

DR. SUNIL KALAI

Assistant Professor | Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Assistant Professor in Journalism and Mass Communication with academic and professional expertise in Video Production and Cultural Studies. Research and creative work focuses on indigenous communities, Kokborok cinema, folklore, media representation, cultural heritage, digital media and Indigenous methodologies, with particular engagement with Tripura and Northeast India.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIALIZATION

Qualification	Details
Ph.D.	AJK Mass Communication Research Centre (AJK MCRC), Jamia Millia Islamia
M.Sc.	Visual Communication
Specialization	Video Production; Cultural Studies
Present Position	Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Tripura University

BOOKS

Year	Title	Publication
2024	<i>Kokborok Cinema, Culture and Indigeneity</i>	Eastern Book House, Guwahati
2025	<i>B.R. Ambedkar's Vision for a Developed India: A Blueprint for Inclusive National Transformation</i>	S. John Kavirasu, Roshani Rai & Sunil Kalai; Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

No.	Publication	Journal/Book	ISSN/ISBN
1	Media's Social Responsibility a Constructed Reality	Issues of Journalistic Ethics and Freedom in the Contemporary Age of Digital Media, 2012, pp. 628–631	ISBN 81-86263-02-004
2	Insurgency Movement in Tripura	International Conference Proceedings: Media's Role in Facilitating Peace in Conflict Situation in North East India and Neighbouring Countries, 2014, pp. 136–141	ISSN 09760911
3	Visualizing Tripura Tribal Society: An Analytical Study of Mathia, a Kokborok Film	Journal of Northeast Indian Cultures, pp. 100–109	ISSN 2322-0988

4	Society through the Lenses: Visual Representations of the Kalai Tribe from Tripura, Northeast India	Global Media Journal – Indian Edition, pp. 1–20	ISSN 2249-5835
5	Cinema as an Effective Tool for Teaching Human Rights Issues and Problems: An Analytical Study of Samuel Goldwyn’s Film: The Whistleblower	Multidisciplinary Approach and Studies, pp. 233–244	ISSN 2348-537X
6	Kwtham Kothoma: Folktales, Cinema and the Tribal Narratives from the Oral Narrative to the Digital Story Telling	Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, 2024, pp. 107–115	ISSN 2349-5162
7	The World through Mathia: A Critical Analysis of a Kokborok Cinema	Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, 2024, pp. 8–11	ISSN 2349-5162
8	The Gaines and the Sarangi: Traditions, Digital Media and Emerging Cultural Changes	Humanities and Social Science Studies, 2024, pp. 39–48	ISSN 2319-829X
9	The Gaines: Tradition, Change and Digital Media	Journal of Social Science Research, Silapathar College, 2022, pp. 130–134	ISSN 2454-2636
10	Exploring the Correlates of Facebook Addiction and its Impact on Academic Performance among Youths of Tripura (Co-author)	Media Asia, Taylor & Francis, 2023, pp. 1–19	ISSN 0129-6612; 2377-6277
11	Awareness, Media, and Mitigation Actions for Climate Change: A Study among the Students of Higher Education in Tripura (Co-author)	Media Asia, Taylor & Francis, 2023, pp. 1–24	ISSN 0129-6612; 2377-6277
12	Community Media in Democratic Era (Co-author)	The Assam Valley International Journal of Humanities & Cultural Studies	ISSN 2320-0324
13	The Shades of Cyber Patriarchy: Typology and Prevalence of Online Sexism and Misogyny Among Women in Tripura (Co-author)	VIDUNI Multidisciplinary Research Journal (VMRI), 2026, pp. 5–18	ISSN 3107-8613

RESEARCH PROJECTS

No.	Project	Funding Agency	Amount	Period
1	A Study on Socio-Economic Issues and Challenges of the Kalai Tribes in Tripura	ICSSR	₹8 lakh	March 2016 – March 2018
2	Production of Full-length Feature Film based on selected tribal folk tales of Tripura: Chethuang, Kuchu Kherengbar and Nuai	Tribal Research and Cultural Institute, Govt. of Tripura	₹20 lakh	May 2016 – May 2018

