

ART

SAARC

September, 2014 | Issue No. 1



SAARC

SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE - SRI LANKA



South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation



FEATURED

SAARC Cultural Centre
Events
October - December
2014

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SAARC Films of the Year
Pg. no. 10

Message from the Director

SAARC Art Magazine is the first of its kind magazine that SAARC Cultural Centre is launching coinciding with the sixth Governing Board Member Meeting being held at the Pegasus Reef Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka. It gives me great pleasure in releasing this magazine. The number of the cultural activities that SAARC Cultural Centre holds give an opportunity to work together, exchange ideas and develop friendship and mutual understanding while representing talent in the SAARC Region. In the course of many events that SAARC Cultural Centre host, we come across many multifaceted personalities and participants at our events, like Artists Camp, Film Festival, Cultural Events and Conferences and workshops related to cultural activities.

This magazine will have tete tete with the great minds of the SAARC Member States, some interviews with film makers, some famous artists from the region, briefs on the national heritages and national games and sports and all aspects covering culture.

Ayubowan

G.L.W.Samarasinghe

Director,
SAARC Cultural Centre, Sri Lanka

Winners of the
SAARC Photography
Competition 2013

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WORLD OF FILM

The SAARC Cultural Centre caught up with Mr. Phillip Cheah, a film critic based in Singapore for an exclusive interview. Mr Cheah, is a Programme Consultant for the new south East Asian Film Festival, and many other Film Festivals. He is considered an expert on Asian Cinema. He has been one of the adjudicators at the SAARC Film Festival, held in Colombo for the last 3 consecutive years.

How important are such film festivals in the region?

They are essential and terribly important. If you trawl the internet in English, there is almost an absence of local South Asians representing their own cinemas internationally. Most information are either compiled by foreign researchers or expatriate South Asians. So the local voice is almost inaudible.

What have been some of the key features of the SAARC Film Festival, organized by the SAARC Cultural Centre?

The key features of the SAARC Film Festival are its efforts to represent the region and its annual seminar where regional speakers can hear about each others' film industry. But my most vivid impression is the local-international divide. Each year, the filmmakers ask me what it takes to have their films platform internationally. Besides the motivation of expanding your domestic industry, I think that it is crucial that the filmmaker must be philosophical on an individual level first. For example, does he have a story that cannot be communicated to the local audience? Does he want to experiment stylistically that won't appeal in his home country? Or is it that the home country forbids the subject of his story?



“Maybe the real issue is the size of the creative space in each respective country. Are filmmakers happy with their ability to express freely within their national borders? This seems to me the more pertinent issue for all of us.”



What are your observations on the standard of films in the SAARC Region?

Often, I have to remind filmmakers that there is a trade-off in going international. In many ways, the standards of cinema vary in the SAARC region because the film language used is different. For example, in the Bhutanese features seen at SAARC, repetition was a feature of their film language. Narrative threads obvious to a foreign audience, is overly expounded probably to the satisfaction of the local audience.

So here's another question. Why should a local award be less prestigious than an international award? Why is reaching your own audience less satisfying than exciting a foreign one?

Maybe the real issue is the size of the creative space in each respective country. Are filmmakers happy with their ability to express freely within their national borders? This seems to me the more pertinent issue for all of us.

How much of western influence can one find in regional films?

The western influence is most apparent in recent Indian cinema but this is not a criticism. Indian cinema is so rooted that whatever influence is taken on, is broken down and absorbed into its soul. For example, the MTV rapid-cut aesthetic is seamlessly absorbed into Bollywood music scenes. You can't tell it apart except for the fact that MTV is trapped by its time format while Bollywood is not.

To put this idea in a musical frame, an alumni jazz group of former Miles Davis band members recorded Miles in India, an album of Miles covers in 2008. The group also featured a number of leading Indian musicians and here again, the fusion was seamless. The Indians sounded totally at home in the band, as if they had played Miles' music before he even composed those tracks.

What are your recommendations for films in the region?

I think what would be most helpful to the region is the presence of anthropological film critics or critics steeped in anthropology. They can be there not to judge and tell anyone what to do, but to observe, explain, clarify, facilitate, support and reflect what they see.

There must be a less invasive culture somewhere, where the motive isn't about conquering, expanding or consolidating but about sharing and growing together.

A film is - or should be - more like music than like fiction. It should be a progression of moods and feelings. The theme, what's behind the emotion, the meaning, all that comes later.

