



## *International Conference*

# Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia's Shared Cultural Heritage

Hyatt Regency Bali, Indonesia | 14th & 15th September, 2024

### Partners





## Introduction

In the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean lies a shared narrative of cultural exchange and historical resonance between two diverse yet deeply connected nations: India and Indonesia. Two day International Seminar on “Echoes across the Waves: Revisiting the Intersections of India and Indonesia’s Shared Cultural Heritage” encapsulates the essence of this enduring bond, inviting participants on a journey through time and space to explore the rich tapestry of cultural connections that unite these two nations.

From ancient times, the Indian Ocean served as a conduit for trade, ideas, and cultural diffusion, facilitating the exchange of languages, philosophy, religions, art forms, and traditions between India and Indonesia. This seminar endeavors to revisit and re-contextualise these intersections, shedding light on the profound impact they have had on the socio-cultural fabric of both countries.

- From the intricate carvings of Borobudur to the vibrant colors of Indian classical dance, from the philosophical teachings of the Bhagavad Gita to the mystical traditions of Javanese mysticism, our discussions will traverse the breadth and depth of India-Indonesia cultural connections. By revisiting these intersections, we aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural bonds that unite us, while also laying the groundwork for future collaborations and initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting our shared heritage for generations to come.



As we delve into the echoes of the past and contemplate their resonance in the present, this seminar aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the shared cultural heritage that binds India and Indonesia. Through collaboration, dialogue, and mutual exchange, we seek to not only celebrate the richness of our collective heritage but also pave the way for future collaborations and initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting our cultural legacy for generations to come.







## **Objective**

The seminar aims to:

Explore the historical, linguistic, religious, and artistic exchanges between India and Indonesia.

Examine the contemporary manifestations and influences of shared cultural heritage in both countries.

Foster dialogue and collaboration between scholars, researchers, artists, and practitioners from India, Indonesia, and beyond.

Provide a platform for interdisciplinary discussions and perspectives on India-Indonesia cultural connections.

Identify opportunities for further research, preservation, and promotion of shared cultural heritage.



## DAY 1

### Inaugural Session

Welcoming Remarks and Keynote Address

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## DAY 2

### Plenary Session I

**Topic: Waves of Exchange: Exploring Ancient Maritime Trade Routes in the Indian Ocean**

**Time: 10.00 a.m. – 11.15 a.m.**

These session here would focus on the ancient maritime trade routes that crisscrossed the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean serve as a testament to the rich tapestry of trade and cultural exchange between nations. Among the myriad interactions along these routes, the connections between India and Indonesia stand out for their depth and significance. From as early as the first millennium BCE, merchants and seafarers traversed these waters, carrying goods, ideas, and cultural practices between the shores of the Indian subcontinent and the Indonesian archipelago. Spices, textiles, precious metals, and gemstones flowed from the ports of India to the bustling markets of Indonesia, while languages, religions, and artistic traditions were exchanged and assimilated along the way. The maritime trade between India and Indonesia not only facilitated economic prosperity but also fostered a profound cultural syncretism that continues to shape the identities of both nations to this day. Through the exploration of these ancient maritime trade routes, we gain insight into the interconnectedness of India and Indonesia, and the enduring legacy of their shared cultural heritage.





## Parallel Sessions I

### Topic A: Language and Literature: Comparative Analysis of Linguistic and Literary Traditions

Time: 11.15 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

This session offers a platform for scholars and enthusiasts to delve into the linguistic and literary connections that have flourished between India and Indonesia over centuries. Through a comparative lens and explore into the rich tapestry of literary traditions encompassing epics, poetry, and philosophical texts. By tracing the evolution of languages and literature across borders, this session sheds light on the shared narratives, cultural exchanges, and enduring influences that have shaped the literary landscapes of both nations, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of their shared cultural heritage.

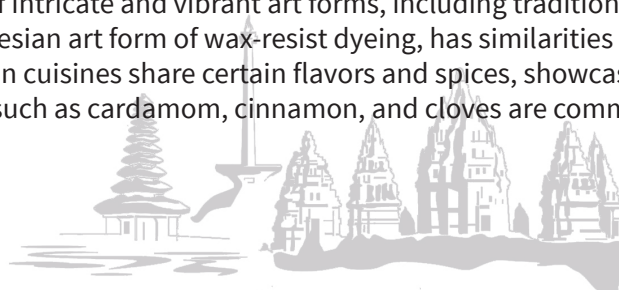
Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language, has influenced Indonesian languages, especially in terms of vocabulary. Both countries have cultural terms and expressions rooted in Sanskrit. The Ramayana and Mahabharata, ancient Indian epics, have influenced Indonesian art, literature, and performance arts. Indonesian shadow puppetry (wayang kulit) often features stories from these epics.

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### Topic B: From Brushstrokes to Spice Blends: Tracing Cultural Innovation in Art-Craft and Cuisine

This session serves as a vibrant tapestry woven with threads of artistic ingenuity, architectural marvels and culinary delights. Participants embark on a journey through time and space, exploring the continuum of cultural expressions that have evolved and endured across the landscapes of India and Indonesia. From the intricate craftsmanship of traditional arts and crafts to the awe-inspiring grandeur of architectural wonders, from the tantalizing flavors of culinary delights, this session celebrates the dynamic interplay of continuity and innovation in cultural expressions. Through this exploration, participants gain a deeper appreciation of the diverse manifestations of shared heritage, fostering a renewed sense of connection and belonging within the tapestry of India and Indonesia's cultural landscape.

