



SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (SAARC)

In this Issue

SAARC Secretary General's Visit to Sri Lanka

Secretary General of SAARC visits Sri Lanka

1

SAARC Secretary - General calls on H.E. the President

1

SAARC Cultural Centre Headquarter Agreement Signed

2

SAARC Secretary General Visits the SAARC Cultural Centre

2

About the Centre

SAARC Cultural Centre Complex in Matara - 21 April 2011

3

Our Programmes

SAARC Film Festival- 11-15 May 2011

4

Film Workshop - 12 May 2011

6

Lecture by Mr. Somnath Gupta - 14 May 2011

6

New Publications

Announcements

Regional Conference on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia

8

Research Grants for Research on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia

8

Artist Camp

9

News from Member States

Exhibition of Sacred Buddhist Relics from Pakistan

10

Quiz

11

Vacancy

12

Secretary General of SAARC visits Sri Lanka

H.E. Ms. Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed, Secretary-General of SAARC visited Sri Lanka on 21-22 June 2011. This was her first official visit to this country.

SAARC Secretary-General calls on HE the President



Secretary-General, SAARC with H.E. the President of Sri Lanka during her visit to the Temple Trees on 22 June 2011.

On 22 June 2011 the Secretary General SAARC, H.E. Ms. Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed met H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka at his official residence, the Temple Trees. She briefed H.E. the President about the activities of the SAARC Cultural Centre and its future plans to promote cultural relations between the people of the South Asian region. Ms. Damayanthi Rajapakse, Director- HSC Division, SAARC Secretariat, was also present with the officials of Ministry of External Affairs at the meeting.

The Secretary General, during her courtesy call on H.E. the President of Sri Lanka complemented the excellent work carried out by the Director and staff of SAARC Cultural Centre since its establishment. She placed on record that this is the vibrant centre.

H.E. Ms. Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed of the Maldives assumed the office of the Secretary-General of SAARC on 1 March 2011 for a term of three years. A former Attorney General of the Republic of Maldives and a former parliamentarian, H.E. Ms. Saeed is the tenth Secretary-General of SAARC and is the first woman to occupy this prestigious position. She was serving as Maldivian Government's Envoy for South Asia just prior to assuming her new assignment in Kathmandu. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Law (LLB) from the University of Tasmania, Australia and a Master's Degree in Law (LLM) from the Graduate School of Law and Politics, Osaka University, Japan.



Editorial

We would like to thank our readers for their encouraging response to the Inaugural Issue of the Newsletter (Vol.1: No.2 – March 2011). We have also received many suggestions to further enrich the contents and accordingly, we are pleased to present the second issue of the Newsletter where new features like Quiz and News from Member States have been introduced. We are sure that these features will make the Newsletter more interesting and representative. We look forward to the comments and contributions of our readers.



SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER



SAARC Cultural Centre Headquarters Agreement Signed



Secretary-General,
SAARC, Ms. Fatimath
Dhiyana Saeed and the
Minister of External
Affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris,
21 June 2011
Picture courtesy:
Daily Mirror, Colombo.

On 21 June 2011 H.E. Ms. Saeed and Honourable - Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister for External Affairs of Sri Lanka signed the Headquarter Agreement for the SAARC Cultural Centre. Among the distinguished guests present to witness this historic occasion were: Mr. K. Amunugama, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of Sri Lanka; Ms. Damayanthi Rajapakse, Director, SAARC Secretariat; Mr. G.L.W. Samarasinghe, Director, Dr. Sanjay Garg, Deputy Director (Research), and Ms. Soundarie David Rodrigo, Deputy Director (Programme), SAARC Cultural Centre. On this occasion the Minister expressed hope that by signing this Agreement the activities of the SAARC Cultural Centre would be greatly facilitated. The Secretary-General also held wide-ranging talks on other regional issues with the Minister and the Foreign Secretary.