Stanley Kubrick



**15th MUMBAI
FILM FESTIVAL**

October 14 -21, 2014

IFFK INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL OF
KERALA
2014

IDSFFK INTERNATIONAL
DOCUMENTARY & SHORT
FILM FESTIVAL OF KERALA
2014



**FILM FESTIVALS IN
THE SAARC
REGION**

THE SAARC FILM FESTIVAL

The SAARC Cultural Centre organizes the SAARC Film Festival every year in May, showcasing feature and documentary films from the region. Awards for the Best Feature and Documentary are given, and the films are screened free to the general public. This festival is a treat for all those who love Asian Cinema as the best of award winning films from all 8 SAARC countries are screened.

Visit <http://www.saaarcculture.org> for more information

The International Film Festival of India

This is the national flagship film festival of India. The 1st edition of IFFI was organized by the Films Division, Government of India, with the patronage of the first Prime Minister of India. Held in Mumbai from 24 January to 1 February 1952, the Festival was subsequently taken to Madras, Delhi and Calcutta. In all it had about 40 features and 100 short films. In Delhi, the IFFI was inaugurated by Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru on 21 February 1952.

Since its beginnings in 1952 the IFFI has been the biggest event of its type in India. The IFFI aims at providing a common platform for the cinemas of the world to project the excellence of the film art.

Visit <http://www.iffi.nic.in> for more information

International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala

The seventh edition of the International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK 2014) was formally inaugurated by Sri. Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, Honourable Minister for Cinema, Sports, Forest, Environment and Transport. It was held from the 18th - 22nd of July 2014.

The festival, a unique venture in India is organized by the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy for the Dept of Cultural Affairs, Govt of Kerala as part of its endeavor to catalyse a vibrant documentary and short film movement. Increasing accessibility and affordability of media technology has led to a boom in the production and scope of films. The media is now used by image-makers from all walks of life to express, experiment, learn and as an effective tool to conscientise and bring about social change. The festival aims to map and reflect the exploding nature of the medium in its many facets of creativity and resistance.

<http://www.iffk.in/idsffk/home.php>

The Mumbai International Film Festival

The Mumbai Film Festival programme is divided into nine sections: International Competition for the First Feature Films of Directors, World Cinema, Indian Frame, Dimensions Mumbai, Celebrate Age, Retrospectives, Above the Cut, New Faces in Indian Cinema and The Real Reel. The Mumbai Film Festival Programme aims to present the best of the crop in all its sections. In 2012, with over 200 films from 65 countries around the world screened and master classes that inspired, the 15th Mumbai Film Festival presented by Reliance Entertainment and organized by MAMI was truly a grand success. This year, the festival will be held from the 14th -21st of October 2014.

Visit <http://www.mumbaifilmfest.org> for more information

International Film Festival of Kerala 2014

Both as an industry and as an art form Malayalam cinema faced uphill challenges by the end of the last century. Grooming better cinematic sensibility among the people with the support of film societies was one important task. Finding avenues abroad for filmmakers was another. Smoothing the relation between the Government and film bodies and among the film bodies themselves was urgently required. Welfare of film artistes had to be ensured. Government formed the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy to address these and kindred problems.

International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) was one of the chief planks of the Academy. In fact Government had started IFFK in a modest way from 1994 onwards. Under the leadership of Academy it soon emerged as one of the important film events of the world. IFFK has a competition section for films from the Asian, African and Latin American films. The non competition section includes inter alia contemporary world cinema and films of great masters. The 19th IFFK will be held from the 12th - 19th of December 2014.

