for a week in February/March 2017 in Malmö/Sweden to continue the exchange and follow up the development of their work. The module will also include workshops and seminars with speakers and build on the sharing of the participants' own experiences and knowledge. The organisers look forward to collaboration with SASNET, just like what happened with the previous programme, when SASNET along with its student organisation SASA, organised a Fika without borders event in Lund for the participants attending the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme.





### Successful SASNET conference on the Future of Everyday Life in South Asia

• On 20-22 September 2016, SASNET successfully organized a conference entitled "Modern Matters: Negotiating the Future of Everyday Life in South Asia" at Lund University. The conference attracted more than 60 researchers, Swedish and European, but a large number of them also came from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Eight panels related to Modernity in South Asia were organised:

- Panel 1. Religion and Modernity in South Asia  
Chaired by Dr. Clemens Cavallin, Religious Studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- Panel 2. Mapping Subaltern Modernities in Neoliberal India  
Chaired by Dr. Kenneth Bo Nielsen, Department of Sociology, University of Bergen, Norway
- Panel 3. Beyond the Desirable: Critical Perspectives on Media-Modernity  
Chaired by Dr. Britta Ohm, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern, Switzerland; Dr. Per Ståhlberg, Department of Media and Communication Studies, Södertörn University, Sweden; and Dr. Vibodh Parthasarathi, Centre for Culture, Media & Governance, Jamia Milia Islamia University, India.
- Panel 4. Staging Marriage and Modernity among the Middle Classes in South Asia  
Chaired by Dr. Anindita Datta, University of Delhi, India
- Panel 5. The Transformation of Caste  
Chaired by Prof. Staffan Lindberg, Lund University & Dr. Neil Webster, DIIS, Copenhagen, Denmark
- Panel 6. Youthful Modernities: Negotiating the Past, Present and the Future  
Chaired by Prof. Ravinder Kaur, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, India; and Prof. Rajni Palriwala, University of Delhi, India.
- Panel 7. Women and Gender in South Asian Modernity: Vulnerabilities and Violence  
Chaired by Dr. Ulrika Andersson, Lund University; Dr. Anna Lindberg, Lund University & Dr. Nishi Mitra, TISS, India
- Panel 8. Open panel for papers that did not fit any of the other panels but still made original contributions to understanding of modernity in South Asia.

Chaired by Dr. Henrik Chetan Aspengren, Linnaeus University, Sweden  
The three keynote speakers were Prof. Dipesh Chakrabarty from the Dept. of History at University of Chicago, USA; Associate Professor Sumi Madhok from the Gender Institute at London School of Economics (LSE), UK; and Prof. Sasanka Perera, Dept of Sociology at South Asian University (SAU), Delhi, India.

They all gave much appreciated public lectures.

On the final day, at the vote of thanks, unexpected news for most of the participants were given. Prof. Ravinder Kaur from IIT Delhi and Dr. Neil Webster from DIIS in Copenhagen broke the news that both Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund, SASNET director and deputy director respectively, will retire by the end of 2016. They showered praise over the work being done over the years by Anna and Lars, and also by Prof. Staffan Lindberg, the first director of SASNET, who was present on stage, as well as the rest of the current SASNET staff consisting of Dr. Andreas Johansson; Elina Vidarsson; and Andreas Mattsson. Staffan also held a lengthy speech on the history of SASNET from its inception in January 2001 till now.



## Successful 2016 SASNET media workshop at Lund University

• On 23 September 2016, SASNET and School of Journalism (Journalistutbildningen) at Lund University organised a workshop day in the LUX building. The workshop got very good reviews. It consisted of five interesting presentations. First out were Vibodh Parthasarathi, Associate Professor in Centre for Culture Media & Governance at Jamia Milia Islamia and Andreas Mattsson, project coordinator for SASNET and program director for School of Journalism at Lund University. Vibodh and Andreas talked about the media challenges in India and Sweden and highlighted the similarities and differences. Zeenah Annez, Research Associate in the Researchers at Work (RAW) programme at Centre for Internet & Society, held a presentation over Skype about some of the Media transitions in Indian newsrooms. Shaheen Ahmed, PhD student in Visual Studies from the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, talked about the circulation of news through digital media. Tasneem Khalil, Swedish-Bangladeshi journalist and editor of Independent World Report, talked about independent journalism and the Internet. Josefin Wennang, former journalist student at School of Journalism at Lund University, shared her experience as a Swedish Journalist student in India. In 2015 Josefin was part of a Linneaus-Palme exchange programme, which gave her the opportunity to conduct journalistic field work in Kerala, India. Andreas Mattsson summarized the day with some final remarks.



