Dr. Zaad Mahmood
Assistant Professor of Political Science at Presidency University, Kolkata

will give a talk titled:

“Thinking about Gig Work”

Abstract

The term gig work has become ubiquitous in contemporary discussions on employment. The dominant narratives on work veers between the promise of greater flexibility of work, enhanced income opportunity, and improved productivity (Horton, Zeckhauser, and Richard 2016) and that of disruption and exploitation where labour is degraded, inequality intensified, employer-employee relation and control is invisibilised (Gandini 2018, Zwick 2018). This presentation, is a work in progress that seeks to explore the contrasting realities and experiences of gig work. At one level it wants to disrupt the stark binary between hope and flexicurity and the despair of precariousness about Uber work. Based on ethnographic interviews with drivers employed as Uber drivers in Kolkata, India I argue and show that Uber driving in global south should be theorised as “precarious mobility”. The idea of precarious mobility embeds the experience of Uber driving in specific socio-economic context and highlights the multiple and often contradictory possibilities in such work. At another level the presentation proposes a theoretical framework to understand the specific experience of gig work.

Date: Thursday, 19 November, 2020; Time: 3 – 5 pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 819 9441 7587
Passcode: 700094

Maidul Islam
(Convener, Seminar Committee)
All are welcome to attend.