<http://www.iffk.in/index.php?page=about>

The Bangladesh International Children's Film Festival

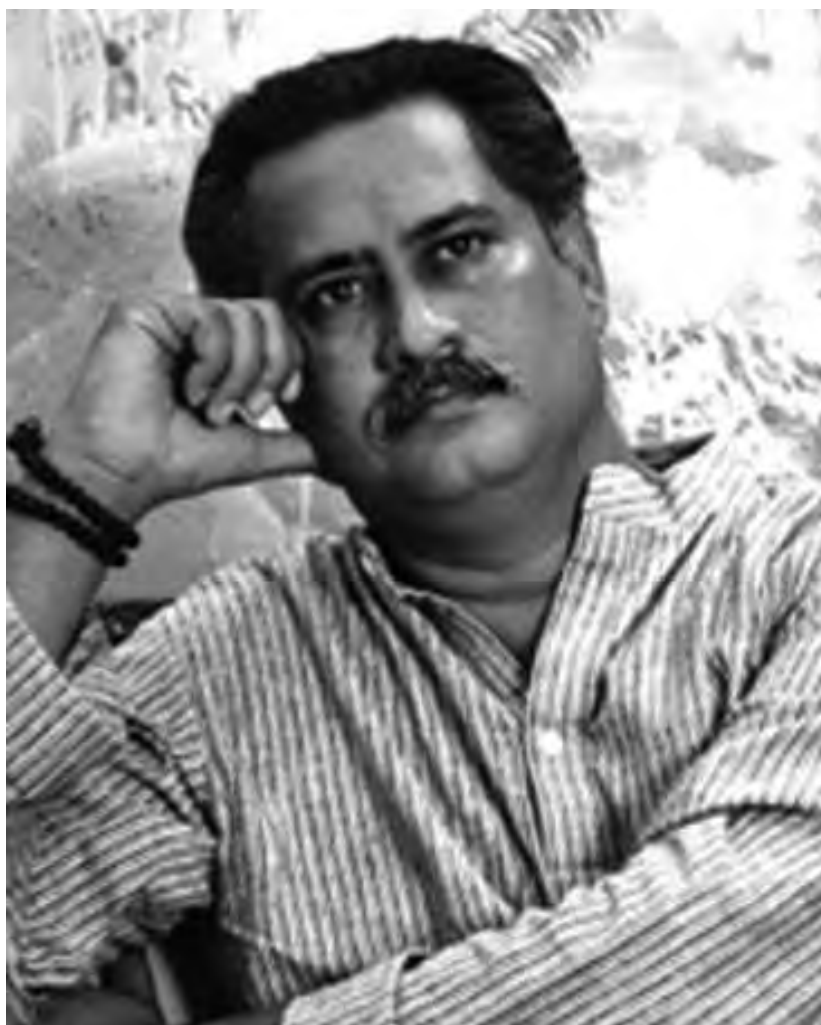
This is the only Children's film festival in the world, run by children in all aspects. The film festival was started with the aim to open a new world of cinema to the children of Bangladesh and to give them an exposure to the culture and tradition of different countries through cinema. One of the main goals of the festival is to give children a basic idea on film to create their interest on the media and to understand its role to build awareness on different social issues as well as a powerful media of learning through entertainment.

Visit <http://www.cfs-bangladesh.com> for more information

An Artist, A Film Director, A friend of SAARC – Meet Mr Khalid Mahmood Mithu from Bangladesh

Mr Khalid Mahmood Mithu, is a well known Visual Artists and Film Director from Bangladesh. He completed his Master of Fine Arts from the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, and has followed several workshops from renowned persons in the field of Photography as well as Animation. He is a man of multi talent. He is a Film Director as well as an Artist (Painter) and Cinematographer. He is an important personality in the cultural field of Bangladesh. He primarily emphasizes on three fields: Painting, Film Making and Photography. And he has been really successful in all of these mediums and has received many awards both nationally and internationally. Significant awards include for Painting, the Peace Cup Award, Beijing, China, the Olympic Medal, Beijing Olympic Fine Arts, China, the National Award for Video Installation, from the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, and many more, for Film, he has won the award for Best Film Director in 2010, and 2011, as well as awards for Best Sound, Best Film, and many more.

The SAARC Cultural Centre met with him at the SAARC Artist Camp held in the Maldives in March 2013, and here are some of the sentiments he expressed.



How was your experience at the 2013 SAARC Artist Camp held in Maldives?

First of all I would like to say, the effort that the organizers and the volunteers of Maldives have put into the campaign was their main strength. For this reason the Maldives Artist camp had a very lively atmosphere.

One of the many traits of a painter is that: They are very social and friendly towards other painters. Especially of foreign land. This is what happened in Maldives. Everyone was interacting with each other in such a friendly manner that it seemed that they knew each other for ages. On the first boat trip there was a beautiful presentation of singing by many artists.

Every country has their own style of art. As this was a campaign of SAARC, similarities blossomed more. Artists were able to exchange ideas and techniques with one another and of course, songs of the different SAARC nations. As a result, doors to many friendships were opened, new ideas were generated from this exchange and it was a very disciplined program.

Do experiences such as these enrich the creative instincts of artists?
How much of a learning experience was it?

