

# Nordic South Asia Network

## Nordic Newsletter 17 – 16 March 2018

Submitted by [admin](#) on Fri, 2018-03-16 11:23

### NORDIC SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

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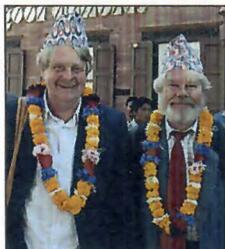
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### Research Community News

#### • Edited India book by Staffan Lindberg and Lars Eklund to be launched on 3 April

Professor emeritus [Staffan Lindberg](#) and NSAN editor [Lars Eklund](#) have finalised a new book, an edited volume on Indian Society, History, Economics, Religion and Culture. It is written in a popular scientific mode in Swedish language. Besides the two co-editors, articles are written by eminent Scandinavian South Asia scholars including Dr. Kenneth Nielsen and Dr. Anne Waldrop at University of Oslo, Prof. Knut Jacobsen at University of Bergen, Prof. Jørgen Dige Pedersen at Aarhus University, Dr. Henrik Chetan Aspengren, Linnaeus University, Växjö and also the Institute of Foreign Affairs (UI) in Stockholm.

The book, entitled "*Miraklet Indien och dess baksida*" will be published by Palmkrons förlag in Lund and be introduced with a book launch event on Tuesday 3 April 2018 at Lund University's SASNET office at Villa Norlind, Biskopsgatan 5 ([more information](#)). It will also be launched at University of Oslo.



Staffan and Lars have worked together on South Asia since the late 1970s, first with the SYDASIEN magazine - launched by Staffan and colleagues in 1976 and edited by Lars for 25 years (1982-2007); and then successfully launching the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) on a Swedish government initiative in 2001. As a close-knit professional team combining academic and journalistic know-how they travelled extensively in the whole South Asia region, establishing an extremely wide network of affiliated researchers in Scandinavia, Europe and South Asia, till Staffan retired from service in 2007 and Lars quit in late 2016. (*Photo from Nepal in 2005*).



Staffan Lindberg och Lars Eklund (red)

#### • Joint initiative by three universities to share Bengali Summer School in Heidelberg

The South Asia Institute at Heidelberg University, Germany, is hosting a "Bengali Summer School" for beginners and advanced learners during the period 15-30 August 2018. This first-time event is a joint initiative by the Heidelberg Department of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures, in collaboration with the Institute of South and Central Asia, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic; and the Chair of South Asian Studies, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland. The medium of instruction will be English. All those who are keen on making their first steps in the language or want to deepen their communication and reading skills are welcome to register. To register, please contact [hiwisnsl@gmail.com](mailto:hiwisnsl@gmail.com). Registration deadline is 31 May 2018. [More information](#).



#### • EASAS Research Student Award to be presented in Paris



One of the stated aims of the European Association for South Asian Studies is to encourage and support young

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scholars working in the field of South Asian Studies. In pursuit of this aim, the Association is offering awards linked to its biennial conference. Awards are to be made for the most outstanding papers by currently registered research students presenting at the conference. At the 25th EASAS conference to be held 24-27 July 2018 in Paris, up to three awards of €300 each will be made. All current PhD students fully registered and presenting at the conference may submit their paper for consideration. The submitted papers will be considered by a panel of judges selected by the EASAS Council. It is hoped that by offering three Awards, the competition will reflect the full range of disciplines represented at the conference. Deadline for paper submission is 30 June 2018. [More information.](#)

#### • Kolkata historian guest researcher at Uppsala University

During the period 8-30 April 2018, Associate Professor Ritwika Biswas from the Department of History, University of Calcutta, will be visiting Uppsala University, and its Dept. of History. Her visit is part of the successful Linneaus Palme exchange programme between the two history departments that has been running for the past 10 years. Dr. Biswas is a specialist on the leftist movements in Bengal, and also on the Partition of India. In 2011, she published a book entitled *"Radical Face of Democratic Liberalism: A Study of Communist Politics in West Bengal 1947-77"* based on her 2009 PhD thesis. Currently she is engaged in research work on a theme related to the idea of governance as reflected in the Bengali writings during the period of 1858-1950.

