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Assamese academics wins highest teaching award at Flinders University, Australia



[Mowsam Hazarika](#) · 13:50, 10 Dec 2011 · 12311 views · 3 min read



Dr. Udoy Sankar Saikia, who is currently working as the Associate Director of Applied Population Studies Programme at Flinders University, South Australia has been recently selected for “Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching” for the year 2011. This award is highest award category in teaching in an Australian University and normally awarded to only one every year. Dr. Saikia has been awarded for his sustained commitment to effective and policy relevant teaching through constructivist curriculum design to foster independent learning and empower students to achieve their goals in life. Udoy Saikia’s achievement as a teacher in an overseas university is quite inspiring to Assamese community with the fact that he completed his school and college education in Assamese medium. Among various achievements during his student career, Udoy Saikia received the Indian Friends of “London School of Economics Award” (year 1994) and “Australian Geographical Society’s Best Student Presentation Award” (year 2000).

An economist/demographer by profession (MSc from London School of Economics and PhD from Flinders University), Dr Saikia’s achievements in academic research have been demonstrated through many peer reviewed research publications and two commissioned reports, several conference presentations and two international awards (one from Germany and one from New Zealand). As an international consultant to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Dr Saikia co-authored the first Human Development Report for Autonomous Region of Bougainville- an island in Papua New Guinea. His area of research broadly covers population and sustainable development issues in Asia and the Pacific regions. Dr Saikia is currently the Vice President of the Executive Council, Australian Population Association- the peak research and advisory body on Australian population.

Dr. Saikia who has been residing in Australia for last 13 years, has a strong connection with grassroots developmental work in Assam. He is the founder member of South Australians Supporting Children and Women in Assam, (SASCWA), and successfully initiated ongoing community based project on early childhood development in Assam. With Dr. Saikia's initiative SASCWA has developed a strong partnership with a local community organisation (Parijat) in Assam. SASCWA currently provides funding for primary schools in a number of remote communities in Assam to buy infrastructure and books for the students. SASCWA has also been providing salaries for three teachers in three different schools in these communities on an ongoing basis. With the collaboration and support from local members from Guwahati – SASCWA is currently in the process assisting a village community based in Village Maghupara near Guwahati to transform their village into a model village in near future. Detail about SASCWA can be found at www.sascwa.org

Dr. Saikia originally comes from Tarjana Kakoti Gaon, Jorhat and son of late Dr. Padma Dhar Saikia and Mrs. Santi Prova Saikia.



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