

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

[Arabic one of the Semitic group of languages. Ya'rib bin Qahtan is considered as the father of this language. The teaching of Arabic Language, in Assam, has been started in different ways with effect from 12th century. The first informal Institution for Arabic Studies of the north east region was established in the first decade of the 14th century by the famous Sufi Sah Zia uddin in Badarpur in Karimganj District of Assam. The modern Institution system for Arabic Studies was developed in north east region and Darul Uloom Baghbari was established in 1873 in erstwhile Cachar District at Karimganj. After twenty five years of it, Darul Uloom Bashkandi, a higher Educational institution for Arabic Studies of this time, came into existence in 1897. During British Period the Provincial Government of Assam established Madrassa Education Board for Arabic Studies in 1934 in Sylhet with 9 Madrassas. After Independence the Board was renamed as State Madrassasa Education Board, Assam. The numbers of Madrassa are 707 in Assam under this Board.

Senior level madrasa have a three years course for Madrassa Final Examination (Fadilul Marif.) equivalent to Bachelor Degree in Theological Subjects. In this stage the major subjects taught are Quran, Hadish, Figh, Asul, Aqaid, History of Islam, Arabic prose, poetry, rhetoric, grammar; Quranic translation and interpretation and logic, which are the main branches of Arabic Language and Literature. After that level, Title Madrasas level is started, which have a minimum of two years course for Mumtazul Muhaddis (M.M.) equivalent to Master's Degree in Theological subjects. The subjects of the M.M. course are Hadith, Tafsir and Tarikh, which are the essential part of the Arabic language and Literature. The Arabic literature started its journey from Madrassas and has taken higher positions in the Colleges and Universities of Assam, like Cotton College, B.N. College, B.H. College, Gauhati University and Assam University etc... Most of the Colleges and Universities of Assam have separate independent Department to acquire higher education in the Arabic Language and Literature. Various Arabic madrassas and Islamic cultural institutions of higher studies under the Local public guidance as well as higher education institutions under govt., which produced a large number of Arabic poets, Prose writers, Islamic Scholars, commentators of the Qur'an, scholars of the Traditions (Hadith) etc. In fact the Development of Arabic Literature can't be imagined without the role of Madrassas in Assam. In this brief research paper I have tried to highlight the role of Higher Educational Institutions in the growth and development of Arabic Language and Literature in Assam together with pointing out its major disadvantage as well as the some remedial measures.]

KEYWORDS: Role of Higher Educational Institutions, Growth and Development, Arabic Language & Literature in Assam

INTRODUCTION

Since the advent of Islam, the Arabic Language has become the human language. The Arabic language is the only Semitic language, maintained its existence and become an international language. It was the language of science and literature for

Arabs and non-Arabs and is still the language of literature and science in many non-Arab Islamic nations.

India has embraced most of the Arab culture and most of the Islamic civilization for hundreds of years, as the Arab-Indian relations grew considerably. The carrying of the message of Islam was one of the greatest contributions of the Arabs to the development of India.

The learning of Arabic Language, in India, has been started in different ways for more than fifteen centuries. The Arab merchants came to India and established commercial and cultural links between the two nations. With the advent of Islam in the Indian subcontinent, this friendship became stronger than ever before. Particularly, for cultural and political reasons, several Muslim Ruler came on the soil of India and established the empires, which lasted for more than eight centuries. India became develop with their treasures of various sciences of knowledge, arts, culture and literatures. It is to be mentioned here that India has become one of the most well-known non-Arab country where Arabic language and literature grew, developed and flourished on a large scale. During the period of Muslim Ruler in the Indian Territory, Arabic was the official language of the government and administration and the much better medium of religious knowledge and literary achievement. Moreover, various Arabic- Islamic madrassas and Religious Socio- cultural institutions of higher learning under the public guidance and literally interest of the emperors (Sultans) were established which produced a large number of Arabic-Islamic poets, Arabic writers, Islamic Scholars, thinkers, commentators of the Qur'an, scholars of the Traditions (Hadith) etc.