3	Preparation, Collection and Documentation of Kokborok Speakers, Art, Music, Folk Songs, Folk Dances and Folk Tales of Tripura	North Eastern Council (NEC), Government of India	₹60 lakh	Ongoing
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RESEARCH GUIDANCE

Research Scholar	Thesis / Research Title	Status
Rochelle Ann Lepcha (UGC JRF)	Changing Narratives of Gaines: An Ethnographic Study	Awarded
Utsav Rai	Competing Histories of Darjeeling through Photography	Ongoing
Joel Darlong	Mediating Tribal Culture in Tripura: A Study of Representation, Identity, and Cultural Continuity through Digital Platform	Ongoing

SELECTED INVITED LECTURES, RESOURCE PERSON ENGAGEMENTS & ACADEMIC SESSIONS

Year	Lecture / Role	Institution / Event
2025	Material Culture of the Indigenous People of Tripura & The Making of Kwtham Kothoma	Department of Kokborok, Tripura University
2025	Documenting Cultural Heritage and Developing Tourism in the Northeastern Region of India with special reference to Tripura	IGNCA Regional Centre, Guwahati, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, in collaboration with Department of Kokborok, Tripura University
2025	Tracing the Trajectories of History, Culture, and Language of Tripura	DIET Kakraban, Gomati District, in collaboration with Tribal Research and Cultural Institute, Govt. of Tripura
2025	Roots and Reel: MONDRA Model for Sustainable Narrative	Department of Sociology, Holy Cross College, Agartala
2025	Filming Kokborok Folktales: Representing Cultural Entrepreneurship of Tripura	National Seminar, Tripura University / Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies
2023	Community Informatics Priorities of Indigenous Communities in the Developing World	CIRN Conference, Community Informatics Research Network, Monash University
2021	Centering the Indigenous Community within Indigenous Methodologies: A Case Study of the Tribes in Tripura	Holy Cross College, Agartala & Tribal Research and Cultural Institute, Govt. of Tripura
2021	Media and Society	Doordarshan Tripura, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

2020	Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat: Unity in Diversity via Cultural and Emotional Connect; and related sessions on youth, tourism, culture and textiles	Press Information Bureau, Guwahati / Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
2020	Human Resources Potential Among the Students of North East should be leveraged for the Region's as well as the Country's Growth and Development	Press Information Bureau, Guwahati
2019	Folklore and Films	Department of English, Tripura University in collaboration with IGRMS, Bhopal
2018	Folks in Film – Panel Discussion	Department of English, Tripura University in collaboration with North Eastern Folkway, NEC, Ministry of DoNER

CONFERENCE & SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

Year	Paper	Conference / Organizer
2010	Power Gap as key as Socialization and Social Responsibilities	National Seminar on Biodiversity: Conserve Biodiversity–Conserve Life, ARPAN
2011	Working Together for Collective Peace in Northeast India	Fifth Regional Consultative Conclave of Women from Northeast India, Agartala
2012	Role of Cinema in Promoting Human Rights Issues and Problems in 21st Century	National Seminar on Human Rights in 21st Century, Tripura University & NHRC
2015	Tripura through the Lenses: Images and Human Rights	Media and Human Rights: Problems and Prospects, Assam University, Silchar
2019	Representing Kokborok Folktales through the Lens: Kwtham Kothoma – The Making and Practices	National Seminar on Cultural Studies in North East India: Prospects and Challenges
2022	The Gaines: Tradition, Change and Digital Media	Exploring Digital Media, University of Mumbai & St. Pauls Institute of Communication Education for Women

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Year	Programme	Organizer	Period
2013	106th Four Week Orientation Programme	UGC Academic Staff College, Jamia Millia Islamia	21 Oct – 20 Nov 2013
2015	3 Week Refresher Course	UGC Academic Staff College, Jamia Millia Islamia	10–31 Jan 2015
2016	Workshop on Practice Based Research	AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia	10–17 Dec 2016

