

Proposal for hosting the 58th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics at Independent University, Bangladesh

1. Introduction

Title of conference: 58th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics

Date: 2 – 4 October 2025

This proposal outlines the plan to host the International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics at the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) in Dhaka from 2 October to 4 October 2025. IUB, one of the leading private universities in Bangladesh, was established in 1993. Currently, over 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in different programmes at IUB. The programmes in the School of Liberal Arts include English and Modern Languages, Global Studies and Governance, Media and Communication, and Social Sciences and Humanities (Anthropology, Sociology).

The conference will focus on the languages and cultures of the second-largest language family in the world, Sino-Tibetan, plus Tai-Kadai and Austroasiatic. It will bring together leading scholars, researchers, and students from around the world.

2. History and significance of the conference

The International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics (ICSTLL) is a prestigious academic event that brings together scholars and researchers from around the world interested in Sino-Tibetan, Tai-Kadai and Austroasiatic languages.

The conference is one of the leading platforms for scholars to present their research findings, exchange ideas, and engage in discussions on various topics, including but not limited to historical linguistics, comparative linguistics, phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, sociolinguistics, language documentation, language revitalisation, and language typology within the Sino-Tibetan language family.

The first ICSTLL was held at Yale University in 1968. Since then, the conference has been hosted at renowned universities worldwide. Some renowned universities that have hosted the ICSTLL include the University of California, Berkeley, Dartmouth College, University of British Columbia, Cornell University, the University of Sydney, and Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

3. Conference objectives

- a. To create a platform for academics, researchers, and students to share their latest findings and innovative approaches to studying Sino-Tibetan languages and cultures.
- b. To facilitate discussions on emerging trends and challenges of studying Sino-Tibetan languages and cultures in the current situation.
- c. To promote networking and collaboration opportunities among participants, especially for local students and scholars from developing countries. A limited number of scholarships will be awarded to scholars from developing countries. Currently, we plan to waive registration fees and provide accommodation to five scholars from developing countries.
- d. To raise awareness about the languages of the ethnic communities in Bangladesh.
- e. To publish a conference proceedings volume of selected papers after the conference.

4. Target audience and participants

The target audience and participants for the conference include:

- a. Academics and researchers in linguistics and anthropology.
- b. Professionals working on developing digital tools for the languages of the ethnic communities in Bangladesh.
- c. Policymakers and government officials interested in linguistic and cultural diversity.

- d. Graduate students specialising in linguistics and anthropology.

5. Tentative conference program

The conference will be held in a hybrid format, in-person and online. It will feature numerous sessions in different formats, including:

- a. Opening ceremony and a keynote speech by a local scholar.
- b. Three plenary talks by three leading scholars in the field.
- c. Three parallel sessions of paper presentations showcasing original research (we are expecting 110 participants, including 80 international and 30 local).
- d. Three workshops: 2 October, 3 October and 4 October 2025 (a call for workshop proposals will be sent out.)
- e. Poster presentations.
- f. Conference banquet on 4 October 2025.
- g. A day out on 5 October 2025 (registration and fees are required). Taking account of the traffic in Dhaka, we are thinking of a boat trip on the Balu or Shitalakshya River. The trip will start from the Kanchan Bridge at Purbachal. Participants will be provided with breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The estimated fee for the day out is USD 50 per person.

6. University resources and expertise

IUB possesses the necessary infrastructure and expertise to host the conference successfully. Twenty students will help organise it.

Venues: IUB has a variety of conference spaces suitable for plenary sessions, breakout sessions, poster presentations, and exhibitions.

Technical support: Professional staff experienced in audio/visual equipment, internet access, and technical support during the conference.

Campus services: Catering, printing, photocopying, security, and other logistical services are available on campus.

Faculty expertise: Faculty from the Department of English and Modern Languages and the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities will participate in conference planning, speaker selection, and potential session moderation. The proposed organising committee includes the following people.

- a. Conference advisor: Dean, School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (SLASS), bokhtiar.ahmed@iub.edu.bd
- b. Conference convener: Muhammad Zakaria, Associate Professor, Department of English and Modern Languages (DEML), rehman.zakaria@iub.edu.bd
- c. Conference co-convener: Mahmud Hasan Khan, Professor, Executive Director, Sasheen Centre for Multilingual Excellence, mahmud.hasan@iub.edu.bd
- d. Conference co-convener: HoD, DEML, naureen@iub.edu.bd
- e. Conference secretary: Hla Thoaiching Marma, Administrative Officer, SCMLE, hlathoaiching@iub.edu.bd

7. Registration fees

Breakdown of registration fees

Categories	Registration fees
1. International participants employed full-time	BDT 18,000 (USD 150)
2. International students	BDT 12,000 (USD 100)
3. Local participants employed full-time	BDT 5,000
4. Local students	BDT 1,000

8. Accommodation

The following special tariffs will be offered to the conference participants.

