The International Institute for Asian Studies is a postdoctoral research centre based in Leiden and Amsterdam. The main objective of the IIAS is to encourage Asian Studies in the humanities and the social sciences (ranging from linguistics and anthropology to political science, law, environment and development studies) and to promote national and international cooperation in these fields. The IIAS was established in 1993 on the initiative of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Leiden University, University of Amsterdam, and the Free University Amsterdam. It is financed mainly by the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sciences.

Based in the Netherlands, the Institute acts as an (inter)national mediator, bringing various parties together for the enhancement of Asian Studies. By keeping with the Dutch tradition of transferring goods and ideas, the IIAS works as a clearing-house of knowledge and information. This entails activities such as providing information services, constructing an international network, and setting up international cooperative projects and research programmes. In this way, the IIAS functions as a window on Europe for non-Europeans and contributes to the cultural rapprochement between Asia and Europe.

Research fellows at a post-PhD level are temporarily employed by or affiliated to the Institute, either within the framework of a collaborative research programme, or on an individual basis. The IIAS organises seminars, workshops, and conferences, publishes a newsletter (circulation approximately 22,000 copies), and has established a database which contains information about researchers and current research in the field of Asian Studies within Europe and worldwide. A Guide to Asian Studies in Europe, a printed version of parts of this database, was published in 1998. The Institute also has its own server and Internet site to which a growing number of Institutes related to Asian Studies is linked.

IIAS Newsletter | #29 | November 2002

Dr. Sita Pieris

This research programme focuses on the socio-political implications and practices of the development and application of the new biomedical and genetic technologies by the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR) together with the IIAS and is executed with financial support from the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO).

Programme director: Dr. Ellen Raven

General Editor for Western publications: Dr. Prabu Mohapatra

Dr. Andi Faisal Bakti

Miriyan Aouragh, Myrna Eindhoven

Clemency in Asian State-Centricity

The research project Clemency in Asian State-Centricity focuses on religious authority, power, legal norms and their interrelation in the context of modernisation. The project aims at studying and documenting important changes which occurred in Indonesia during the past century and which have contributed significantly to the shaping of the present nationhood. Its focus is on religious authority and its socio-political implications and practices such as the Islamic State Universities in Indonesia.

Programme coordinator: Dr. Syafii Mufid

M. A. M. Th. A. M. (Abdul) Yatim

Southern China comparing them in order to explore the impacts of globalisation and development on local landscapes, economic systems, and cultural life between and within the regions.

Programme coordinator: Dr. Ankie Lo"os

New IIAS Publications

Tourism, Heritage and National Culture in Java: Nomads in the Sedentary World


Hüsken, Frans and Dick van der Meij (eds.) Reading Asia, New Research in Asian Studies


Since 1994 the IIAS has been appointed to run the secretariat of the European Science Foundation Asia Committee (Strasbourg).

In 1997 the Strategic Alliance for Asian Studies was established: an international cooperation between the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Copenhagen, and the IIAS. The Institute of Asian Affairs (IIA), Hamburg, the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS), Brussels, and the Asia-Europe Centre (AEC), Paris have since joined the Alliance. The Asia Alliance was set up to enhance research on (contemporary) Asia and to create networks in Asia and Europe with academic and non-academic institutions and actors.

Dr. Ratna Saptari

Islamic State in Indonesia: the Dissemination of Religious Authority in the Twentieth Century

This 4-year cooperative research programme is executed by IIAS and the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM, Leiden), but will be executed in cooperation with other Dutch research institutes such as the Institute for International and Comparative Studies in Asia and the Pacific (IIAS), the Institute for Oriental Studies (NIAS), the Programme for Europe-Asia Research Links (PEARL), and various Asian research institutes.

Programme coordinator: Dr. Sita Pieris

M. A. M. (Abdul) Yatim

Abia South and Southeast Asian Art

The ABIA South and Southeast Asian Art Index online database covers parts of Asia which are undergoing economic and cultural change. The IIAS is the centre for this project which the use and monopoly over genetic biodiversity, and which has contributed significantly to the shaping of the present nationhood. Its focus is on religious authority and its socio-political implications and practices such as the Islamic State Universities in Indonesia.

Programme coordinator: Dr. Syafii Mufid

M. A. M. (Abdul) Yatim

Syafi‘i Mufid, Moch Nur Ichwan, Arief Subhan, Muhammad Dahlan

Since 1994 the IIAS has been appointed to run the secretariat of the European Science Foundation Asia Committee (Strasbourg). Together with the Committee, the IIAS shares the objective of improving the international cooperation in the field of Asian Studies (additional information can be acquired at the IIAS).

Dr. Andi Faisal Bakti

Tourism, Heritage and National Culture in Java: Nomads in the Sedentary World

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Upon the initiative of the IIAS, and in close cooperation with NIAS, the Programme for Europe-Asia Research Links (PEARL) was established in Seoul in October 1998. It is a network of researchers from Asia and Europe, i.e. from the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meetings) member countries, representing leading Asian and European Studies institutes. PEARL believes that promotion of Asia-Europe research cooperation ought to be an integral part of the ASEM dynamics. The IIAS provides the secretariat for PEARL.