



Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Lecture Series  
Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati

# **“Hegemonic Developmentalism” in Policy Making and Role of Civil Society and News Media**

The Case of Uttarakhand

**Dr. Anup Kumar**

**Date: Tuesday, 04 October 2016**

**Time: 4 pm**

**Venue: Seminar Hall, Department of HSS**

The demand to create Uttarakhand—unlike many other statehood demands was not primarily based on an imagination of a sub-national ethno-linguistic identity—was an outcome of a critical discourse on development spearheaded by civil society. The political movement for the statehood, 1994-2000, was seen as a logical culmination of a series of social movements, going back to the early decades of the last century, in substantive public discussion in the civil society and the news media about the ideas and ideals complemented grassroots mobilization. One of the key ideal that served as links in the chain of a series of social movements—including the political movement for statehood—was that the struggle was sustainable development and local autonomy in the management of “jal, jungle and zameen.” Since the formation of the State construction of dams, roads, tunnels, etc. has been the main driving force of the State’s GDP. In this paper, I first show how during the first decade of statehood, policy making in Dehradun has been antithetical to the very ideas and ideals of the social movements that led to creation of Uttarakhand. Following which I offer a framework which government, civil society and the news media are the three legs on which stands the stool of policy making. I suggest that the failure of policy making in the new state, in the context of the ideas and ideals of the social movements that brought the state into being, has been of a triumph of the discourse of hegemonic articulation of developmentalism that has dominated policy making and the news media. The civil society left with no other option, but to return to grassroots mobilization.

## **About the Speaker**

Anup Kumar is Associate Professor of Communication in the School of Communication at Cleveland State University. He completed his Ph.D. in communication from University of Iowa in 2008. Joining academia was his second career transition, before that he was a journalist for more than a decade. His academic interest falls in the interdisciplinary area of media, politics and international communication. His research focuses on interactions among media, populist politics, and social and political movements. He has conducted research on sub-national populist movement in India, populist politics in the U.S., and the Egyptian popular uprisings of 2011 and 2013. He has published research articles in peer-reviewed journals including Journal of Communication Inquiry, Newspaper Research Journal, International Journal of Communication, Journal of Media Sociology and Javnost-The Public. He is also the author of *The Making of a Small State: Populist Social Mobilization and the Hindi Press in the Uttarakhand Movement* (2011) published under the series *New Perspectives in South Asian History* by Orient Blackswan (formerly Orient Longman). He continues to write commentary and opinion articles on media and politics in Indian news media such as Outlook, The Hindu, Asian Age, and is a regular contributor on the South Asian media watchdog website thehoot.org. He is a Co-PI on an international team of researchers conducting an interdisciplinary study of Indian elections that includes conducting tracking surveys during national and state elections in India since 2013, media analysis and interviews with political strategists.