



SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE  
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA  
[www.saarcculture.org](http://www.saarcculture.org)

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**SAARC International Conference on “*Buddhist Cultural Trails: Journey Through Time & Space, of Merchants, Monks & Pilgrims, Reconciliation of the South Asian Region with the Exchange of Information*” SRI LANKA 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The Buddhist Cultural Trail conference will be the first in a series of Conferences and workshops planned on “Cultural Trails” in South Asia to understand the ancient links and to establish modern links through tourism, to identify and add value to archaeological sites, art, music and other cultural activities along the trails, to develop a South Asian Heritage Sites List, etc. This conference will be a platform for brainstorming on the key issues on Buddhist Cultural Trails such as identification, heritage management, conservation, preservation, promotion of sites, etc. This platform will create a basis for partnerships with the Government institutions within the host country and Member States to collaborate with each other.

This forum will be used to develop the criteria necessary to develop a “South Asian Heritage Sites” inventory as stated in the SAARC Cultural Agenda to promote regional activities.

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## **1.1 Objectives of the Regional Conference**

- To create a platform for research initiatives for ancient cultural trails in South Asia for academics.
- To carry out research on hitherto unidentified cultural trails linking South Asia and cross cultural trends within the region.
- To map the different trails in the Region to evoke the long-forgotten links within the region and to enhance the connections from nation to nation through religious and cultural tourism within the region.
- To disseminate research on Cultural Trails to promote collaborative activities within governmental, non-governmental and private organizations in the region and actively promote cooperation between line ministries in the region.
- To contribute towards the preservation, conservation and protection of South Asia’s Cultural Heritage within the frame work of the SAARC Agenda for Culture.
- To identify intangible heritage in and around the Cultural Trails and to preserve it for posterity.
- To promote South Asian Culture through research and other activities.
- To develop a criterion for sites to be inscribed on the “SAARC Heritage List” and disseminate through digital and print media.

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## **1.2 THEMES FOR THE CONFERENCE**

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- Buddhist Cultural Trails - The paths of the Buddha, Sites of Relics of Buddha, The way of Arahant Mahinda, The path of Theri Sanghamitta, The Fa Xian (Fa Hsien) Route, The Xuanzang (Hsuan Tsang) Route, The Cave Caravan Routes of the Western Ghats, The pilgrimage route of King Nissankamalla to Sri Pada (Sacred Footprint), Sixteen sacred places of Sri Lanka, Footsteps of Guru Rimpoche, Buddhist Cultural Trails in Maldives, Buddhist Cultural Trails in Bangladesh, Centres of learning, New Buddhist Cultural Trails for Tourism promotion and pilgrims, Buddhist Manuscript Trails, etc. (For Details refer to Annexure 1)
- Art and Architecture of BCT.
- Archaeology of BCT.
- Intangible Heritage of BCT (Music, dance, folk art, folk stories, traditional healing, handicrafts, etc.)
- Trade and Commerce of BCT.
- Buddhist Manuscripts, texts and inscriptions, languages and scripts (Gandhari, Prakrit, Sanskrit, etc., languages and Brahmi, Kharosthi, Greek Bactrian, etc. scripts) of BCT.
- Technology of BCT (Irrigation, engineering, agriculture, etc.)
- Cross cultural fertilizations
- Heritage Management of BCT sites
- Tourism promotion of BCT

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## **1.3 Dates and Venue**

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25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017 in Colombo.

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## **1.4 Post Conference Tour**

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Dambulla World Heritage Site & Arankele Meditation Monastery 1 day tour on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

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## **1.5 Participation at the Regional Seminar**

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### **1.5.1 Official Nominees from the Member States**

The SAARC Cultural Centre invites all Member States to send a maximum of **Five** nominations from experts and academics of their country. The SCC hopes that at least one nominee would be from the Department of Archaeology of the Member State.

The Host Country can nominate a maximum of 15 Official Nominees and they will be provided with free registration at the conference but no accommodation during the conference.

### **1.5.2 Accompanying Persons**

Every person accompanying the Official Nominees of the SAARC Member State (viz. the Delegates/Resource Persons cum Panel Heads) should pay a

registration fee of US\$ 300/= towards his/her board and lodging during the Seminar. All such Accompanying Persons will be accommodated with the respective Official Nominee on full board / twin sharing basis.

### 1.5.3 Other Participants

**Category A** - The SAARC Cultural Centre would also accept the participation of other Experts from the Member States (other than the Official Nominees of the respective SAARC Member States). Air Travel and Conference Registration fee to be borne by the participant and SCC will provide accommodation at a subsidized rate, conference kit and the cultural tour.

**Category B** – Participants from Member States who are residing outside the SAARC Region, provided they can meet their travel and accommodation expenses to attend the seminar and pay the registration fee. However, to facilitate their stay during the Seminar, the SAARC Cultural Centre would assist them in securing accommodation in Guest Houses / Hostels at economic / subsidized rates. These participants will be provided with the conference kit and the cultural tour.

**Category C** – Participants from the Host Country where the Conference is held can participate provided they can pay the Registration Fee of the Conference.

SAARC Cultural Centre reserves the right to accept or reject any request for participation in the Conference.

### 1.5.4 Registration Fee

Official Nominees of the SAARC Member States:	Free of Charge
Accompanying persons of the Official Nominees:	US \$ 300/=
Other Participants	
Category A:	US \$ 50/=
Category B:	US \$ 100/=
Category C:	LKR 2,500/=

All payments are to be made in favour of the SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo, either through e-payment OR in cash at the Registration Counter at the Conference.

For E-payment

Name on Bank Account:	SAARC Cultural Centre
Name of Bank:	Bank of Ceylon
Address:	Independence Square Branch, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.
Sri Lankan Rupee A/c:	0009773920

US \$ A/c: 9825298  
SWIFT Code: BCEYLKXL

### **1.5.5 Nomination Process**

The Official Nominees will be selected by each Member State comprising of leading academics, archaeologists and other experts from the Member State. Official Nominations should be submitted to the SAARC Secretariat, with the Registration Form attached (or downloaded from the SCC website) and the details requested below.

All Other Participants (Category A) from each Member State should forward their information (including the registration form) through the respective Foreign Ministries to the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu.

**The last date for sending the Official Nominations / Other Participants is 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017.**

All Participants should include:

- I. Full Name and Affiliation of the Person with a detailed CV
- II. Scanned Copy of Passport
- III. An Abstract (c. 400 words) of the proposed paper / presentations.

The participants would be required to submit their full papers before the Conference and make a short presentation at the Conference.

**The language of the Conference would be English.**

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### **1.6 Time Schedule**

Call for Papers, Poster Presentations	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2017
Deadline for accepting Nominees & Participants	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2017
Selection of Abstracts & informing participants	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Final paper submission	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2017
Conference	25 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> August 2017
Cultural Tour	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2017

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### **1.7 Conference Outcome**

The conference will provide a new approach and perspective to the study of BCT in a regional perspective and combined knowledge will be extremely useful for the promotion of tourism within the region and outside. The conference will hold Plenary Session to prepare a document summarizing the main recommendations emerging out of the deliberations on BCT and future research endeavours. The Plenary Session will also discuss the criteria for selection of SAARC Heritage List commencing with the sites identified during the BCT Conference. The SAARC Cultural Centre will also publish full papers of the research presented at the conference.