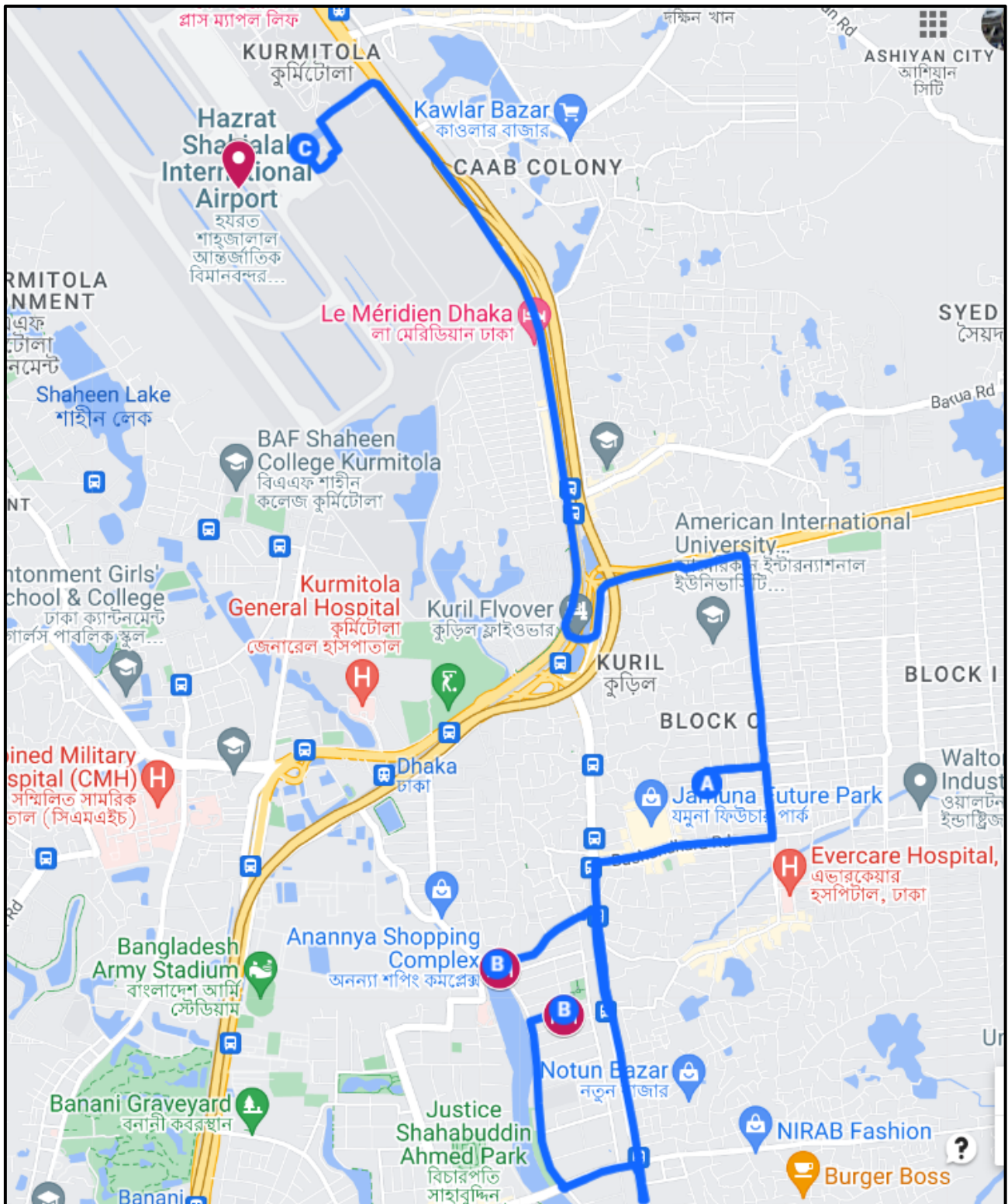
Option 1: Ascott the Palace Dhaka (<https://ascottdhaka.com/>)

- a. Single occupancy (all-inclusive and buffet breakfast included): USD 100 per night
- b. Double occupancy (all-inclusive and buffet breakfast included): USD 125 per night

Option 2: Hotel West Valley (<https://www.hotelwestvalley.com/>)

- a. Standard single (all-inclusive and buffet breakfast included): USD 32 per night
- a. Standard couple/twin (all-inclusive and buffet breakfast included): USD 35 per night
- b. Family suite for three persons (all-inclusive and buffet breakfast included): USD 50 per night

The locations of Independent University, Bangladesh (A, next to Jamuna Future Park), the hotels (B) and the airport (C) are given in the map (source: Google Maps) below.



9. Transportation

Ascott the Palace Dhaka offers free airport pickup and drop-off shuttle services. IUB will also provide transport for the participants to the conference venue and their respective hotels. Most flights to Dhaka from the USA and Europe are via Dubai, Singapore, or Bangkok. Some direct flights are also available with Bangladesh Biman.

10. Conclusion

Bangladesh has never hosted a conference focusing on Sino-Tibetan languages and cultures despite having 15 Sino-Tibetan-speaking language communities. Hosting ICSTLL at IUB presents a unique opportunity to showcase the country's academic excellence, foster knowledge exchange, and engage with the broader community.