I think that everyone gained new experiences, ideas and creativity from this campaign. Usually artists tend to work indoors in their studios. But here I noticed something different. Artists were interacting with one another and then coming back to their canvases to paint. Before some could even lay a stroke of their brush on the canvas, they would run to the dazzling blue waters of Maldives. We were able to dive deep into the heart of nature when we got the chance to be up close with different kinds of sea creatures. Different cultures, new friendships, new experiences all seemed to splashing upon every artist's canvas as they smiled away laying their creativity out there!

Your role as a film director? How much focus do you give on themes from the region?

I have grown as a human being through my experience in SAARC. I am always involved within the sadness and happiness and the different cultures of all the SAARC countries. The reason is: I am a son of the same soil, same land.

As a film director, I have always appreciated and emphasized on the subjects related to the countries of SAARC both knowingly and unknowingly. Being a citizen of Bangladesh, my films will obviously have more to do with the people and culture of Bangladesh. But I have made film on the different countries of SAARC. Besides this I have directed a film on Buddhist Spiritualism, titled Endless Journey. My shootings were surrounded by Buddhist pagodas and meditation areas. I have shot in India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. I have done 3 documentary films on Nepal. Titled: Mono Kamona Temple, Patan, Historical Nepal.

As an artist and team leader of Bangladesh, I came to Maldives to participate in the art camp. My responsibility was to paint and also manage the Bangladeshi team. But I have taken my time out from my responsibilities there to make a documentary film on the art camp. Titled: Journey to the Blue Sea. If I ever get the opportunity and support of a joint venture, I have plans to make a feature film surrounding the countries of SAARC.

“Unity among Diversity” what are your thoughts on this, focusing on the region?

In the contemporary world, Europe and the Americas are going through a economical depreciation. As a result, art markets are suffering there. Everyone seems to have their eye on Asia and the Middle East. It is an utmost necessity for an unity between the countries of SAARC at such crucial times.

Art has an ancient history when it comes to SAARC. Art and Philosophical Myths attract the world. If all these vast cultures of SAARC are presented in a contemporary way and given unimaginable dimensions, we will be able to surprise the world and hence capture the world art market. The philosophical development of Contemporary Art is very important. And this development should not be processed by individual countries of SAARC. This is where unity comes to play. This should be a characteristic of SAARC. AN individual country has limitations when it comes to progress, but as a unity, as SAARC, possibilities are boundless.

Announcement



SAARC International Conference on
Development of Museums in South Asia

Curating Culture *for*
Present & future

23 to 25 October 2014
Colombo, Sri Lanka



SAARC FILMS OF THE YEAR

Soovisi Wivarana

Director: Sarath Darmasiri

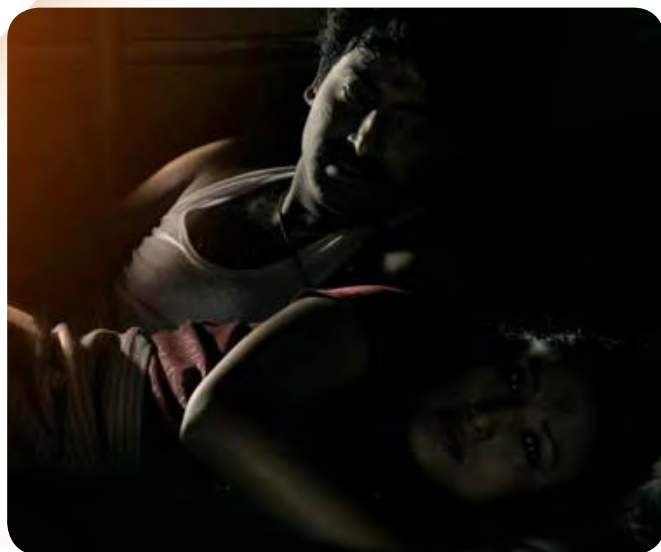
Country: Sri Lanka



Saanghuro

Director: Joes Pandey

Country: Nepal



Ingili

Director: Ravee Farooq

Country: Maldives





SAARC Cultural Events

October 2014 - December 2014

5-8 September, 2014

Meeting of
the Governing
Board of SCC
Sri Lanka

24 September, 2014

Launching of the
annual anthologies
of Short stories &
Poems
Sri Lanka

25-27 September, 2014

Cultural Festival
– Traditional
Dance
India

2 October, 2014

SAARC Non
Violence Day
(Art Camp for
Children)
Sri Lanka

14-19 October, 2014

Exhibition on
Handicrafts
Nepal

23-25 October, 2014

SAARC
International
Conference on
Development of
Museums
Sri Lanka

3-6 November, 2014

SAARC Literary
Festival on
Children's
Literature in
South Asia
Pakistan

8 December, 2014

Exhibition of
Photography
Sri Lanka

8 December, 2014

SAARC Charter
Day
Sri Lanka



GAMES IN BHUTAN

Games or sports in Bhutan are both traditional and modern international games. Archery is the national sport in Bhutan and competitions are held regularly in most villages and towns.

