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SUB-DOMAIN: - 3. TOURISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

PANEL TITLE: EXPLORING KALINGA HERITAGE IN SRI LANKA AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA FOR PROMOTION OF TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

CONVENOR: DR. SAMEER KUMAR DAS

ABSTRACT

Odisha, formerly known as Kalinga, Odra & Utkal, is a pivotal to India's cultural diplomacy as per its "Act East Policy". Its significance in today's context needs to be explored, documented, and promoted. Over the last 2500 years, the legacy of Kalinga heritage has strongly influenced the socio-economic fabric of millions of early Indian-origin inhabitants of South-East Asia and Sri Lanka through the propagation of trade, culture, religion, and architecture. Even Emperor Ashoka, after Kalinga war, used the vast maritime trade route of ancient Odisha to propagate Buddhism to make it a world religion after 200 years of the Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha. It is an irony that despite having such a strong socio-cultural relationship, present day population, particularly youth, of Odisha, Sri Lanka and South-East Asian countries are ignorant about the connection as contemporary historians have never been vocal about Odisha's contribution in shaping world history. These facets of ancient India's connections in Indian Ocean through Kalinga's maritime heritage were not much deliberated and taught in Schools and Universities. Neither these are well-documented for mass awareness. Even the policy makers have not taken keen interest to promote and create awareness of ancient Odisha's maritime heritage among the public particularly among children and youth.

In this context, this panel invites papers from scholars from different disciplines engaged in the process of historical and cultural documentation of these linkages. It also aims to promote the exploration, research, and documentation of socio-cultural and economic relations between Odisha, Sri Lanka, and South-East Asian regions in multi-disciplinary domains. The documentation and subsequent awareness of Kalinga connections will promote heritage tourism and cultural exchanges, thereby, facilitating people-to-people contact as well as boosting our country's strategic as well as multi-lateral relationship with Sri Lanka and South-East Asia.

Keywords: Kalinga, Linkages, South-East Asia, Sri Lanka, Tourism, Heritage Management

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