



The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is proposing to organize an International Conference on “Bharat’s Cultural Expanse across Asia and Beyond” from 14–16 October 2026. The conference commemorates the centenary of the Greater India Society (1926–2026), which pioneered scholarly engagement with India’s civilizational interactions across Asia and beyond.

Schedule of the conference

Day 1:

Inauguration of the Conference by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi

- Plenary Session 1: India’s Civilizational Expanse: New perspectives for the 21st century
- Plenary Session 2: Centenary Commemoration - The Greater India Society: A scholarly legacy revisited

Day 2 & 3:

Academic Sessions on the Themes:

- **Religious Traditions & Knowledge Systems:** transmission of Buddhism and Hinduism; Sufi orders and syncretic movements; Indian systems of knowledge including Ayurveda, astronomy, and mathematics.
- **Languages across Civilizations:** the spread of Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit; translation movements; Sanskrit epigraphy beyond the subcontinent; manuscript cultures across Asia.
- **Art & Architectural Traditions:** Intangible Heritage, temple cosmologies and sacred architecture; Buddhist and Hindu iconography; performing arts; shared musical vocabularies and craft traditions.
- **Cultural Fusion & Shared Traditions:** maritime trade networks; food and spice trade, attires; travellers, envoys, and diplomats as cultural mediators.
- **Diaspora, Preservation & Continuities:** the Giritiya world; merchant communities abroad; language, religion, festivals and cuisine as vehicles of cultural preservation; contemporary diaspora intellectual and cultural contributions.

Shri. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
Minister of Culture and Tourism

Shri. Vivek Aggarwal
Secretary, Ministry of Culture

Shri. Ram Bahadur Rai
President, IGNCA

Shri Arvind Kumar
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture

Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi
Member Secretary, IGNCA

Convenor

Prof. (Dr.) D. C. Choubey
HoD, Brihattar Bharat and Area Studies, IGNCA

Organising Committee

Prof. (Dr.) Achal Pandya
HoD, Conservation, IGNCA

Prof. (Dr.) Sudhir Lall
HoD, Kalakosha, IGNCA

Dr. Richa Kamboj
HoD, Kaladarshan, IGNCA

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Shri. Anurag Punetha
Controller, Media Centre, IGNCA

Administrative Coordination

Dr. Shah Faisal
Director (Administration), IGNCA



संस्कृति मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
CULTURE



BRIHATTAR BHARAT

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

on

BHARAT'S CULTURAL EXPANSE ACROSS ASIA AND BEYOND



“बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय लोकानुकम्पाय”

"For the welfare of many, for the happiness of many, and out of compassion for the world"

Brihattar Bharat: A Background

- Brihattar Bharat denotes the wider civilizational sphere shaped by the transmission and adaptation of Indian cultural, philosophical, artistic, and religious traditions across Asia and beyond.
- Extending from the Buddhist monastic corridors of Central Asia and the overland trade routes of Eurasia to the temple civilizations of Southeast Asia and the Buddhist worlds of East Asia.
- Civilizational evidence survives in inscriptions, monumental complexes, literary traditions, and shared artistic vocabularies spanning nearly two millennia — 3rd century BCE to 15th century CE.
- The Brihattar Bharat Conference re-examines India's historical global connections, using regional cultural linkages as entry points for renewed academic inquiry into its shared civilizational heritage.

- India and Southeast Asia
- India and East Asia
- India and Central Asia
- India and West Asia
- India and Europe
- India and the Global Diaspora

Focus of the Conference

- Convened to mark the centenary of the Greater India Society (estb. 14 October 1926), the conference aims to honour its founders and renew the scholarly mission they set in motion.
- It will seek to map India's civilizational presence across Asia and beyond — tracing the scholars, traders, and travellers who carried Indian philosophy, art, and culture outward through centuries of peaceful exchange.
- The conference will work to cultivate Bharat-centric scholarly frameworks, inviting interdisciplinary voices to develop methodologies rooted in indigenous values rather than colonial or Euro-American paradigms.
- It will aim to facilitate access to scattered global archives, support joint UNESCO and World Heritage nominations, and contribute to embedding Brihattar Bharat studies in academic curricula.
- The conference will endeavour to reclaim this civilizational dialogue as a living field of inquiry — one with deep scholarly relevance and enduring contemporary significance.
- The conference seeks to bring together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and heritage professionals from diverse disciplines to examine India's historical and contemporary civilizational interactions through fresh evidence, interdisciplinary approaches, and critical perspectives.

