The role of All India Radio (AIR), the state broadcaster of India, in the growth of the nation has been phenomenal. Modelled on the BBC, AIR had a monopoly of the airwaves since its inception and though a number of decades in independent (post 1947) India. Living up to its mandate to inform, educate and entertain, AIR was instrumental in shaping national attitudes towards culture, promoting language and rhetoric and above all, national integration. News bulletins delivered by AIR, informed the nation on matters of national and international importance. Through the decades of the 50s, 60s and 70s, some of the greatest artistes, scientists, writers and intellectuals, as well as many of the world’s leading statesmen and visiting world leaders, were broadcast from AIR. This paper gives an overview of the growth of AIR in the decades that followed India’s independence, in tandem with the development of the nation, looking at key events that impacted both the nation and the state broadcaster, in terms of both growth and media regulation. Challenges faced by AIR questioning it as the mouthpiece of the state rather than being free and fair, and those posed by the introduction of new technologies and the loss of monopoly, are examined. How has the state broadcaster coped with these and what is the way forward?

Ms Coonoor Kripalani
Honorary Institute Fellow
Hong Kong institute of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Hong Kong

| ABOUT THE SPEAKER | Coonoor Kripalani is Honorary Institute Fellow at the HKIHSS (inc. the Centre of Asian Studies), University of Hong Kong. She is the author of several scholarly articles on popular Hindi film published in academic journals and books, a succinct biography, Mahatma Gandhi: Apostle of Non-Violence (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2003) and co-editor of Indian and Chinese Immigrant Communities: Comparative Perspectives (London & New York: Anthem, 2015; Singapore: ISEAS, 2016). At present she is writing on radio broadcasting in India. Coonoor also writes for children. She is the author of 12 bilingual picture-books in Hindi and English, with lively content and illustrations, that build early learning skills (for children from 2 to 6 years) in both languages in a fun and playful way. Her latest book introduces Yoga (Scholastic, 2013, reprint 2014, 2015) to children – inculcating in them an appreciation for its practice with a delightful story that promotes interaction. Currently, Coonoor is working on books for children about conservation and environment that will raise their awareness on these issues. 

| DATE | Wednesday, 20 April 2016
| TIME | 3.00pm to 4.30pm
| VENUE | Malay Studies Seminar Room, AS7 #04-13, Kent Ridge Campus, NUS Singapore 117570

Please email to sassec@nus.edu.sg to register