Other traditional Bhutanese sports include **khuru**, **soksom**, **pundo**, and **digor**.

Football is also the most popular game in Bhutan and recently cricket is gaining popularity too.

Archery

Archery game is historically prominent in Bhutanese way of life and is deeply reflected in their religion, ritual, and recreation. It is most popular games during tsechus(festivals) and organized matches. Bhutanese archery is different from the Olympic standards in details such as the placement of targets. The distance to the target is about 130 metres (430 ft) . The targets are wooden planks measuring 3 feet (91 cm) tall and 11 inches (28 cm) wide and usually brightly painted.

Hitting a bullseyes (called karay) are celebrated with great rejoicing and dancing Traditional Bhutanese bows are made from bamboo, and arrows from bamboo or reeds, fletched with feather vanes. Arrows may be painted and tipped with metal arrowheads. The quiver may be of wooden or bamboo with colourful knitted plates or sometimes with an animal hide covering and a woven strap. Bhutan also participates in Olympic Games and has an Olympic team.

Khuru

Khuru (darts) is an outdoor game and is very popular among the office goers and team sport very often played during festivals and archery tournaments. For playing khuru, heavy wooden darts pointed with a 10 centimeters (3.9 in) nail are thrown at a paperback-sized target 10 metres (33 ft) to 20 meters (66 ft) away. Khuri is a very traditional dart game in Bhutan and are very popular in all the villages and among civil servants

Soksom

Soksom is similar to the javelin throw, and is it is one of the Bhutanese sports in which players throw a javelinat a distance of 20 meters (66 ft).

Digor

Digor is one of the national game resembling shot put, petanque and horseshoes. It is played with a pair of spherical flat stones that are thrown or hurled at two targets (pegs) fixed in the ground about 20 metres (66 ft) apart. The game can be played one-on-one or in teams of up to seven players. Digor is played all over Bhutan among men and mostly among monks in olden days. But nowadays it is played among women and it has become very popular sports even in rural areas.

Pundo

Pundo is one of the traditional Bhutanese games akin to shot put. It is a game whereby a stone weighing over a kilo is thrown at a distance as far as possible. The throwing movement is from the shoulder, with the stone held flat in the hand. It is usually played by laymen in the rural settings.

International sports

Football

Football is the most popular sport in Bhutan. The sport of football in Bhutan is run by the Bhutan Football Federation. The association administers the Bhutan national football team as well as the A-Division.

The Changlimithang National Stadium is the most popular stadiums where all the big national games are played.

Futsal

The Bhutan national futsal team represents Bhutan in international futsal competitions and is controlled by the Bhutan Football Federation.

Cricket

Bhutan became an affiliate member of the ICC in 2001. The Bhutan national cricket team has represented the kingdom in international cricket matches and is one of the most successful affiliate nations in the region.. Bhutan made its international debut at the 2004 ACC Trophy, making to the quarter finals. The team competed at the ACC Trophy in 2006 although it was eliminated in the first round after a series of heavy defeats. The only win was against newcomers Myanmar. The team also qualified them to the next ACC Trophy Challenge.

Culture makes people understand each other better. And if they understand each other better in their soul, it is easier to overcome the economic and political barriers. But first they have to understand that their neighbour is, in the end, just like them, with the same problems, the same questions.