The event was part of the Sweden–South Asia Media Project. Launched in 2015, the Sweden–South Asia Media Project aims to study and report on the growing digital media landscape in South Asia and link these results together with the development of the Swedish media landscape. The purpose is to create a forum for exchange of ideas, perspectives and future outlooks on the South Asian and Swedish media landscapes.

## SASNET/SASA seminar on Female Community Health Volunteers in Nepal



• On Thursday 29 September, the South Asian Students Association at Lund University (SASA) held a Fika Without Borders lecture with Lalita Bashyal, PhD Scholar in Centre for the Study of Social System at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi. She held a lecture entitled: "The Status of Women and Female Community Health Volunteers in Nepal". Female Community Health Volunteers work as a bridge between community and the health system of Nepal. Absenteeism of medical professionals is still prevalent in rural part of Nepal. In this meager situation, Female Community Health Volunteers role become vital in the rural health sector where more than 70% of the people reside. Hence this seminar will try to divulge the role and status of Female Community Health Volunteers working in the same community they belong to in order to improve health and status of women in Nepal.

## OCTOBER 2016

### SASNET board meeting approved organisational changes

• On Monday 10 October 2016, the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) held its final board meeting as an autonomous unit of Lund University. On 1 January 2017, an organizational change takes place, and SASNET will merge with the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), and become a subdivision of CMES. The focus of SASNET henceforth will be on South Asia related research and teaching at Lund University. The members of the board approved the new organisation, but added that they hope that SASNET's brand continues to be independent and suggested that a reference group should be appointed with representatives from several faculties. The Board also emphasized the importance of SASNET's national network function, and that it somehow may survive. Since SASNET now will merge with CMES, this meeting was also the final one for the board that has been in charge of business since 2013. From January 2017, the board of CMES takes over the responsibility.

### Social entrepreneurs awarded at SASNET Media and Innovation Day in Mumbai



• SASNET and the Centre for Work, Technology and Society (WTS) at Lund university jointly organised a successful Media and Innovation Day at Bungalow 9 in Bandra West, Mumbai. Over 80 people (students, researchers, media entrepreneurs, and journalists) participated in the workshop that was sponsored by the Consulate General of Sweden in Mumbai. SASNET was represented by project leader Andreas Mattsson and communications officer Elina Vidarsson. The day started with an introduction by Andreas Mattsson and Divya Rajagopal, the co-founders of the Sweden-South Asia Media

Project. Next session was an insightful opening speech by Nils Eliasson, the Acting Head of the Consulate General of Sweden in Mumbai, where he shared his experiences of human rights and also brought up the fact that Sweden this year celebrates 250 years of press freedom since it is the anniversary of the Swedish Press Freedom Act (Tryckfrihetsförordningen). After the consul's speech, Andreas Mattson hold a presentation about Media and Innovation in a Digital Context. Before the High Tea Elin Åström, sustainable manager at H&M India Retail, hold an inspirational talk about how to make innovations sustainable. After the break K.P. Jayasankar and Aditi Maddeli from School of Media and Cultural Studies at TISS Mumbai, hold an interesting presentation about the multimedia web archive (Castemopolitan Mumbai) that seeks to contribute to the debates around caste in the metropolitans in India.

Paul D'Souza with his innovation Touché was the prize winner of #InnovationForGood 2016. The award carries a cash prize of INR 100,000, and it recognises innovators who have created platforms at the intersection of technology, media and human rights. Touché is a device with an affordable refreshable braille display. Paul hopes that this device will contribute to making Braille literacy relevant again.

Three candidates were shortlisted for the award, and they were all given a chance to present themselves. Aditi Gupta, co-founder of Menstrupedia, presented her project that aims to empower parents and teachers with educational tools to teach young girls about aims to empower parents and teachers with educational tools to teach young girls about periods. Rupesh Mandal and Lokesh Khemani presented their Spothole app, which is a Mobile app for citizens to use to report the GPS location of a pothole. The app is currently in pilot mode in Mumbai and is part of their "Fill in the Potholes Project". The project aims to establish an unified, open and transparent channel for Citizen-Governance partnership to solve civic problems.