If any other Scandinavian university has an interest to invite Dr Biswas for a seminar, contact can be had through Prof. [Margret Hunt](#), coordinator for the Uppsala/Kolkata Linneaus Palme collaboration.



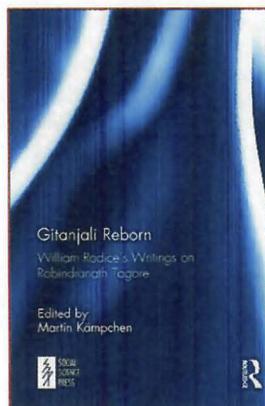
#### • Heidelberg University seeks successor to Professor Dharampal-Frick

The South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University, Germany, invites applications for a Full Professorship (W3) in „Modern History of South Asia“, to succeed eminent Professor Gita Dharampal-Frick from October 2019. The position has an emphasis on the History of South Asia from the early modern period onward. The candidate is expected to be competent in one or more South Asian languages and to cover a broad spectrum of the discipline in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

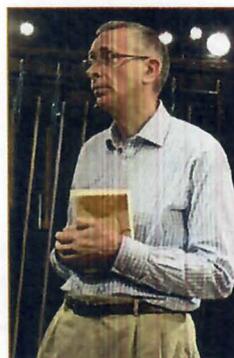
The South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University, with seven academic departments and four additional affiliated professors, has a particular focus on interdisciplinary research, and has been very successful in attracting research grants for joint research projects. The candidate is expected to participate in interdepartmental research projects and to collaborate with other departments at the South Asia Institute as well as with the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies and the Department of History. The application deadline is 15 March 2018. [Full information.](#)



#### • William Radice's unpublished papers now presented by Martin Kämpchen



*Gitanjali Reborn. William Radice's Writings on Rabindranath Tagore.* Edited by Martin Kämpchen. Routledge 2018. The well-known British scholar William Radice, himself a recognized poet and a Rabindranath Tagore specialist, delved into the deeper meaning of Tagore's poems and songs, and discussed his ideas on education and the environment with an insight probably no other Westerner has. He also translated Tagore's short stories and short poems, and finally in 2012 was able to make a complete breakthrough by translating *Gitanjali* afresh and restoring Tagore's original English manuscript. Martin Kämpchen, residing in Santiniketan, West Bengal and Germany, and is a reputed Tagore scholar and writer, has edited the new volume. It should be mentioned that Prof. Radice met with a severe traffic accident in 2014, but has since somewhat recovered. [More information about the book.](#)



William Radice is a friend of the NSAN editor Lars Eklund. He attended the 2004 ECMSAS conference in Lund as a commentator ([read his report](#)), and in 2011 and 2013 Radice was invited by Lars for lecture tours in Scandinavia in connection with the Tagore jubilee events.

#### • Shashi Tharoor proves Churchill's role as a racist war criminal

On 10 March 2018, The Washington Post published an article by Indian writer and MP Shashi Tharoor on Winston Churchill - in connection with the Oscar award to a new film. The article is entitled *"In Winston Churchill, Hollywood rewards a mass murderer"*, Tharoor claiming that the British prime minister during the second world war was one of the great mass murderers of the 20th century, yet he is the only one, unlike Hitler and Stalin, to have escaped historical odium in the West. Instead he has been crowned with a Nobel Prize (for literature!), and now, an actor portraying him (Gary Oldman) has been awarded an Oscar.

Shashi Tharoor reminds about Churchill's constant racist policies throughout his career. In the fight for Irish independence, Churchill, in his capacity as secretary of state for war and air, was in favour of bombing Irish protesters, suggesting in 1920 that airplanes should use "machine-gun fire or bombs" to scatter them. Dealing with unrest in today's

Iraq in 1921, as secretary of state for the colonies, Churchill acted as a war criminal, ordering a large-scale bombing of Mesopotamia, with an entire village wiped out in 45 minutes. In Afghanistan, Churchill declared that all Pashtuns who resist will be killed without quarter. Every tribesman caught was speared or cut down at once.

