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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

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FRIDAY, 21ST OCTOBER 2022 AT 3:00 PM

SRINIVAS SEMINAR ROOM, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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KUMAR



STANDARDISED FOODS & COMPROMISED CONSUMERS: CAN THE REPEAL OF THE FARM LAWS TURN THE CLOCK BACK?

Abstract:

This paper argues that the repeal of the farm laws, and even meeting the demand of the protestors to reduce corporatisation of agriculture and enhance guaranteed state procurement, is unlikely to bring significant positive transformation for farmers or consumers. Indian agriculture was remade – not by corporations, but by the might of the state – during the 1960s Green Revolution through an industrial logic by harnessing science and technology. Beyond its well-known negative environmental and livelihood impacts, this logic also transformed diets and damaged the health of people. Challenging the tropes of food security, modernisation, efficiency and quality that have been used to justify the perpetuation of this logic, I argue that it only by tracing the relationships leading to the present, that we can begin to unravel them and reimagine a healthier and more sustainable agrarian future.

The Speaker:

Richa Kumar did her PhD at the Science, Technology & Society Program at MIT, USA, and is currently Associate Professor of Sociology and Policy Studies at IIT Delhi. Her current research is on the impact of monoculture farming on farm systems, the environment and human health. She is a co-author of the *State of Rural and Agrarian India Report 2020*, and the author of *Rethinking Revolutions: Soyabean, Choupals and the Changing Countryside in Central India* (2016).