Paulo Coelho



SAARC PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2014

www.saarcculture.org | sccphotocomp@gmail.com

Deadline for submission 15th October 2014

SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE - SRI LANKA



South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

Category 1: 'Natural Landscape'



SAARC
PHOTOS
2013

1st Prize: 'K-2 Second Highest
Mountain in the world' by
Mohammad Daniel (Pakistan)

Category 1: 'Natural Landscape'



2nd Prize: 'Cityscape seen
from Chobhar Height ' by
Mr. Narayan Maharajan (Nepal)

SAARC
PHOTOS
CONTEST
2013

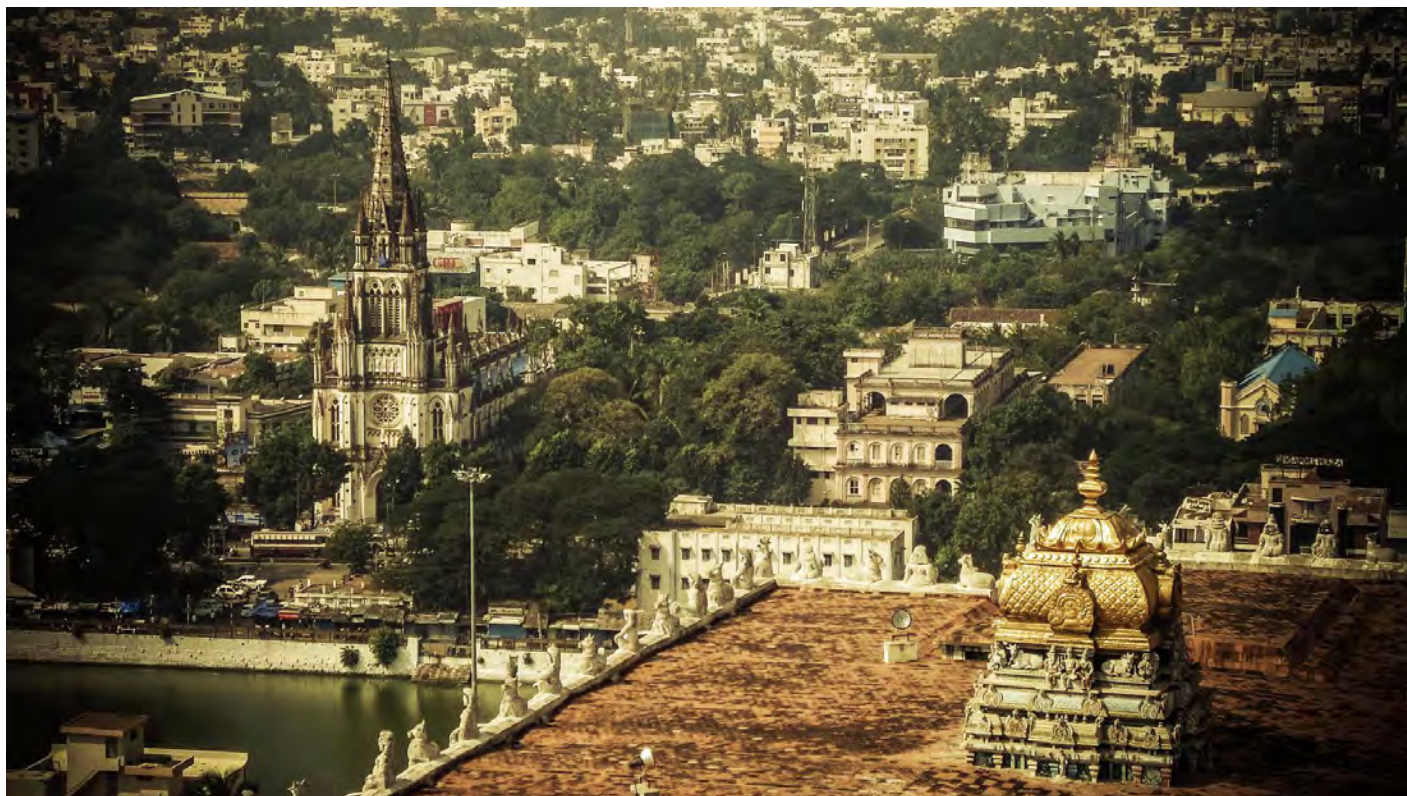
Category 1: 'Natural Landscape'



SAARC
PHOTOS
2013

3rd Prize: 'Symmetrically
Balanced' by Mr. Dharmavarapu
Chandraka (Sri Lanka)

Category 2: 'Historical Sites'



1st Prize: 'Connecting with the Divine'
by Mr. Sangeeth Harshendra
Packiyarajah (Sri Lanka)

SAARC
PHOTOS
2013

Category 2: 'Historical Sites'



SAARC
PHOTOS
2013

2nd Prize: 'Evening view of
Boudahanath Stupa' by Mr. Narayan
Maharajan (Nepal)