But the principal victims of Winston Churchill were the Indians — "a beastly people with a beastly religion," as he charmingly called them. He wanted to use chemical weapons in India but was shot down by his cabinet colleagues, whom he criticized for their "squeamishness," declaring that "the objections of the India Office to the use of gas against natives are unreasonable." Thanks to Churchill, some 4 million Bengalis starved to death in the 1943 famine. Churchill ordered the diversion of food from starving Indian civilians to well-supplied British soldiers and even to top up European stockpiles in Greece and elsewhere. When reminded of the suffering of his Indian victims, his response was that the famine was their own fault, he said, for "breeding like rabbits." [Read the full article.](#)

[Compare NSAN article on the new film about the 1944 Bengali Famine.](#)

#### • NCI invites applications for Academic Activity/Collaboration Grants

The Nordic Centre in India university



A silhouette of former British prime minister Winston Churchill is silhouetted in front of the Houses of Parliament in London in 2015. (Gauri Mukherjee/Reuters)

consortium (NCI) has introduced a new Academic Activity/Collaboration Grant, with a purpose to build research ties between its member universities and Indian counterparts. Two projects or academic events, each one with a maximum grant of Euros 3.500, will be selected during 2018. A precondition is that an application involves more than one NCI member university along with Indian partners, and the application should be made by researchers on PhD level and above. Deadline for a project during the fall semester 2018 is 15 April, and the corresponding date for the spring semester 2019 projects/events will be 15 October 2018. Applications will be evaluated by an NCI Grants Committee based on the heft of the project description, academic credentials, potential for long-term Indo-Nordic cooperation and benefits for the Nordic Centre in India. Upon completion of the event, the main applicant will be required to submit a written report to the Nordic Centre of India. [Full information](#).

#### • Jönköping University co-organised 5th Media Summit in Mumbai

On 16-17 February 2018, the [School of Education and Communication \(HLK\)](#) at Jönköping University co-organised an International conference entitled "*Mediamorphosis. Identity and Participation*" in Mumbai, India. The Indian partner institution was the Department of Mass Media at Kishinchand Chellaram College (KC College) and the conference was presented as KC College's 5th International Media Summit. The keynote speakers were Dr. **Ernesto Abalo**, senior lecturer from Jönköping University, and Dr **Jayalakshmi Garrabost**, Associate Professor from Xi'an Jiantong – Liverpool University, China.

The conference became an enriching experience as it provided students and participants a platform to interact and learn with the leaders from the education field and media industry. 27 papers were presented, and a panel discussion on the topic 'Redefining Media' was held with prominent personalities like senior Supreme Court lawyer Mr **Jamshed Mistry**, Bollywood actress **Kajal Aggarwal**, and **Ethel Da Costa**, Head of Media & Publicity at the Goa International Film festival. Jönköping University School of Education and Communication was also represented by Professor **Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta**, Professor **Mia Verhoeff-Friman**, Associate Professor **Ylva Lindberg**, Senior lecturer **Anette Svensson**, PhD candidate **Lars Almén**, and teaching staff **Johan Bäcklund**, besides the masters student **Loraine Gauteul** and the International Relations Manager **Marie Fullsta**.

KC College was established in 1954. It won the 'Best College, (Urban Area) Award' by the University of Mumbai in January 2015. The college strongly believes in using innovative methods of learning for the benefit of its students. This is evident from the fact that the Department of Mass Media has been ranked among the top 10 colleges for media courses in India by the India Today Magazine, and is fortunate to have some of the best people from the industry to be a part of their programmes – Bachelor of Mass Media (BMM), BA in Films, Television and New Media Production (BA-FTNMP), Masters in Communication and Journalism (MACJ) and Masters in Entertainment, Media & Advertising (MA-EMA). [More information about the 5th International Media Summit](#).



