



Former Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Shri Prahil Singh Patel presenting the Mongolian Kanjur to Former President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind.



Statue of Avalokiteśvara



Dharmachakra Pravartana Buddha at Sarnath, a Gupta statue of the Buddha from Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh.

Focus of the Conference

1. Explore the 2,000-year continuity of India–Mongolia relations, highlighting historical, religious, linguistic, and cultural exchanges.
2. Examine the transmission of Buddhist knowledge, Sanskrit learning, and monastic traditions from India to Mongolia, and their adaptation through Tibetan institutions.
3. Study literary, artistic, and aesthetic exchanges, including Mongolian translations of Sanskrit texts and the creative integration of Indian Buddhist artistic traditions, notably in the works of Zanabazar.
4. Investigate Indian contributions to Mongolian medicine, ritual practice, and cultural symbols, including the Soyombo emblem and sacred mantras.
5. Document interactions between Buddhist institutions and Mongol courts, including royal patronage, religious education, and architectural achievements.
6. Foster interdisciplinary dialogue among scholars to deepen understanding of the shared civilizational heritage and India's enduring spiritual and intellectual influence in Mongolia.

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT DETAILS

Registration fee Rs. 1000/- per person.

Last Date of Registration: 14th February, 2026

Registration Link:

<https://forms.gle/CuJSfYxrsDXWAZUi9>

PAYMENT DETAILS

Name of the Institution:

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

A/c No.: 0143101008365

IFSC Code: CNRB0003525

Name of Bank: Canara Bank

Branch Details: Govt. Business Branch,
NAI Building, Janpath, New Delhi - 110001

You can also Scan QR for Payment

(After payment kindly mention the payment details in the above registration form)



Patron

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Co-Convenor

Prof. D. C. Choubey

Head of Department

Brihatter Bharat & Area Studies Division, IGNCA

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Dr. Shah Faesal, IAS

Director (Administration), IGNCA



Ministry of Culture
Government of India



Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

Cordially invites you to the

International Conference

on

Cultural Interflow between India and Mongolia

18-19th February 2026

at

Samvet Auditorium, IGNCA,
Janpath, New Delhi-110001

"Celebrating a shared legacy of scholarship, spirituality, and creativity across centuries".

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), established in 1987 as an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is a pioneering centre for cultural research, documentation, and outreach programme. Conceived as a nodal institution for the study of India's diverse artistic and intellectual traditions, IGNCA adopts a multidisciplinary and holistic approach to understanding culture.

Central to its mandate is the recognition of the interconnectedness of visual, performing, literary, oral, and ritual traditions with broader philosophical, historical, ecological, and socio-cultural contexts. Moving beyond compartmentalized scholarship, IGNCA integrates perspectives from the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts to generate nuanced and context-sensitive insights.

Through its commitment to preserving both tangible and intangible heritage, fostering critical inquiry, and encouraging public engagement, IGNCA plays a vital role in cultural preservation and intellectual discourse. It serves as an important platform for scholars, artists, and policymakers, continually redefining the relevance of art and culture in contemporary society through rigorous research, inclusive representation, and sustained dialogue.

Brihattar Bharat

The Brihattar Bharat and Area Studies Programme at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) has evolved from its earlier focus on Area Studies into a broader platform for academic engagement and cross-cultural dialogue across the various regions of Asia and Eurasia. Established over more than three decades ago, the programme undertakes systematic research on the arts, culture, and history of Central, East, Southeast Asia and West Asia as well as the wider Eurasian region.

The programme facilitates collaborative projects, scholarly seminars, documentation, exhibitions and archival exchanges aimed at understanding trans-national cultural connections. In September 2023, the programme was renamed Brihattar Bharat, reflecting a renewed focus on exploring India's cultural roots and its historical interactions across these regions. This objective is closely aligned with IGNCA's mandate to document, preserve, and promote India's traditional knowledge systems and cultural heritage across the world.