Category 2: 'Historical Sites'



3rd Prize: 'Ruwanweli Seya' by Mr.
K.A.D.Amanda Samai Jayawardhana
(Sri Lanka)

SAARC
PHOTOS
2013

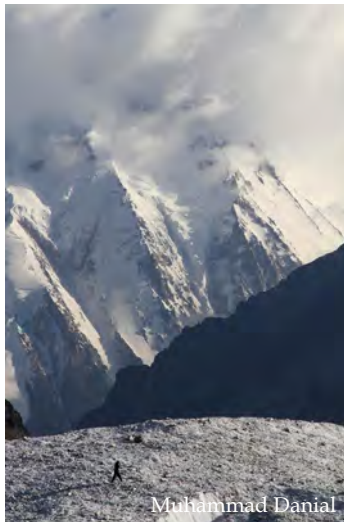
SAARC PHOTOS 2013



M. Yousuf Tushar



Narayan Maharajan



Muhammad Danial



Muhammad Danial



K.M. Asad



D. Chandrika



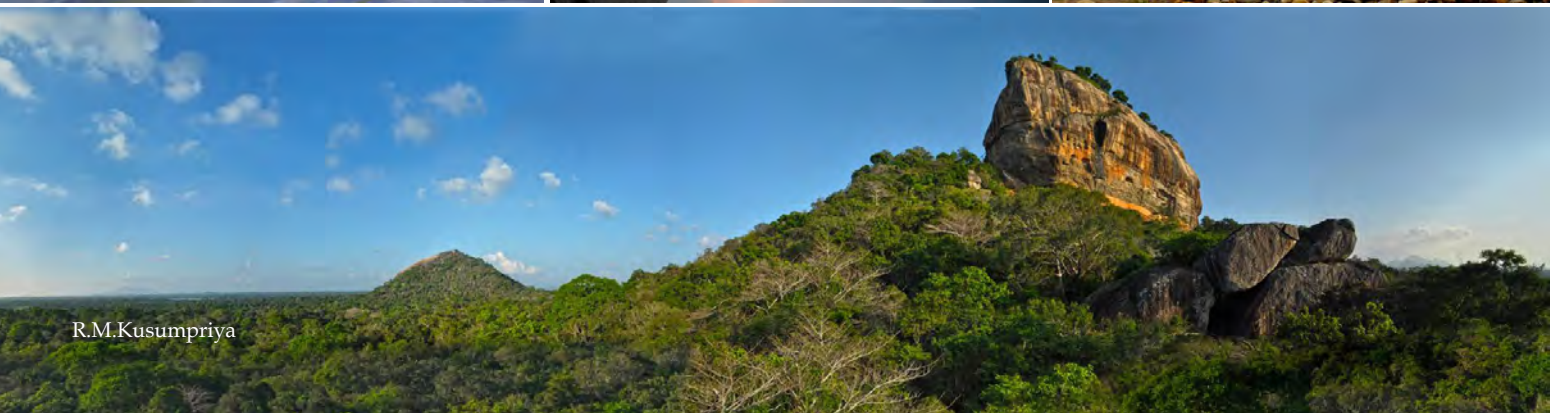
Fayzul Islam



A.M. Weerakoon



D. Chandrika



R.M.Kusumpriya



SAARC Cultural Festival on

Traditional Dance

An **Unique** Experience in **Cultural Diversity**



25 – 28 September 2014
Delhi, India

SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE - SRI LANKA



South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation



Bamiyan Buddhas

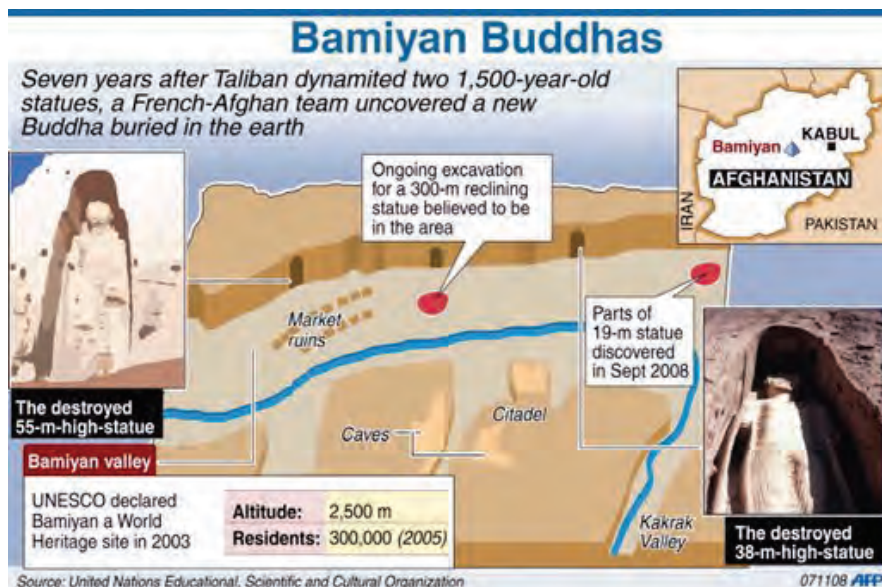
Buddhist Heritage of Afghanistan

Many Buddhist statues of Buddha at Bamiyan in Afghanistan dating from 552 AD are a rich cultural heritage of Buddhist art and culture.

Some statues are as tall as 55 m and some are 38 m high tall. The red stone Bamiyan plateau stretch from east to west for a distance of 1800 , and is believed to have about 750 rock caves and niches of different sizes and styles tuck into the cliff. Their existence were mentioned by Chinese travelers and pilgrim like Huan Tsang who passed through the region in 630 AD. During the period of Western Turks who ruled at that times. It is believed that a local prince had commissioned to construct the statues as he came into prominence after becoming rich doing trade between India and China. Bamiyan lies on the Silk Route of ancient world.

However, an order was issued by Mullah Omar of Taliban in 2001 to carry out the destruction of the statues in Bamiyan and other places were great loss to the country. UNESCO listed the place as World Heritage Site in 2003 and some preservation and conservation works have begun thereafter. It is reemphasized and inscribed as the strong influence of Gandhara school of Buddhist art which had flourished between the period 6th BCE to 11th CE. Bamiyan valley is also listed as the World Heritage site in danger due its many years of negligence and fragile location. Bamiyan Buddhas belong to the period and Buddhist times and cultural tradition in Afghanistan history which is lost from Central Asia. The place commands a spectacular views of Hindu Kush mountain ranges in the north.