#### • SYDASIEN Magazine Index 1977-2007

The non-commercial magazine SYDASIEN was published from 1977 till 2010, and carried an amazing amount of valuable material by Swedish and Scandinavian South Asia experts, academics, journalists and others. All issues have been indexed and are now available as pdf-files on the NSAN web site. [Go for the index](#).

For 34 years the Swedish-language print magazine SYDASIEN played an important role to disseminate news and information on South Asia. With popularly written articles on politics, history, literature and culture in the eight countries that consist South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) SYDASIEN was a unique feature in Scandinavia till the magazine closed down in late 2010. Lars Eklund, now NSAN editor was the editor in chief for 25 years, during the period 1982–2007. From 2008 till the closure in 2010, the magazine was edited by John Sewirratne in Norrköping. However, Since 2011 SYDASIEN has resurfaced in a brand new shape, as a high-quality Internet based web magazine. It was launched by the new editor of the magazine, Ms. Johanna Sommansson.



#### • Linnaeus University presents its India related research

Linnaeus University with the two campuses at Växjö and Kalmar continues to be a strong hub for South Asian studies in Sweden. On Thursday 22 March 2018, at 16.00, a book launch event will take place at the Växjö Campus/Teleborg castle. It is "*India: Research on Cultural Encounters and Representations at Linnaeus University*", an edited volume by Dr. Billore, and Dr. Kristina Myrvold at the Department of Cultural Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Humanities. In the book, ongoing research projects at the university are presented. It will be preceded with a research seminar about "*What's in a Name? Race and the Science of Colonization in Australia in 1800*", organized by Linnaeus University Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies. [More information](#).

NSAN editor Lars Eklund already visited the Växjö campus on Tuesday 21 November 2017, and met Dr. Soniya Billore, Senior researcher at the Dept. of Marketing, School of Business and Economics. He was able to receive a copy of the book just being published. The book includes articles by Dr. Henrik Chetan Aspegren on "*Statistical Counter-representations of India 1860s-1880s*"; by Prof. Margareta Petersson on "*A Danish Family in India: Gendered Colonial Upbringing, Everyday Life, and Cultural Encounters*"; by Dr. Radhika Krishnan on "*The Dynamics of Railway Building; Through Joseph Stephens*"; by Kristina Myrvold on "*Christian Missionaries and Book Printing in Nineteenth-Century India*";



by Prof. Hans Hägerdal on "South Asian Migrants and Early Modern Colonialism"; by Dr. Stefan Lagrosen on "India's Ayurveda Health System, Implications for Western Workplace Health"; and a few other contributions. The book is published by Makadam Förlag in Gothenburg. [More information.](#)

- **Contact journeys to South Asia and other travel reports by Lars Eklund**

Go for <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/content/contact-journeys-south-asia-and-other-travel-reports>

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

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

## Educational News

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

See <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/education-news>

## Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

- **Huddinge seminar on Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar**

On Wednesday 7 March 2018, 14.00-16.00, the Swedish Labor Movement's archives and libraries (Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek, ARAB) in Huddinge, south of Stockholm, organised a public seminar dedicated to Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Indian lawyer, economist, politician and contributed to many social reforms. Ambedkar fought against Dalits' social discrimination and for women and workers rights. He was India's first justice minister after independence and he was the main architect of the Indian constitution and thus one of the founders of the Indian Republic. Two visiting Indian researchers - Dr. Chitra Sinha and Shivangi Jaiswal - spoke about Ambedkar, with an introduction by Hans Larsson. Chitra Sinha comes from the Center for Gender Studies in Uppsala and Shivangi Jaiswal from Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. [More information.](#)



- **Spring 2018 series of Morgenstjerne seminars at University of Oslo**

The South Asia section at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, arranges a new series of Morgenstjerne lectures during the spring 2018. The seminar series owes its name to Georg Morgenstjerne, who was a renowned Professor of Indo-Iranian languages from 1937 till 1963 at the University of Oslo. (Before that he was actually Professor of Comparative Indo-European Linguistics at University of Gothenburg 1930-1937). Venue for all seminars: P.A.Munchs hus, Blindern, Oslo.

