

**NALANDA - SRIWIJAYA CENTRE (NSC) - NALANDA UNIVERSITY (NU)
CONFERENCE**

Imagining Asia(s): Networks, Actors, Sites

10–11 October 2016, ISEAS, Seminar Room I & II

Welcome Remarks by Dr Gopa Sabharwal, Vice-Chancellor, Nalanda University

Ambassador Tan Chin Tiong Director of ISEAS Yusof-Ishak Institute, Dr Terence Chong, Head of the Nalanda Sriwijaya Centre and other guests

Good Morning.

It is my pleasure to be here today and welcome all of you to this conference titled *Imagining Asia(s): Networks, Actors, Sites*, hosted jointly by the Nalanda Sriwijaya Centre, ISEAS Yusof-Ishak Institute and Nalanda University.

The partnership between the Nalanda University and the Nalanda Sriwijaya Centre which goes back to before 2010 when the university came into being, has been crucial to the university developing important linkages in Singapore and beyond. At a personal level too, my first ever public lecture on the future of Nalanda University and its form and structure, was at NSC in January 2011, and the visit provided a valuable opportunity to share ideas about the new Nalanda with a wider audience.

The two institutions have since, collaborated for various events such as sponsoring speakers to conferences, and writing for the IIAS newsletter. But, since 2014, when the Nalanda university launched its formal academic programmes, the level of engagement between the two institutions has moved to another level.

Nalanda University now hosts one member of the NSC for a semester of teaching at NU. We had Dr Andrea Acri with us from January to May 2016 as part of this exchange. ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute in turn will host a member of the Nalanda community for the summer – and our founding Dean Academics, Dr Anjana Sharma (now with University of Delhi) spent a month at ISEAS in the summer working on a publication that is to be jointly printed by ISEAS and NU. ISEAS also introduced student internships for our Masters students over the summer and one of our students, spent a few weeks here in the summer. We are also now moving into a partnership with the archaeology unit and one of our students is going to be attending the field school in December. And now, we are partnering for this wonderful seminar which promises to provide two very fruitful days of discussion.

Thus, our partnership is growing at various levels and we hope to continue to grow and expand our points of co-operation. I thank all the people involved in the conference for all the hard work that has gone into making this a success. For the academic aspects of the conference – I would like to place on record my thanks to Dr Andrea Acri, Dr Sraman Mukherjee, Dr Kashshaf Ghani and Dr Murari Kumar Jha. I would also like to thank the staff at the NSC for all the logistical support and for the arrangements at the venue.

Last of all I wish all the participants a good conference and look forward to myself participating in the same over the next two days.