Both nations share a tradition of intricate and vibrant art forms, including traditional dances, music, and crafts. Batik, a traditional Indonesian art form of wax-resist dyeing, has similarities with Indian textile traditions. Indian and Indonesian cuisines share certain flavors and spices, showcasing the influence of trade and cultural exchanges. Spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, and cloves are common in both cuisines.






## Plenary Session II

**Topic:** **Divine Encounters: Tracing Hindu-Buddhist Traditions of Indonesia**

**Time:** **12.30 p.m.-13.45 p.m.**



This topic delves into the profound impact of Hinduism and Buddhism on the cultural landscape of Indonesia. From ancient times, the spiritual traditions of India journeyed across the waters of the Indian Ocean, finding fertile ground in the archipelago's lush islands. Through the construction of majestic temples like Borobudur and Prambanan, intricate carvings, and vibrant artistic expressions, the influence of Hindu-Buddhist thought permeated Indonesian society, shaping its architecture, philosophy, and way of life. These divine encounters not only left a lasting imprint on the religious practices of the region but also fostered a cultural syncretism that continues to thrive in contemporary Indonesia. Through this exploration, we gain insight into the enduring legacy of Hindu-Buddhist influences, which remain an integral part of Indonesia's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

It should be noted Balinese Hinduism, with its unique blend of indigenous beliefs and practices, reflects a deep reverence for the divine and a harmonious relationship with nature. Through this exploration, we gain insight into the intricate rituals, elaborate ceremonies, and artistic expressions that characterize Balinese culture, providing a glimpse into the enduring legacy of Hindu-Buddhist influences on Indonesian civilization, particularly in the spiritual heartland of Bali.

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### Lunch

**Time: 2.00 p.m.- 3.00 p.m.**

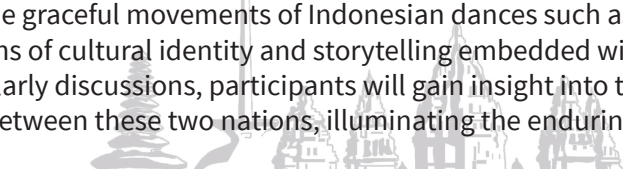
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## Parallel Session II

**Topic A: Rhythmic Dialogues: Exploring Dance, Music, and Theater Traditions of India and Indonesia**

**Time: 3.00 p.m.- 4.15 p.m.**

We delve into the rich tapestry of dance, music, and theater traditions that bind India and Indonesia together. This session offers a captivating exploration of the rhythmic dialogues and harmonic melodies that have echoed across borders, transcending time and geography. From the intricate footwork of Indian classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Odissi to the graceful movements of Indonesian dances such as Javanese and Balinese, we uncover the nuanced expressions of cultural identity and storytelling embedded within these art forms. Through vibrant performances and scholarly discussions, participants will gain insight into the cultural cadences and artistic interplay that have flourished between these two nations, illuminating the enduring legacy of their shared cultural heritage.





## **Topic B: Modern Mirrors: Reflecting on India-Indonesia Cultural Exchanges in the Modern Era**

In this session, participants will engage in a thought-provoking exploration of the contemporary cultural exchanges between India and Indonesia, observing how these interactions reflect and shape the cultural landscapes of both nations in the modern age. From the realms of art, literature, and cuisine to the realms of technology, business, and diplomacy, this session delves into the multifaceted dimensions of cultural exchange, tracing the threads of connectivity and collaboration that bind India and Indonesia together in today's globalized world. Through insightful discussions and reflections, participants gain a deeper understanding of the evolving dynamics of cultural exchange between these two vibrant nations, uncovering new pathways for mutual understanding, appreciation, and collaboration in the 21st century.

The presence of Indian films and Bollywood music has gained popularity in Indonesia, reflecting contemporary cultural exchanges. Cultural festivals and events celebrate the diversity and shared heritage of the two nations. Bilateral agreements and cultural exchange programs foster closer ties between India and Indonesia. People-to-people interactions through tourism, academic exchanges, and business collaborations contribute to cultural understanding. Both countries actively participate in international forums and organizations, promoting their cultural heritage and strengthening global partnerships. Overall, the cultural connectivity between India and Indonesia is deeply rooted in history and continues to evolve through various forms of exchange, creating a strong foundation for bilateral relations. There is an active cultural exchange between the two countries. The consulates of India operate Jawaharlal Nehru Indian Cultural Centre (JNICC) which holds regular classes of Indian classical music, Indian classical dances, Yoga, and also teaches Indian languages. Yoga is now popular among youths in Indonesia.

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### **Valedictory Session**

#### **Reflections on Shared Heritage and Future Collaborations**

**Time: 4.30 p.m.- 5.30 p.m.**

'Echoes across the waves' seek to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the enduring cultural ties between India and Indonesia. By revisiting historical intersections and exploring contemporary expressions, the seminar aims to contribute to the preservation and promotion of this shared cultural heritage for future generations.





