

[New System to Access Asia's Art & Cultural Heritage](#)

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New System to Access Asia's Art & Cultural Heritage

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Very soon a person sitting in any corner of South Asia will be able to get a clear picture of the glory that Hinduism enjoyed in this region until some centuries ago. This is going until some centuries ago. This is going to be possible following a decision taken in New Delhi on October 22, 1991, to set up a specialized system for the networking of all data and documents about the art and cultural heritage lying mostly unknown or unused in the libraries of the countries in the region.

The lead in organizing such a system has been given by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (INGCA) in New Delhi. The center, which had already begun to be compared with the Smithsonian Institute, organized a conference of experts from South and South-East Asian countries to discuss the ways to evolve a system to manage the resources of the region.

The conference was organized in pursuance of the resolution of the 24th session of the resolution of the 24th session of the UNESCO that a regional workshop for the Asia and the Pacific Region be convened and a few pilot projects launched at selected centers of excellence in the region of lifestyle studies, using sophisticated modern information technology for multi-media computerizable documentation. In another resolution, the session had stressed the need and urgency of developing integrated regional databases and information systems for the storage, retrieval and dissemination of data on art and cultural heritage.

The main participants in the conference were from Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. There were also representatives from Australia, Iran, the Philippines and the United Kingdom. All these countries are members of UNESCO.

The conference decided that the Roman script be used for the creation of databases until such time as new technology can tackle successfully the diverse and different scripts.

Since this heritage is of great importance it has been felt for some time that the cultural resources of this region should be suitably indexed, documented and preserved by the sharing of effort, using modern techniques. The efforts involve paying careful attention to the multi-lingual, multi-media, multi-national and multi-religious cultural resources information status of the region.

The conference, therefore, accepted therefore, accepted the necessity for multi-lingual documentation of cultural resources so that it is possible to integrate art and interrelated texts (published and unpublished), the static visuals (paintings, sculptures, architectures, craft, artifacts etc.), the kinetic visuals (dance, drama, festivals, rituals, lifestyles, etc.) and the oral (musical performances, recitation, speeches, interviews, etc.) and establish their cross references. Initial efforts will be confined to the printed material.

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