About the Conference



India and Mongolia share civilizational ties spanning over 2,000 years, shaped not by politics alone but by enduring exchanges of faith, knowledge, language, and culture. Mongolia nurtured monastic traditions inspired by Nalanda; preserved Sanskrit names, mantras, and stotras to Goddess Tārā; embraced Meghadūta as a classical lyric; and bears the Soyombo (Svayambhū)—the only national flag with a Sanskrit name. Bound by centuries of shared intellectual and spiritual life, India and Mongolia remain pilgrims of a common eternity.

Marking the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations, this conference explores the deep intellectual and spiritual interflow between the Indian subcontinent and the Mongolian world. From the transmission of Buddhist philosophy, sacred texts, and scholastic traditions to the movement of monks, scholars, and ideas, this relationship reflects a shared commitment to learning, spiritual inquiry, and cultural openness. India's heritage found resonance on the Mongolian steppe, where it was preserved, adapted, and enriched by local traditions. The conference revisits this enduring bond as a living legacy that continues to inspire dialogue, understanding, and cooperation today.

cholars, Art, and Knowledge Exchange

Historical evidence reveals sustained interaction between India and Mongolia through the movement of Buddhist monks, scholars, and ritual specialists who served as vital agents of cultural transmission across Inner Asia. Indian monks acted as spiritual preceptors in Mongolia, facilitating the circulation of Buddhist philosophy, ethical systems, medical knowledge, Sanskrit-based learning, linguistic traditions, and ritual practices through monastic networks. These traditions were not adopted unchanged; they were translated, reinterpreted, and adapted to Mongolian social structures, languages, and environmental realities.

The depth of Indo-Mongolian exchange is especially visible in visual and material culture, where philosophical ideas took form in sculpture, architecture, and iconography. A notable example is Zanabazar, the seventeenth-century Mongolian spiritual leader and

Artist, whose sculptures embody a creative synthesis of Indian Buddhist metaphysical aesthetics—marked by balance, serenity, and spiritual inwardness—with indigenous Mongolian materials and artistic sensibilities. These interactions reflect a dynamic and reciprocal cultural process rather than a one-way transmission, highlighting Mongolia's integration into wider Asian networks of Buddhist learning and artistic production, and India's enduring role as a source of philosophical, medical, and ritual knowledge across Eurasia.



Meditative Deity, Bronze Sculpture

Attributed to Zanabazar or the Zanabazar School, 17th century

The First Dalai Lama

The title Dalai Lama, meaning “Ocean of Wisdom,” was bestowed upon the *Third Dalai Lama, Sonam Gyatso*, by the Mongol ruler Altan Khan in the sixteenth century and was later applied retrospectively to Gendun Drup and his successor. Thus recognized as the First Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup laid the spiritual and institutional foundations of a lineage that would come to play a central role in Tibetan religious history and continue to influence global spiritual thought today.

Renowned for his scholarship, humility, and commitment to monastic life, Gendun Drup emerged as a leading teacher of the Gelug tradition. His most enduring institutional contribution was the founding of Tashilhunpo Monastery, which grew into one of Tibet's foremost centers of learning and practice. His teachings emphasized ethical conduct, compassion, and the cultivation of wisdom for the benefit of all beings.



The First Lama, Gendun Drup (1391–1474)

Gandantegchinlen Monastery (Gandan Monastery)

Gandantegchinlen Monastery, commonly known as Gandan Monastery, is Mongolia's foremost center of Buddhist learning and practice. Located in Ulaanbaatar, it represents the continuity of the lama tradition and the enduring presence of Tibetan Buddhism within Mongolian culture. Founded in 1586, the monastery developed as a major institution of the Gelug tradition, whose teachings trace their intellectual roots to Indian Buddhist scholarship transmitted through Tibet.

Historically, Gandan served as a leading monastic center for education in philosophy, ritual practice, and monastic discipline. It remained an important locus of Buddhist continuity through periods of social change and today stands as the country's central monastic institution. The monastery is also home to the renowned Migjid Janraisig statue of *Avolokiteśvara*, a symbol of compassion and spiritual resilience. Following Mongolia's democratic transition in the early 1990s, Gandantegchinlen Monastery has played a key role in the revival and contemporary practice of Buddhism in Mongolia.



Gandan Monastery, located in Ulaanbaatar