Themes of the Conference

- Religious Traditions & Knowledge Systems
- Languages across Civilizations
- Art & Architectural Traditions
- Cultural Fusion & Shared Traditions
- Diaspora, Preservation & Continuities





संस्कृति मंत्रालय
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International Conference
on
Bharat's Cultural Expanse across Asia and Beyond

14 – 16th October 2026

CALL FOR PAPERS

"बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय लोकानुकम्पाय"

Bahujanahitāya Bahujanasukhāya Lokānukampāya

“For the welfare of many, for the happiness of many, and out of compassion for the world”

Research papers are invited from scholars to participate in the International Conference on “*Bharat's Cultural Expanse across Asia and Beyond*” to be held from 14-16th October in New Delhi, India.

Concept Note

The idea of **Brihattar Bharat** (Greater India) refers to the wider civilizational sphere shaped by the movement, adaptation, and exchange of Indian cultural, philosophical, artistic, linguistic, and religious traditions across Asia and beyond and vice versa. Rather than a political or territorial construct, it represents centuries of intercultural dialogue fostered through trade, pilgrimage, scholarship, maritime networks, migration, diplomacy, and intellectual exchange. These interactions created enduring connections between India and regions including Southeast Asia, East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, Europe, and the global Indian diaspora.

The legacy of these exchanges survives in inscriptions, manuscripts, temples, monuments, literature, performing arts, languages, knowledge systems, artistic traditions, and living cultural practices across a vast geographical landscape. Equally significant are the reciprocal influences through which India absorbed and reinterpreted ideas from the cultures with which it interacted, making *Brihattar Bharat* a history of shared civilizational development rather than one of unilateral cultural diffusion.

The year **2026** marks the **Centenary of the Greater India Society (Brihattar Bharat Parishad) 1926–2026**, founded by eminent scholars including **Radhakumud Mookerji, Prabodh Chandra Bagchi, Jadunath Sarkar, Suniti Kumar Chatterji, R.C. Majumdar, Kalidas Nag**, and others under the intellectual inspiration of **Rabindranath Tagore**. Their pioneering work laid the foundations for the systematic study of India's transregional civilizational linkages and continues to inspire contemporary scholarship.

To commemorate this landmark and to advance research in the field, the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)**, under the **Ministry of Culture, Government of India**, is organizing the **International Conference on *Brihattar Bharat: Bharat's Cultural Expanse***

across Asia and Beyond. The conference also forms part of the **Brihattar Bharat Scheme (2026–2031)**, a national initiative dedicated to promoting research, documentation, preservation, digitization, and identification of India's shared cultural and civilizational heritage with the wider world.

The conference seeks to bring together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and heritage professionals from diverse disciplines to focus on India's historical and contemporary civilizational interactions through fresh evidence, interdisciplinary approaches, and critical perspectives. It aims to encourage new scholarship on transregional cultural exchanges, facilitate international academic collaboration, and contribute to a deeper understanding of the interconnected histories that have shaped Asia and beyond.

Original research papers are invited on themes relating to religion and knowledge systems, languages and literary traditions, art and architecture, archaeology and epigraphy, maritime and overland cultural exchanges, culinary, lifestyles, performing arts, diaspora studies, heritage documentation, and other aspects of India's civilizational interactions across regions and cultures.

Sub-themes and Focus areas:

1. Religious Traditions and Knowledge Systems
2. Languages across civilizations: Transmission, Translation and Literary Bridges
3. Art and Architectural Traditions across Civilizations
4. Recovering the Legacy of the Greater India Society
5. Cultural Fusion and the Evolution of Shared Traditions
6. Diaspora Communities, Cultural Preservation and Civilizational Continuities
7. Maritime and Overland Commercial Interaction

Submission Guidelines:

- **Abstract:**

Please send an abstract of your research paper, comprising 200-500 words, in a Word document format, in English **12 font (size) in ‘Times New Roman’** and in Hindi **14 font (size) in Unicode Mangal/ Devlys 010/ Krutidev 010 by 15th August, 2026**. The abstract should concisely outline the scope and principal finds of your research.

- **Research paper:**

The full-length research paper should have a minimum word count of 3500 words, including the bibliography, and should be submitted in Word document format. The paper should adhere to academic standards and include clear citations and references.

The deadline for submitting the research paper is 31st August, 2026.

Please ensure that your submissions comply with the guidelines and deadlines. Submission should be sent to: brihattarbharatconference@gmail.com with the subject line “*Submission: [Title of Research paper]*.”

For any queries contact: +91-112 344 6464

Or on: brihattarbharatconference@gmail.com We are here to help with any conference related queries you may have.