Secretary-General, SAARC, Ms. Fatimath Dhiyana Saeed and the Minister of External Affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris, signing the Headquarters Agreement for SAARC Cultural Centre, on 21 June 2011. Also seen are: Mrs. Damayanthi Rajapakse, Director (HSC), SAARC Secretariat, and Dr. Saj Mendis, Director (SAARC) Ministry of External Affairs, Sri Lanka.
Picture courtesy: *Daily Mirror, Colombo.*

SAARC Secretary-General visits the SAARC Cultural Centre



Mr. G.L.W. Samarasinghe Director, SAARC Cultural Centre seen with the Secretary-General, during her visit to the Centre on 22 June 2011.

On 22 June 2011, H.E. Ms. Saeed, accompanied by Ms. Damayanthi Rajapakse, visited the SAARC Cultural Centre. This was the first-ever visit of a Secretary-General to the SAARC Cultural Centre which was inaugurated on 25 March 2009. During her visit the Secretary-General met the Director and the staff of the Centre. The Director, Mr. G.L.W. Samarasinghe thanked the Secretary-General for signing the Headquarter Agreement for the SAARC Cultural Centre with the Sri Lankan Government and for also for her visit to the Centre. The Secretary-General reviewed the progress of Centre's work and future plans, including the construction of the Centre's new building complex at Matara. A set of publications of the Centre were presented to the Secretary-General by the Director. The Secretary-General described the SAARC Cultural Centre as 'a vibrant centre' and complimented the Director and his staff for their hard work. She assured all help and support to the Centre in its activities.

To a vibrant Centre.
22/6/2011
Fatimath Dhiyana Saeed, Secretary-General of SAARC.

In the evening a Reception was hosted by the Director, SAARC Cultural Centre at Hotel Cinnamon Grand, Colombo in honour of the visiting Secretary-General. It was attended by the High Commissioners/Ambassadors of the SAARC Member States and officials of the Ministry of External Affairs, and other dignitaries related to culture.



SAARC Cultural Centre Complex in Matara- 21 April 2011

Hon. T. B. Ekanayake, Minister of Cultural Affairs and Arts, together with other distinguished delegates, laid the first brick marking the commencement of construction of the new building complex of the SAARC Cultural Centre in a scenic location in Morakatiyahena, Nawimana, Matara on 21 April 2011. Other distinguished guests who attended this ceremony included: the Members of Parliament, Divisional Secretary, Officers from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Arts and those from the SAARC Cultural Centre. Several members of the local community, including school children, were also present on this auspicious occasion. The new complex will function both as performing art center and a repository for traditional knowledge related to the rituals of South Asia. It will include an auditorium, an open air theatre, a cinema hall, a museum, areas for exhibition, galleries, cafeteria, restaurant, club house, seminar and lecture halls, studio for video and audio production, IT room, library, archives, administration/ office areas, residential facilities for staff and visitors. The Ceremony included: hoisting of the national flags of the SAARC Member countries; multi-religious prayer and benedictions (Buddhism, Christianity and Islam); power-point presentation of the proposed building complex by the Architect; and speeches by the Chief Guest and Guests of Honour.



Chief Guest, Hon. T. B. Ekanayake, Minister of Cultural Affairs and other distinguished guests participating in religious rituals before laying the foundation stone for SAARC Cultural Centre Complex.



Distinguished guests at the ceremony.



Staff Members of SAARC Cultural Centre in front of proposed SAARC Cultural Centre Complex.



Visitors at the ceremony listening to speeches by the Chief-Guest and Guest of Honor

SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER



**Best Feature Film in the
SAARC Region Selected**

SAARC Film Festival- 11-15 May 2011

The SAARC Cultural Centre successfully concluded the SAARC Film Festival organized for the first time by the SAARC Cultural Centre on the 15 May 2011. The Film Festival is yet another SAARC Cultural initiative, which aims to provide a platform for exchange of ideas and points of view from Film Directors of the region. The SAARC region has produced some films with a standard of excellence. The SAARC Film Festival focused on promoting some of the best films featured in 2010 from all Member States. A call for two feature films from each SAARC Member State was made and nominations were received from four countries namely Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. A panel of International Jury Members from Singapore, Russia and Italy adjudicated at this festival and an award was made to the Best Feature Film in the region for the year 2010. Silver and Bronze Medals were also awarded. Films were screened free of charge to the general public at the National Film Corporation Cinema Hall from the 11 – 14 of May 2011. The Inauguration of the Film Festival took place on the 11 May 2011, under the patronage of Honorable Dr. Keheliya Rambukwella, Minister of Mass Media and Information. The Chief