On Thursday 15 March 2018, 14.15-16.00, Associate Professor **Kenneth Bo Nielsen** held a seminar entitled "*Paper Activism: Environmental Struggles in Western India*". [Read more...](#)



On Thursday 3 May, 14.15-16.00, **Mukulika Banerjee** - Associate Professor of Social Anthropology and Director of the India Studies Centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) will hold a seminar entitled "*Cultivating Democracy: 15 years of Election Ethnography from Eastern India*". Currently completing a book manuscript based on 15 years of ethnographic data of rural voters and their multivalent engagement with elections and voting activities in West Bengal, India, she examines the reasons why despite varying odds, India's voter graph continues to rise, making India the largest electoral democracy in the world. [Read more...](#)



On Thursday 31 May 2018, 14.15-17.00, Assistant Professors **Lisa Björkman**, University of Louisville, and **Nicholas Martin**, Universität Zürich, will hold a Morgenstjerne Seminar Double Lecture entitled "*The Anthropology of South Asian Politics Today*".

Lisa has written on the encounter in the Indian city of Mumbai between liberalising market reforms and the materially-dense politics of the city's water infrastructures, exploring the everyday political, social, and material dynamics that produce and inhabit flows of water through the growing and globalising city, whereas Nicholas has done fieldwork mostly been on Punjab, both in Pakistan and in India. His main field has been agrarian change, the evolving nature of patron-client ties, and on debt bondage, and a book entitled *Politics, Landlords and Islam in Pakistan* that was published by Routledge in 2015. [Read more...](#)

- **Afghanistan State building workshop at Lund University**

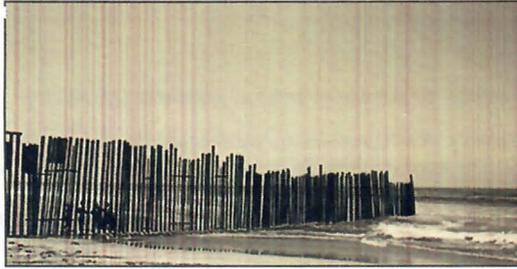
On Monday 23 April 2018, the Dept. of Political Science at Lund University organises a public panel discussion on State Building in Afghanistan in a Global Context. Venue: Edens hörsal, Universitetsplatsen. With its strategic location Afghanistan has been a focus of global politics for many centuries. Despite its fragile nation-state and conflicting ethnic parties, Afghanistan has managed not to formally cede its sovereignty to a colonial power or break up along ethnic lines. How can we explain this historical development? How does the Afghan state function? What role do international organizations and NGOs play in Afghan state-building? What role do the Taliban play? What role does migration play? What role do global Islamist networks play? Can we speak of Afghanistan as a "failed state"? What can the case of Afghanistan teach us about contemporary global politics? Join us for a panel discussion on Afghan state building and the global significance of Afghanistan featuring both scholars and experienced practitioners who have worked in Afghanistan for NGOs and international organizations.



Invited panelists include Professor Robert D. Crews, a historian from Stanford University, USA; and Sari Kouvo - co-Director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network and Associate Professor at the Department of Law, Gothenburg University. Associate Professor Ted Svensson will be the moderator. [Full information about the event.](#)

- **Växjö conference on critical theory, postcoloniality, migration and populism**

On 14-16 June 2018, the Linnaeus University Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies at Linnaeus University in Växjö organises an international conference on critical theory, postcoloniality, migration and populism. The conference is entitled *"Global Challenges: Borders, Populism and the Postcolonial Condition"*, and addresses current global challenges with a focus on the present resurrection of geographical and intellectual borders, the rise of populism in the West and beyond, and the realisation that current geopolitical relations are still deeply informed by the long history of colonialism. Confirmed keynote speakers include Gurminder K Bhambra, Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies at University of Sussex, UK. To facilitate a productive and interdisciplinary meeting, the conference will include scholars from a wide interdisciplinary spectrum, including postcolonial studies, migration studies, animal studies, trauma studies, and ecocriticism.



