DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

Mughals to Mobiles: Communications, Power and Wealth in India, 1512-2012

Professor Robin Jeffrey

CHAIRMAN
A/P Medha Kudaisya

Wednesday, 26 September 2012, 3 pm, PS lounge, AS1-04-01

Abstract:

The paper surveys changes in the differing ability of various social groups to communicate – from the Mughals until today. It stresses the importance that access to information has played for power holders, religious authorities and merchants. It identifies the extent and limitations of communications in pre-British times, the effects of the printing press, telegraph and railway and the policies of the post-independence Indian state. It concludes by discussing the arrival of the cheap, mass-market mobile phone and speculates on its social, political and economic consequences in the twenty-first century.

About the Speaker

Robin Jeffrey is a Visiting Research Professor in the Institute of South Asian Studies and the Asia Research Institute at NUS. He has just finished a book with Assa Doron at ANU entitled The Great Indian Phone Book: How Cheap Mobiles Phones Change Business, Politics and People’s Lives, to be published by C. Hurst in the UK, Harvard University Press in North America and Hachette in India.

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