Madrassas in undivided India, even after Independence of the country, have rendered a remarkable services to the Socio-Economical development of the Societies, communities and whole country. They have played a very quiet but significant and important role in the growth and development of Arabic Language and literature in India. The services of Madrasas include the spreading of literary activities in the social, political and academic fields. In fact the Literary development of Arabic Language and literature can't be imagined without the efforts of Madrasas and maktabas. Ulamas and Arabic scholars has been grown up by these Madrasas take leadership not only in religious matters but also in social & political field also as well. From Sah Wali Ullah to the great Islamic Scholar like Maulana Shaekh Abul A'la Maududi, Maulana Quasim Nanatwi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulan Syed Abul Hasan Ali al Nadwi was the most prominent personalities among Islamic Scholars and leaders. They were from amongst the product of Madrasas and they had a close relationship with the Madrasa Talim (education).

Arabic studies in north east region, particularly in erstwhile Assam started in the pre-colonial period in a sophisticated way that the Arabic Language, has been taught in almost all the levels of formal education, in addition to the private Qaumi and Khariji madrasahs of higher Islamic Studies.. The first informal Institution for Arabic Studies of the north east region was established in the first decade of the 14th century by the famous Sufi Sah Zia uddin in Badarpur in Karimganj District of Assam. The modern Institution system for Arabic Studies was developed in north east region and Darul Uloom Baghbari was established in 1873 in erstwhile Cachar District at Karimganj. After twenty five years of it, Darul Uloom Bashkandi, a higher Educational institution for Arabic Studies of this time, came into existence in 1897. During British Period the Provincial Government of Assam established Madrassa Education Board for Arabic Studies in 1934 in Sylhet with 9 Madrassas. After Independence the Board was renamed as State Madrassasa Education Board, Assam. The numbers of Madrassa are 707 in Assam under this Board.

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Now I am going to mention here the most famous and influential colleges and universities of Assam, in which the study of Arabic language and literature have been taken a remarkable places in the development of the Arabic language and literature to a large extent. The Department of Arabic and Persian was established in the premises of Cotton College from the very beginning of the College in 1901. All the three languages - Arabic, Persian and Urdu has been taught by Prof. Maulovi Abu Nasr Muhammad Wahed, the founder Head of the Department. This department has a vital role in the expansion and development in the field of Persian and Arabic literature in the North Eastern Region in general and Assam in particular. Initially, the affiliation to Intermediate Level Course in Arts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu has been accorded by the Calcutta University in 1907. In the year 1909, the affiliation to the B.A. Pass Course for the Department of Arabic and Persian has been extended by University. Affiliation to Honours (Major) Course was given to Department of Persian in 1924 by Calcutta University and subsequently to the Department of Arabic in 1966 by Gauhati University. The Post-Graduate Courses in the Department of Arabic and Persian under Gauhati University was started in 1992 after getting permission from proper authority. In this department, the provision of teaching in Urdu was as Modern Indian Language. The Cotton College has been upgraded to the State University under The Cotton University Act, 2017 of the Assam Legislative Assembly and merged the College with Cotton College State University. The Gauhati University is established in 1948 to develop the educational atmosphere in the North East Region. From the beginning, the University is continuously leading to develop the teaching and research work in various disciplines. The Department of Arabic of Gauhati University has been started in 1969. Since its inception, the department has been working in the field of teaching, learning and research in Arabic language and literature both classical and modern and giving much importance on the functional aspects of the subject. The effort of the Department has been leading to motivate the students and scholars to learn the language efficiently and to achieve the knowledge and skill in the area using the application of creative methods and modern technical aids. Therefore, they has been getting better placement in different capacities in the country as well as abroad. Assam University has been established in 1994 through Assam (Central) University Act, 1989 passed by Parliament of India . Since then the University is strongly becoming an excellent Centre of teaching, learning and research. The department of Arabic came into existence in July 1997. The department has designed its Master Level Course covering different aspects of Arabic language skills and Literature with a due weightage on Modern and Functional Arabic. The department has started a functional curriculum for teaching - learning of Arabic as a vibrant foreign language. Creativity building on various linguistics skills, deferent aspects of computer application with software in Arabic Language, and skill making on Arabic - English translation are the characteristics of the Master Course.