A recent exhibition showcasing the Buddhist artefacts entitled into 5 parts were held with the aim to show different aspects of Afghan history and culture of those times to the outside visitors.





Pre - 2001



Now



Now

Folk Dance Festival 2011 | Dhaka - Bangladesh



Bangladesh



Bhutan



Nepal



Sri Lanka

Dance concert featuring folk dancers from the SAARC Region were presented to the audience at the SAARC Folk Dance Festival in 2011

Cultural Festival 2012 | Colombo - Galle



Bangladesh



India



Maldives

Dancers from SAARC countries participated showcasing traditional and folk dances of the region to local audiences.



Sri Lanka



SAARC *Artists Camp*

SRI LANKA 2012 . MALDIVES 2013 . BANGLADESH 2014



Learn more about the diverse culture of the SAARC Region.

Visit the SAARC Cultural Web Portal

www.saarcculture.org/portal



**SAARC
CULTURAL
PORTAL**
.....
SRI LANKA

Ayubowan
The culture of Sri Lanka has been influenced by many things in the past, but has managed to retain much of its ancient, rich aspects. Mostly it has been influenced by religion and colonization by the Dutch, the Portuguese and the British.

SRI LANKA



AFGHANISTAN BANGLADESH BHUTAN INDIA MALDIVES NEPAL PAKISTAN SRI LANKA

CULTURAL EVENTS



**SAARC
CULTURAL
CENTRE**



**Resource
Library**



AFGHANISTAN BANGLADESH BHUTAN INDIA
MALDIVES NEPAL PAKISTAN SRI LANKA

SAARC IN GENERAL

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) comprises the eight countries of South Asia, i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
[Read more...](#)

SAARC CULTURAL CENTRE

SAARC Cultural Centre is a regional centre established based on the decision made by the heads of state or government of SAARC Countries to promote cultural cooperation in order to bring the people of South Asia closer and to project the distinct identity of South Asia.
[Read more...](#)



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If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him.

John F. Kennedy



SAARC

SAARC Cultural Centre

No. 224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Tel : +94 11 2584451 Fax : +94 11 2584452

Email : saarc-scc@sltnet.lk Web : <http://www.saarcculture.org>



SAARC.Cultural.Centre



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