Guest at the Awards Ceremony was Honorable, Dr. Sarath Amunugama, Senior Minister for International Monetary Co-operation. The SAARC Cultural Centre plans to host many such festivals on an annual basis so as to promote feature and documentary films in the region.



MOVIES SCREENED @ SAARC FILM FESTIVAL 2011, COLOMBO



Film Name : CHORTAN KORA II
Country : Bhutan
Director : Mr. Wangchuk



Film Name : SHADO SEMO
Country : Bhutan
Director : Mr. Tshering Wangyel



Film Name : VIHIR
Country : India
Director : Mr. Umesh Vinayak Kulkarni



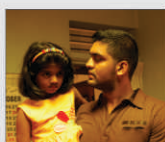
Film Name : AMI AADU
Country : India
Director : Mr. Somnath Gupta



Film Name : MOHABBATAAN SACHIYAAN
Country : Pakistan
Director : Mr. Shahzad Rafique



Film Name : SHACKLES YET TO OPEN
Country : Pakistan
Director : Mr. Shahzad Rafique



Film Name : IRA HANDA YATA
Country : Sri Lanka
Director : Mr. Bennett Rathnayake



Film Name : BAMBARA WALLALLA
Country : Sri Lanka
Director : Mr. Athula Rathna Sri Liyanage



Best Feature Film in the SAARC Region 2010 –
"Bambara Wallala" – Award being collected by Actress,
on behalf of the Director of the film - Mr. Athula Liyanage.



Mr. Somnath Gupta, director of the film from India
"Ami Aadu" collects the Silver Medal.



"Ira Handa Yata", Sri Lankan Film carries away the
Bronze award. Mr. Bennet Ratnayake accepting
the medal.



SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER



Workshop on "Societal Role of Film-makers: Balancing Commercial Success and Social Commitments"

A Workshop on "Societal Role of Film-makers: Balancing Commercial Success and Social Commitments" was organized by the SAARC Cultural Centre on Thursday, 12 May 2011, as part of the SAARC Film Festival-2011 at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, Colombo 7. It was attended by film directors from Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka; the members of the international Jury of the Film Festival; film critics, faculty members from universities and other academic institutions as well as others interested in the films.

Mr. G.L.W. Samarasinghe, Director, SAARC Cultural Centre welcomed the participants and introduced its objectives. He emphasized that this workshop will help in initiating a dialogue among the film directors of South Asia and outside for interaction with each other on film industry to develop and to increase the potentiality of their films for social stability and welfare of the peoples of South Asia.

The Keynote Address was delivered by Dr. D.B Nihalsingha, one of the most senior film directors in Sri Lanka. He presented a detailed analysis of the social role and commitment towards society of film makers and the need for commercial success for existence of the industry.

Lecture by Mr. Somnath Gupta

As part of the SAARC Film Festival (11-15 May, 2011) a lecture by Mr. Somnath Gupta, one of the Indian Film Directors who participated at the SAARC Film Festival 2011, Colombo, was organized jointly by the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo and the SAARC Cultural Centre on Saturday 14 May 2011. Mr. Gupta delivered a lecture on cinema based on his experiences while making his renowned film "Ami Aadu" and elaborated the cinematic aspects which one has to take care while making a film.

In the question-answer session, Mr. Gupta clarified many points raised by the audience with reference to his feature film "Ami Aadu".

The Second session of the Workshop comprised a Panel Discussion on the theme. The panellists included: Mr. Edwin Ariyadasa, Senior Journalist, Sri Lanka; Mr. M. Ramachandran, Director, Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo and Mr. Glen S. Davis, Media and Information Officer, Embassy of the United States of America, Colombo. Many participants joined the panelists in the ensuing discussions.



