

# Harmony in Diversity, Unity for All

The Second International Conference on China–South Asia  
Civilization and Connectivity

美美与共、天下大同

——第二届中国—南亚文明互鉴国际学术研讨会

**Dates:** 23–26 October 2026 (inclusive of arrival and departure)

**Venue:** Kunming, Yunnan, P.R. China

## Conference Background & Objectives

Following the successful inaugural International Conference on “*China-South Asia Civilization and Connectivity: History and Contemporary Issues*,” jointly organized in December 2024 by the China-South Asia Center for Socio-Cultural Studies (CSCSS), North South University (Bangladesh), and Yunnan University (China) in Dhaka, the second edition will be hosted in Kunming in 2026.

This continuation seeks to consolidate scholarly momentum and advance interdisciplinary, cross-regional dialogue on civilizational interactions. The 2024 conference brought together scholars, policymakers, and experts from multiple countries to examine historical linkages, including the Silk Road and the Tea-Horse Road, as well as contemporary frameworks such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), socio-cultural dynamics, and emerging regional challenges.

Building on these foundations, the 2026 conference adopts the thematic framework “*Harmony in Diversity, Unity for All*” (美美与共、天下大同), a seminal vision articulated by Chinese sociologist Fei Xiaotong. This theme underscores a shared commitment to civilizational mutual learning, epistemic pluralism, and cooperative regional futures.

We invite submissions from scholars, researchers, policy analysts, and civil society practitioners whose work critically engages with the historical depth and contemporary complexity of China–South Asia relations—from premodern networks of trade, pilgrimage, and knowledge transmission to present-day initiatives in green infrastructure, multilingual digital public diplomacy, and transboundary environmental

stewardship.

The conference aims to serve as a rigorous academic platform for rethinking how civilizational encounters inform structural transformation, policy convergence, and cultural resilience across the region. For documentation and outcomes of the inaugural conference, please visit:

<https://cscsnsu.org/conference>.

## Conference Aims

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- To advance interdisciplinary scholarship on the historical evolution and contemporary dynamics of socio-cultural, economic, and political interactions between China and South Asia.
- To critically examine China–South Asia relations through civilizational, ethical, and grassroots (people-to-people) frameworks, foregrounding agency, reciprocity, and long-term coexistence.
- To assess socio-environmental and cultural heritage implications of large-scale infrastructure initiatives, including the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and trans-Himalayan connectivity projects.
- To foster evidence-based academic and policy dialogue on priority cooperation dimensions, including sustainable development, cultural heritage, education, and health cooperation.
- To explore the role of digital media, artificial intelligence, and cyber diplomacy in shaping mutual perceptions and regional stability.

## Call for Submissions: Themes & Panels

We invite scholarly contributions—including individual paper abstracts, fully formed panel proposals, and roundtable sessions—that engage with the conference theme.

Submissions may address (but are not limited to) the following thematic areas:

### **I. Civilizational & Cultural Interactions**

- Historical connectivity frameworks: Silk Road, Tea–Horse Road, maritime linkages
- Transregional religious and philosophical exchanges (e.g., Buddhist networks)
- Heritage conservation, museum collaborations, shared artistic traditions
- Ethnic communities, cross-border cultural practices, and identity

### **II. Political & Diplomatic Dimensions**

- Decolonization in the Global South
- Geopolitical flashpoints: Bay of Bengal, Indo-Pacific strategies
- Regional security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian issues (e.g., Rohingya)

### **III. Economic & Trade Dynamics**

- Trade patterns, investment, and LDC strategies
- Digital finance, de-dollarization, and economic cooperation
- MSMEs in cross-border value chains
- Sustainable development and inclusive growth

#### **IV. Connectivity, Infrastructure & Logistics**

- BRI projects: narratives, implementation, and local impacts
- Transboundary energy cooperation
- Transport corridors and trade facilitation
- Environmental implications of large-scale connectivity

#### **V. Technology, AI & Cyber Diplomacy**

- Artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and governance
- AI ethics and cross-border data flows
- Cyber diplomacy and confidence-building measures
- Digital public infrastructure and regional cooperation

#### **VI. Language, Education & People-to-People Bonds**

- Language education, student mobility, and academic partnerships
- Scholarship programs and cultural institutes
- Translation, publishing, and intellectual exchange
- Role of diaspora communities

#### **VII. Health, Medicine & Traditional Knowledge**

- Traditional Chinese medicine and South Asian ethnomedicine
- Health system strengthening and pandemic preparedness
- Medical diplomacy and cross-border health initiatives
- Climate-health nexus

#### **VIII. Media, Communication & Public Sentiment**

- Media narratives on China–South Asia relations
- Digital activism, social media, and public opinion
- Film, documentary, and cultural representation
- Disinformation and fact-checking

\* Proposals that transcend these categories or adopt innovative formats (e.g., roundtables, dialogue sessions, film screenings) are strongly encouraged.

## **Submission Guidelines**

We invite submissions of:

- Individual paper abstracts (250-300 words)
- Panel proposals (3-4 papers with chair/respondent)
- Roundtable proposals

Each submission should include:

- Title
- Name and affiliation of presenter(s)
- Abstract or session rationale
- Preferred thematic area

**Submission Email:** [csc\\_conference@126.com](mailto:csc_conference@126.com)

## Important Dates

- Abstract Submission Deadline: **15 July 2026 (23:59 CST)**
- Notification of Acceptance: **20 August 2026**
- Full Paper / Extended Abstract Submission: **30 September 2026**

## Participants

We welcome scholars, faculty members, independent researchers, postgraduate students (MA and PhD candidates), policy advisors, diplomats, cultural practitioners, and civil society representatives from China, South Asia, and beyond. Early-career researchers and those from underrepresented institutions are especially encouraged to apply.

## Conference Format

The conference will span four days (23-26 October 2026), including arrival and departure. The core academic programme, scheduled for 24-25 October, will feature keynote lectures by distinguished scholars, parallel sessions, thematic panels, and a concluding roundtable aimed at generating actionable insights.

All sessions will be in Kunming, with hybrid participation options available for remote participants (details to be announced).

## Conference Organizing Committee

*Secretariat – 2nd China–South Asia Civilization and Connectivity Conference*  
*School of Ethnology and Sociology, Yunnan University*  
*2 Cuihu Bei Road, Kunming, Yunnan Province, 650091, P.R. China*

*China–South Asia Center for Socio-Cultural Studies (CSCSS)*  
*South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG)*  
*North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh*

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(Kindly include “Conference2026” as a prefix in the subject line of your email)