

**TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, GUWAHATI
AND
COTTON COLLEGE STATE UNIVERSITY, GUWAHATI**

invite you to

**FRONTIERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
WINTER PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 02**

TOPIC

**IS INDIA RACIST: MURDER, MIGRATION AND
MARY KOM**

by

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1530 hours

**Conference Hall, MCB Building, Cotton College State University, Panbazar,
Guwahati**

Abstract

After the 2012 Olympics, Bronze medal-winning boxer Mary Kom achieved national celebrity. As a member of the Kom tribe, a Tibeto-Burman community from India's Northeast region, Mary Kom has come to represent a region long considered, and self-identifying, as outside the boundaries of the Indian nation. The same week that Mary Kom returned from London, 30,000 Northeast migrants fled Indian cities fearing racially-motivated attacks. The so-called 'exodus' provoked rare conversations on racism within India. During this crisis the figure of Mary Kom was invoked continually to challenge the existence of racism in India and posit paths to better integration in India's cities. These conversations paid little attention to the brutal experiences of the Indian state and military in the Northeast itself and the voices publicising brutality. Thus as Mary Kom has come to represent a Northeast that Indians can embrace, whereas figures such as dissident Irom Sharmila represent a Northeast that Indians wish to forget.

SPEAKER

Dr. Duncan McDuié-Ra is the Associate Dean (Research) at the University of New South Wales (Australia). He teaches Development Studies and his areas of interest are urban sociology, race and ethnic relations and migration. His most recent publication, ***Northeast Migrants in Delhi: Race, Retail and Refuge***, is an ethnography of the work and lives of students and workers from the hill states of Northeast India (to India's capital).