2019	Two-Week Refresher Course: Rural Development, New Media and Social Change	Faculty Development Centre, Tripura University / MHRD	1–14 Jul 2019
2020	Two Week Online Faculty Development Programme on Research Methodology	Ramanujan College, University of Delhi	1–15 Oct 2020
2020	Two Week Online Faculty Development Programme on Photography and Media Communication	University College of Engineering, Villupuram Campus	9–13 Nov 2020
2023	Online Two Week Refresher Course in Media Studies & Governance	Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia	5–18 Dec 2023
2011	5 Day Regional Workshop on Science Broadcasting	VIGYAN PRASAR / Dept. of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, University of Calcutta & partners	19–23 Sep 2011

AWARDS, RECOGNITION & DISTINCTIONS

Year	Recognition	Awarding / Organizing Body
2025	Pathbreaker – Special Attendee	Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
2025	National Changemaker	1st National Changemakers Meet, Gujarat
2025	Youth Icon	Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India; Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect
2024	Dattopant Thengadi Award	Swadeshi Jagran Manch – special contribution in entrepreneurship, skill development and self-employment in Purvottar Bharat
2023	One of thirteen Social Entrepreneurs selected by Meta	Meta
2022	Best Paper Award	Online National Conference on Exploring Digital Media: Reshaping the Landscape of Society and Culture
2004	3rd Prize – On-the-Spot Photography Contest (Fashion)	Indian International Photographic Council (IIPC), Indore

FILMS, DOCUMENTARIES & CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS

Production	Contribution / Description
Kwtham Kothoma	Directed a full-length feature film based on tribal folktales of Tripura.
Ruler with a Vision	Directed a short film on the life and achievements of Maharaja Bir Bikram of Tripura (2012), sponsored and produced by INTACH, Tripura Chapter.
Tripura Bleeds	Directed a 15-minute documentary (2009) on the root causes of ethnic conflict in Tripura; screened on several occasions within India.
Hazardous Life	Directed a 10-minute documentary (2008) on the lives of people in Kasi Koil Kupam, Tamil Nadu, affected by industrial pollution.

The Seek	Made a 10-minute short film on displacement and separation caused by natural calamities and subsequent social consequences.
Lead by Examples	Directed a 10-minute documentary on Loyola NCC (2008).
Celebrating Womanhood	Directed a documentary in collaboration with OTPC and ONGC, Tripura.
SWRAIJAK	Directed and produced a music video for Rock Music Society of Tripura.

SELECTED MEDIA & PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE

- Guided students on academic projects in Television Production (Specialization paper) since joining Tripura University.
- Guided documentary projects on the Lusai of Tripura, Bru displacement, the Saimars, Chongpreng – a tribal indigenous instrument, and Child’s Stress and Anxiety.
- Guided music video productions including Stand Together, Better Tomorrow, Drowned in a Pool of Death and Ude Patang.
- Videographer for Silhouette of Niladri Bose and Passion That Turns into Profession.
- Completed academic production work including ENG video, studio news/features, audio assignments, multitrack music album production, photo exhibition event management, street play, photography portfolio and workshops.
- Associated with television productions during 2007–2009.
- Extension and dissemination activities include appearances in recognized media channels on various topics.

INSTITUTIONAL, COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- Founder & President, MONDRA (A Social Welfare Society).
- Life Member, Asia Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC).
- Convener, Media Activism and Indigeneity Workshop-cum-Seminar for Scheduled Tribes Media Practitioners of Tripura, sponsored by TTAADC, 3–5 March 2023.
- Participated in Training of Trainers, Impulse Case Management Centre Online Safety Initiative, Gangtok, Sikkim, 26–28 February 2024.
- Completed 120 hours of community service through Loyola Extensive Awareness Program during 2007–2009.
- Chaired academic sessions and served as resource person/panelist in workshops, seminars and conferences on tribes, culture, media, indigenous knowledge and development.

ACADEMIC & RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Kokborok cinema, folklore and indigenous narratives
- Indigenous methodologies, identity and cultural continuity
- Media representation and visual culture
- Cultural heritage and material culture of Tripura
- Community media, digital media and cultural entrepreneurship

- Video production, documentary filmmaking and photography

CURRENT / ONGOING ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

- Ongoing research guidance on competing histories, photography, tribal culture, identity and digital platforms.
- Ongoing NEC-supported documentation project on Kokborok speakers, art, music, folk songs, folk dances and folk tales of Tripura.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Particular	Details
Name	Dr. Sunil Kalai
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