The conference will be comprised of a number of thematic sessions that include issues such as Contemporary cultural discourses on torture, dignity, and victimization; Sovereignty, violence, and citizenship; Migration, mobility, and borders; and Postcoloniality, nationalism and human rights. Venue for the conference: Teleborg Castle situated on the Växjö campus of Linnaeus University. [More information.](#)

• **India and China in focus for 10th ADI conference in Copenhagen**

On 18-20 June 2018, the 10th Annual Asian Dynamics Initiative (ADI) Conference is being held by the University of Copenhagen. The theme for the 2018 conference is *"Transition and Disruption in Asia"*, focusing on the spectacular rise of China and India. Therefore the organisers claim that it is only natural that these populous new superpowers dominate scholarly and media attention, while other regions in Asia are foregrounded only in exceptional moments of environmental, political or economic crisis. Yet the latter, too, confirm the need to conceive of Asia as a site of accelerated change. This principle also applies to the pre-modern period, in spite of the fact that Eurocentric observers preferred to conceptualize this vast space as a permanently stagnant region. Among the organisers appear Prof. Jørgen Delman and Ravinder Kaur, both from the Dept. of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies. [Read more...](#)



• **Karlstad University conference on Education, Mobility, and Future Challenges"**

On 29-30 August 2018, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Karlstad University organises an International conference on *"Education, Mobility, and Future Challenges"* in collaboration with the Malaviya Centre for Peace Research (MCPR) and the UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi, India. The conference draws synergy from the ongoing collaboration between the two universities and, aims to learn from the convergent and divergent experiences of Sweden and India in evolving pedagogies to promote the imperatives of democracy and development. It will be the third session in a series of conferences on Sweden and India.

The previous two conferences, held at MCPR, Varanasi in April 2017, and in Karlstad June 2016, addressed the topic of *"Women, Activism and Politics"*, and marked the beginning of a mutually rewarding interaction between scholars, activists and politicians from Sweden and India. The June 2016 conference deliberations in Sweden and the April 2017 conference held in India have raised fresh issues and agendas that will be addressed in forthcoming conferences. Abstracts should be submitted by 26 March 2018. [Full information.](#)



• **Jönköping conference on Genres and Media Landscapes in Virtual-Physical Learning Spaces**

On 12-14 September 2018, the School of Education and Communication (HLK) at Jönköping University organises an International conference of the CCD (Communication, Culture & Diversity) network. The conference is entitled *"Genres and Media Landscapes in Virtual-Physical Learning Spaces. Moving Frontlines?"* (GEM 2018). It aims to create a multi-disciplinary platform for dialoguing on the every-day uses of modality rich, parallel, linked, and hybrid, communicative genres that are embedded in media landscapes and circulate in learning spaces inside and outside institutional settings. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 April 2018.



The conference is chaired by Associate Professor Ylva Lindberg, and the committee also includes Professor Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta, previously working at the School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (HumEs) at Örebro University, that hosted a similar conference entitled *"Virtual Learning Sites as Linguistic Spaces"* (ViLS-2) in 2015 ([more information](#)).

The invited speakers include Imtiaz Haznain, Professor of Sociolinguistics at Aligarh Muslim University; Manjula Srinivas, Associate Professor at K.C. College in Mumbai; and Sanjay Ranade, Associate Professor in Communication and Journalism at Mumbai University. [Full information about the GEM 2018 conference.](#)

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

See <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/lectures-in-scandinavia>

## Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

• **Conferences connected to South Asian studies all over the World**

See <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/conferences/conferences>

## South Asia related culture in Scandinavia

• **Information about South Asia related culture in Sweden/ Scandinavia**

See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/cultural-events>

**Best regards****Lars Eklund**

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Nordic South Asia Network (NSAN) newsletters are produced by Lars Eklund.

Till 31 December 2016 he worked as deputy director for the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET), based at Lund University.

After retiring from SASNET, Lars runs the NSAN web site and produces monthly newsletters as a follow-up venture to the old SASNET Newsletter service that was closed down in April 2016.

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