### Researcher from University Kerala spent time as guest researcher at Lund University

- On 15 October, Jishnu J.R, Ph.D Scholar from the Department of Law at University of Kerala in India, returned to India after spending a month as a SASNET funded scholar at the Dept. of Law, Lund University. Jishnu with an interest in property and cyber laws is pursuing his Ph.D on "Copyright and trademark aspects of social media" at University of Kerala. During his stint in Lund, he was also provided with the opportunity to participate and co-chair a panel with Henrik Chetan Aspengren, Linnaeus University in the conference entitled "Modern Matters: Negotiating the Future in Everyday Life in South Asia."

### SASNET/SASA seminar on Gandhi's Self-rule and the Critique of Modern Society

- On Thursday 20 October, SASA held a Fika Without Borders lecture with Erik Ringmar, Senior lecturer in Department of Political Science at Lund University. His presentatio was entitled: "Self-rule and the Critique of Modern Society". In his Hind Swaraj, Mohandas Gandhi was sharply critical of modern society as foisted upon India by the British. Yet this critique of modern society was itself quite a staple of conservative, romantic and reactionary thought in Europe itself. In his talk Erik Ringmar explored this connection, reflecting on the meaning of 'self-rule.

### SASNET attended 45th University of Wisconsin–Madison Conference on South Asia



- The 45th Annual Madison Conference on South Asia was held 20–23 October 2016. This year's theme was DECAY. The conference, sponsored by the Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's, attracted over 750 scholars and specialists on South Asia, coming from countries all over the world and much of the United States. This year the Joseph W. Elder keynote lecture at the conference was given by Professor Radhika Coomaraswamy, former under-geneal secretary from Sri Lanka, and the 2016 Plenary Address speaker was Pankaj Butalia.

This year, SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund participated in the Madi-

son conference. The Madison conference is about double the size of the corresponding European South Asian studies conferences (this year held in Warsaw, Poland in July), and this makes it even more difficult to choose which panels to attend. Alf Gunvald Nilsen, University of Bergen, and Kenneth Bo Nielsen, University of Oslo, were the only Scandinavian panelists at the conference, in a panel entitled "Revisiting Dis/possession Politics: The Macroview of India", chaired by Anand Vaidya – also based at Bergen, Norway.



## Lars Eklund visited SALC at University of Chicago

• After attending the Madison conference at Madison, Lars Eklund did not return immediately to Sweden but instead he travelled to the nearby metropolitan city of Chicago in order to visit the University of Chicago on invitation from Professor Dipesh Chakraborty who recently visited Lund University as the keynote speaker for the SASNET conference on Modernity in South Asia.

Unfortunately Prof. Chakraborty was out of station at the time, but he had made arrangements for Lars to visit the prime institution of interest, namely the Center for South Asian Civilizations and Culture (SALC), located in the impressive and beautiful late 19th century building Foster Hall where he met with Gary Tubb, Anupama and Guru Ramakrishnan Professor, Chair of the SALC Department (and a renowned Sanskrit scholar), as well as Associate Professors Whitney Cox and Rochona Majumdar and Assistant Professor Thibaut d'Hubert. They discussed various forms of possible collaboration between SASNET/Lund University and University of Chicago. Lars had a mission to explore this issue from

SASNET new acting Director, Dr. Andreas Johansson, who is actively searching for new partners in developing South Asian studies in Lund.



NOVEMBER 2016

## Pakistani activist against bonded labour visited SASNET

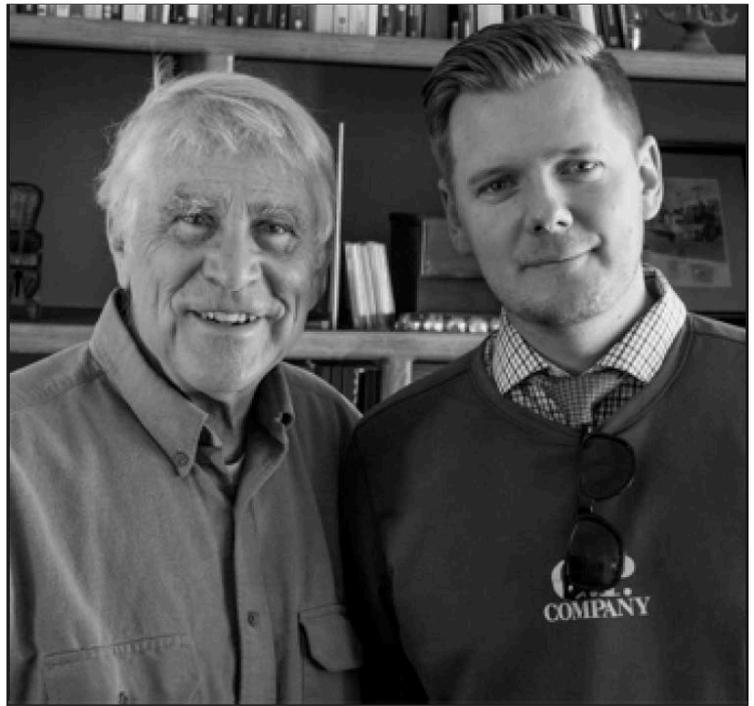
• On Wednesday 23 November 2016, Liaqat Javed, Executive Director for the Backwards Rehabilitation and Improvement Commission Pakistan (BRIC), visited SASNET at Lund University. Javed had come to Lund – as part of a Sweden tour – on invitation from the regional outfit of ABF, Sweden's largest adult non-profit educational organisation and a collaboration partner of SASNET. His mission is to share his experiences from workers' rights among brick kiln workers in Pakistan. Being born in a family of bonded labour working in the brick kilns around Lahore himself, but later being able to get proper education and have his family set free from the debt slavery, Javed is a strong proponent of mobilizing the disadvantaged groups in his home country, exploited workers, tribal groups etc. In Lund a public seminar was organised by the Fairtrade City Lund organisation.



