



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES KOLKATA

(A Centre of Excellence in Social Sciences funded by the Government of West Bengal)

SALT LAKE CAMPUS • DD 27/D, SECTOR 1, SALT LAKE, KOLKATA 700 064

Seminar

Professor Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Head, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, will deliver a lecture on

Partition and Dalit Peasant Refugees in Eastern India, 1946-64

Date: January 11, 2017 (Wednesday)

Time: 3:15PM

Venue: IDSK Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Salt Lake

(All are welcome to participate in the seminar)

Subhanil Chowdhury

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Abstract

It is now widely recognized that the Partition of India was not just an event that happened in August 1947 – it had a long afterlife. And in exploring that aftermath of Partition, many voices have been recovered, yet many still remain silent. The Partition had unleashed unimaginable violence and triggered perhaps the greatest exodus of people in human history. Among those refugees were nearly two million *Dalit* or low-caste Hindu peasants who fled from East Pakistan to West Bengal between 1947 and 1964. As Partition historiography focuses almost exclusively on the Hindus and Sikhs on the one hand and the Muslims on the other, until now these low caste peasant refugees have remained almost totally excluded from the narratives of Partition. This paper is a work-in-progress report on a project that by using oral history methods and archival research seeks to restore the voices of the *Dalit* in the history of Partition in eastern India.