The M.Phil. & Ph.D. programmes has been started in 2001, the department has been actively worked in research in a wide range of areas such as Arabic Language and Literature both Classical and Modern, Indo- Arabic writings and Literature, Arabic literature of the Americas and Socio-Arabic Linguistics especially Comparison of Arabic Language with

eastern Indian languages. In last two decades, the department has shown itself as the prominent Centre for research work in Arabic Language, literature and culture in the entire Northeast region of India.

Bholanath College, Dhubri, is one of the most important Educational Institutions of Higher Learning in Lower Assam. The college came into existence formally on the 16th August, 1946. The department of Arabic was inaugurated in the year 1979. The affiliation of the department for both B A Major and General Courses was accorded by Gauhati University. At present there are three faculties in the department working in the sanctioned posts. Here, Arabic is also being taught in H.S level.

Rangia College is the famous institution of higher education on the north bank of the Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup Rural. Established on August 5, 1963, the college has rendered invaluable services to the community belongs to socially and economically backward classes of the population. Arabic study in this college was started from its very beginning. Presently, the Department of Arabic offers Arabic Literature Courses in H S, B A (Honours/Major and Pass Course) as well as M A in Arabic.

In August, 1996, as an extracurricular activities of the Department of Arabic, Rangia Collage a society namely 'Rangia College Arabic Language & Literature development society (RCALLDS), is constituted in the Room no-5 of the first front A.T. Building of the College to develop the knowledge of Arabic Language among students of the department. The students and teachers unanimously formed a committee. It was inaugurated by honorable Prof. U.C Goswami, the head of the Department of English.

The origin of B. H. College came into existence in January 1964 under the guidance of Jadab Chandra Das. Accordingly the college started functioning in 1966. Arabic Department also was started in this college from its very inception. Presently, the Department of Arabic has been working in the development of teaching of Arabic language and literature with special attention in modern and functional Arabic more.

Kharupetia College is one of the most famous institutions of higher education in undivided Darrang District, which was Established in the year 1981. The Arabic Department was started from its very beginning. The College has offered the Higher Secondary and Degree courses. Department of Arabic is continuously working in the Development of the teaching of the Arabic language and literature with special attention in modern and functional Arabic.

Besides these cited colleges, the Arabic language and literature have been taught also in various colleges of Assam like Alamganj Rangamati College, Alamganj - Bilasipara College, Bilasipara - Chilarai College, Golakganj - Dharmasala College, Dharmasala - Dhubri Girls` College, Dhubri - Halakura College, Mahamayahat - Hamidabad College, Jamadarhat - Hatsingimari College, Dhubri - Mankachar College, Mankachar - Pramathesh Barua College, Gouripur - Sapatgram College, Sapatgram - South Salmara College, South Salmara, - M.C. College, Barpeta etc.

As a result, the Higher Educational Institutions like colleges and Universities, have a significant role in the Development of Arabic Language and Literature in Assam. Besides Colleges and universities, Various Arabic madrassas and Islamic cultural institutions of higher studies under the Local public guidance as well as higher educational institutions under govt., which produced a large number of Arabic poets, Prose writers, Islamic Scholars, commentators of the Qur'an, scholars of the Traditions (Hadith) etc. In fact the Development of Arabic Literature can't be imagined without the role of Madrasas, colleges and Universities in the North East Region in general and Assam in particular

As per my research The number of Arabic Scholars, learners and Islamic Ulamas has been produced from the Madrassa, schools, colleges and universities but they can't reach the goal due to the defective course and syllabus and lack of using the proper methodology in teaching learning process. That's why the output in Arabic studies in north-east India, specifically in Assam is not satisfactory at all. We need proper utilization of Modern facilities of language teaching and modernization of the course and syllabus. I pray to both state and central government to look into the matter positively.

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