Javed was accompanied by Christoffer Sjöstrand from ABF MittSkåne, and met with SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund and communications officer Elina Vidarsson at SASNET's new office in Villa Norlind at Biskopsgatan 5. They had a fruitful discussion on the issues BRIC highlights, and possible future common activities such as organising seminars. As a side effect of the meeting, Christoffer Sjöstrand and the SASNET representatives agreed upon reviving the public brownbag seminars presenting Lund University's South Asia research that ABF and SASNET organised during the period 2011-2013 at Lunds konsthall. A new series of lectures will be planned for the spring 2017.

## Andreas Johansson visited University of California Santa Barbara

• In the end of November 2016, Acting SASNET director Andreas Johansson travelled to University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) for a week-long stay in order to explore the possibility for future research collaborations between UCSB and Lund University. The tour was funded by a grant from Knut and Alice Wallenberg's Foundation. At UCSB Andreas had several meetings, first with people connected to the Global Studies Consortium at UCSB, like Victor Faesell and Victor Rios. He also discussed possibilities for research collaboration with Michael Stohl, director, Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies; Barbara Holdrege; Department for South Asian Studies; Kathgleen Moore, Department of Religious Studies studies; and Sameer Pandya, Asian American Studies. Finally, Andreas met with Professor Mark Jürgensmeyer to venture possible opportunity to invite him as a Guest Professor in Lund. *Photo to the right.*



## DECEMBER 2016

### SASNET seminar on "Eco-ethnicity" in National Parks in Megacities

• Professor Frédéric Landy, director at the French Institute of Pondicherry, India, held a seminar entitled "National parks within the urban agglomerations of Mumbai, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town: between urbanization and globalization, which place for 'eco-ethnicity'?" at Lund University on Thursday 8 December 2016. In his talk, Frédéric Landy focused on his notion of "eco-ethnicity" (the environmental image of groups, that can provide them soft power or not) in national parks in megacities such as Mumbai, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town. The seminar was jointly organised by SASNET and the Department of Human Geography and the Human Ecology Division at Lund University and was held at Geocentrum I.

### Final decision to change organizational status of SASNET

• On Thursday 8 December 2016, Lund University Vice Chancellor Torbjörn von Schantz formally decided to change the organizational status of SASNET, from being an independent university unit within the Lund University Special Activities (USV) to becoming a sub-unit within the university's Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES). The change will take place from 1 January 2017, and on the same day, the Directions for SASNET cease to be valid, and the SASNET board is relieved from office. The same applies to the position as Director.

Acting Director Andreas Johansson will be head of the SASNET sub-unit within CMES, and he will be assisted in running SASNET local activities by communications officer Elina Vidarsson, who will also take over some of the responsibilities previously held by SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund – who retires after 16 years in service on 31 December.

From 1 January 2017, SASNET will also be manned by two post-doc researchers, Maria Tonini and Admir Skodo. Maria defended her PhD at Lund University's Department of Gender Studies in 2016 with a thesis entitled "The Ambiguities of Recognition – Young Queer Sexualities in Contemporary India".

Admir Skodo earned his PhD in history from the European University Institute. He has held research or teaching positions at the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, Berkeley City College, and San Quentin Prison University Project. His research field is modern transnational and global history of ideas and immigration.