Panelists of the Workshop

The final session of the workshop was the Valedictory Session Chaired by Prof. Chandrasiri Palliyaguru, University of Kelaniya who summarised the keynote speech and the panel discussion. The workshop ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Sanjay Garg, Deputy Director (Research) at the SAARC Cultural Centre.

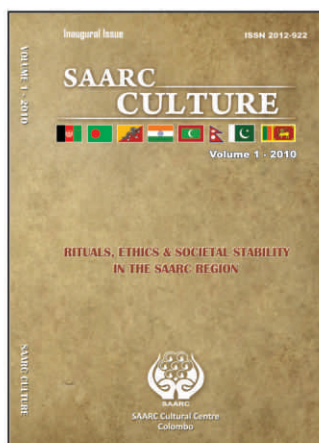
Mr. Somnath Gupta's film "Ami Aadu" eventually won the Silver Medal at the SAARC Film Festival – 2011.



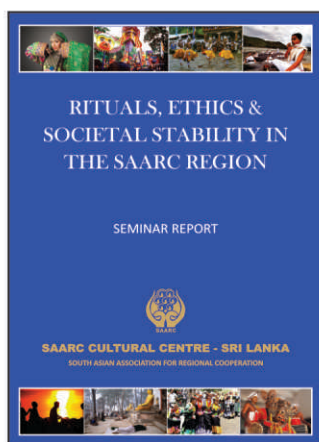
Mr. Somnath Gupta (Indian Film Director)
Delivering the Lecture



New Publications



SAARC Culture - is an annual research journal of the SAARC Cultural Centre Colombo. It seeks to provide a platform to the academics, practitioners and policy makers of culture in the region to present their research findings and to debate on issues of mutual and common interest. The Inaugural issue (Vol. 1: 2010) of the journal has been published recently which features 14 academic papers by professionals from SAARC Countries on the theme Rituals, Ethics and Societal Stability in the SAARC Region. The journal will be widely disseminated as an on-line publication and also as hard copy to project cultural richness and cultural diversity of the SAARC Region.



Rituals, Ethics and Societal Stability in the SAARC Region - Seminar Report - is a publication on proceedings of the Seminar on Rituals, Ethics and Societal Stability held on 23-25 September 2010 in Colombo.

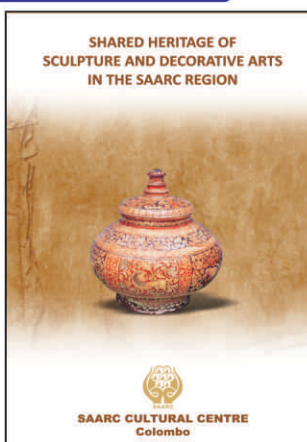


SAARC Film Festival – Sri Lanka - is an information booklet brought out on the occasion of the SAARC Film Festival. It contains details about the films nominated for SAARC Film Festival and profiles of Directors and Jury Members.



SAARC Cultural Centre Brochure - is an introduction to SAARC Cultural Centre. The brochure gives information about the Centre, its objectives, activities, achievements, future programmes and contact details.

Forthcoming Publication



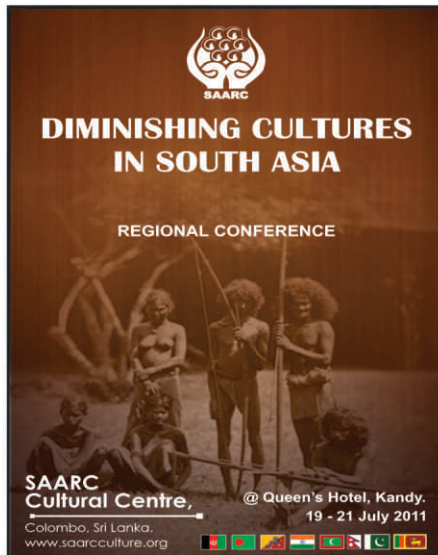
Shared Heritage of Sculpture and Decorative Arts in SAARC - is based on the Symposium on Shared Heritage of Sculpture and Decorative Arts in South Asia held on 27-30 January 2011 at Colombo . It contains the proceedings of the Symposium.

SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regional Conference on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia



SAARC Regional Conference on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia will be held from 19-21 July 2011 at Queen's Hotel, Kandy, Sri Lanka. Experts on the subject from the region will be presenting papers on the theme at the Conference. There will also be a brainstorming session to discuss related issues and to identify themes and sub-themes on diminishing cultures that merit independent and in-depth research.

A one day field visit will be organized on 21 July 2011 to Dambana, to meet, experience the life style and discuss issues faced by the Vadda Community of Sri Lanka. The field visit will include a visit to the Museum in Dambana, interactive session with the Vadda community, traditional lunch and a cultural show.

Research Grants for Research on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia

SAARC Cultural Centre calls for Proposals for research projects on Diminishing Cultures in South Asia from amongst the Member States. The research project will give an opportunity for the awardee to conduct an in-depth study on diminishing cultures and identify and project the productive components for the benefit of their people.

SAARC Cultural Centre will review the research proposals received and select the recipients of the research grant of US\$ 2000 per project. All the research grants will be subject to a mid-term review and the continuation of the project will be subject to the approval of the Progress Report by the SAARC Cultural Centre. At the end of the research project each researcher will be required to submit a publishable draft of the report. The Research Project, will be of 11 months duration, starting from September 2011.

Please check our website www.saarcculture.org for the announcement of research themes, and the application process.





Artist Camp & Exhibition of Paintings

Artist Camp &
Exhibition of Paintings
of the SAARC Region



'Unity in Diversity'—Exploring Contemporary Modern Art

SEPTEMBER 2011



SAARC
Cultural Centre,
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
www.saarcculture.org

Artist Camp :
"Janakala Kendraya"
Pejawatte, Battaramulla

Exhibition :
"J.D.A. Perera Gallery"
Colombo



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The SAARC Cultural Centre calls for nominations from Member States for Artists to participate at the Artist Camp and Exhibition of Paintings of the SAARC Region. The Artist Camp will create a forum for artists in the region to come together and work on a theme as well as exhibit their paintings, which will portray certain amount of similarities within the region, yet diverse enough to give each artist/painting their unique identity which hails from the country they come from. One of the main objectives of this, as per the SAARC agenda for culture, is to give all Member States an opportunity to showcase the talents of the artists of the Member States of the SAARC region and to accord due regional recognition for their work of art.

The names of nominated artists, together with relevant details need to be sent through the relevant Ministry concerned, via the Foreign/External Affairs Ministries in the Member States. For more details please contact the Programme Division of the SAARC Cultural Centre @ 0094 11 2584463.



Exhibition of the Sacred Buddhist Relics from Pakistan in Sri Lanka

An exhibition of the sacred Buddhist relics was organized in Colombo by the Government of Pakistan. The President of Sri Lanka H.E Mahinda Rajapaksa inaugurated the public exposition of the sacred relics at Maligakanda Temple in Colombo, 3 June 2011.

The exhibition comprised of four relics from the collection of the Peshawar and the Taxila Museums. These include: the sacred relics of Lord Buddha, Kanishka's Relic Casket from Shah-Ji-Ki-Dheri, Stone Reliquary in stupa shape and a golden Casket.

Buddhism left a monumental and rich legacy of art and architecture in Pakistan. Despite the vagaries of centuries, the Gandhara region has preserved a lot of its heritage and much of this legacy is visible even today in Pakistan.

The honourable Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka H.E. Chamal Rajapaksa received the sacred relics at the airport along with the High Commissioner of Pakistan H.E. Seema Ilahi Baloch and officers of the Pakistan High Commission.

Dr. Paul Bhatti, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Minorities Affairs and a high level team of archeology Department of Pakistan accompanied these relics to Sri Lanka. The relics was taken back to Pakistan on 20 June 2011.



*Kanishka Relic Casket
(Peshawar Museum)*



Relic Casket (Taxila Museum)



Relic Casket (Taxila Museum)



Tooth Relic



Quiz on Diminishing Cultures

1. Giraavaru People are indigenous to,
 - a. Bangladesh
 - b. India
 - c. Maldives
 - d. Nepal
2. Please identify the statement that is not true about the 'Wanniyala-Aetto'
 - a. Known as Veddas
 - b. Indigenous people of Sri Lanka
 - c. Original religious faith is animism
 - d. Don't believe in the cult of the dead
3. There is no difference between a language and dialect in relation to,
 - a. its vocabulary
 - b. grammar
 - c. alphabet
 - d. pronunciation (phonology, including prosody)
4. How many languages have the UNESCO identified as in danger in disappearing in India?
 - a. 196
 - b. 192
 - c. 179
 - d. 147
5. Following has not been inscribed as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO
 - a. Baul Songs in Bangladesh
 - b. Mask Dance of the Drametse Community in Bhutan
 - c. Chhau Dance in India
 - d. Pada Yatra in Sri Lanka
6. The Mask Dance of the Drametse community in Bhutan is not,
 - a. a sacred dance performed during the Drametse festival in honour of Padmasambhava, a Buddhist guru.
 - b. a festival, which takes place in this eastern Bhutanese village trice a year.
 - c. organized by the Ogyen Tegchok Namdroel Choeling Monastery for centuries.
 - d. a dance featuring sixteen masked male dancers wearing colourful costumes and ten other men making up the orchestra.
7. Novruz, Nowrouz, Nooruz, Navruz, Nauroz or Nevruzis that marks the New Year and the beginning of spring listed by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of humanity. This is celebrated in following two countries in South Asia
 - a. India and Bangladesh
 - b. India and Pakistan
 - c. Nepal and Pakistan
 - d. Nepal and Bangladesh
8. UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in
 - a. 2000
 - b. 2001
 - c. 2002
 - d. 2003
9. Following Country of the South Asia has not yet ratified the UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage
 - a. Afghanistan
 - b. Bhutan
 - c. Maldives
 - d. Nepal
10. What is not a cause of cultural homogeneity?
 - a. Smaller communities adopt the language and views of the dominant community
 - b. Young generations move away from their villages
 - c. Schooling that promotes vernacular language
 - d. The growth of global media



Answer all the questions correctly and win a souvenir from SAARC Cultural Centre. Please send your answers with your contact details to : research-scc@slt.net.lk

SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER



VACANCY

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo is seeking services of a creative high quality Graphic Designer for one year period.

Those who have following competencies could apply on or before 29 July 2011:

- Knowledge in Adobe illustrator, In Design, CorelDraw, Photoshop, Quark Express, HTML, CMX, CSS, Java scrip & Flash.
- Design and Multimedia
- Able to type in English and Sinhala/Tamil
- Experience in Printing Industry preferred
- Able to work both individually & as a team
- Work under pressure and to meet tight deadlines.

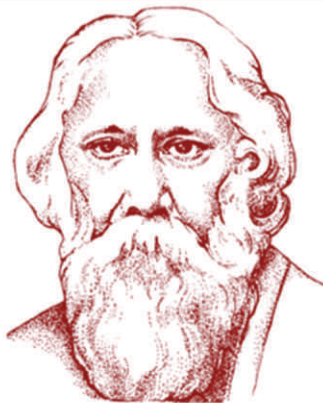
Proposals are called from individuals having above competencies with following details:

- Name and Contact details
- Educational Background
- Previous Work done related to the above competencies
- 03 samples of Graphic Work done

SAARC Cultural Centre will sign an agreement with the successful candidate for the contract.

Director
SAARC Cultural Centre
No 224, Baudhaloka Mawatha
Colombo 07.

Culture Quotes



"The fish in the water is silent, the animal on the earth is noisy, the bird in the air is singing. But man has in him the silence of the sea, the noise of the earth and the music of the air."

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)
Poet, writer, musician, painter, dramatist and educationist.

Editors:

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