CHAPTER - 2

HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE ARABAIC TEACHING IN ASSAM.

2.1 Teaching of Arabic in Different Types of Institutions During the pre-colonial Period.

2.2. The Arabic Language Teaching in Colonial Period and its Impact on Social and Political Changing.

2.3 The Arabic Language Teaching in Post - Colonial Period upto the End of the 20th Century in Madrasas and other Institutions.

CHAPTER – 2

HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE ARABIC TEACHING IN ASSAM.

The history of Arabic teaching in Assam has a gradual development that began with the Khanqahs and Dargahs of Preaching Saints in both Brahmaputra valley and Surma Barak valley at the early age when Islam appeared in this eastern region of British India. From the beginning of the Islamic rule in India, the Arabic teaching, as it is integrated basically with Islamic religious functioning, was introduced in Maktabs and Madrasas. This system continued in Mughal period also. After the fall of the Mughal Empire, it was Shah Waliullah of Delhi who spearheaded the first movement among Ulama and launched a powerful campaign to re-capture the glory of Islam and regain political power. He established a Madrasa in Delhi which focused on religious disciplines.[1] In the presidencies of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa created by the East India Company, Arabic and Persian schools continued to function as before. In 1780 Madrasa Alia came into being in Calcutta at the hands of East India Company.[2]

With the gradual disintegration of Muslim rule, particularly the Mughal Empire and its steady replacement by British administration, the Madrasa education had begun to receive its first wave of shocks, as for it, the transfer of power did not mean a mere substitution of one political power for another, rather it meant the destruction of a particular way of life. The Madrasa education system in vogue at that

time was preparing people for the then prevailing way of life which was now changing and taking a new direction. The series of disgusting events at the command of the British administration like abolition of Muslim civil and criminal courts, abolition of Persian as the court language, resumption of Jagirs, successive land re-settlements in some provinces, determined and planned attempts to uproot Islam from the sub-continent etc. encouraged the Madrasa education system harder and deeper. At many places, the 1857 rebellion was spearheaded by the Ulama. As these Ulama were the products of Madrasas, the British administration became severely hostile against Madrasas and decided to hit this system at its roots to teach a lesson to Muslims aspiring to regain political power and also to curve the chances of recurrence of this kind of attempt in future.[3] It was due to the united and dedicated efforts of the far sighted and alert Ulama from late 19th century through the independence of India that the system of Madrasa education could be saved and sustained and as pointed out rightly by Waheedy, "Islam in the pre-independence India could be saved".[4]

When East India Company was entrusted with the responsibility of education of Indians by the charter Act of 1813, three persons were commissioned in different provinces of India to report on the status of indigenous education so that on its basis a realistic scheme of education for Indians could be formulated and implemented in the Indian Territory under British rule. Thomas Munro was appointed in Madras (1822-24), M.S. Elphinstone in Bombay (1825-29) and William Adams in Bengal and Bihar (1835-38) and Punjab (1849) to make a detailed survey of indigenous education system obtained in these areas. All the three made sincere efforts and produced detailed reports on the existing

Muslim and Hindu educational institutions in the given areas. Adam as a matter of fact, was in favour of maintaining the indigenous education system. He believed that it could be improved by "transfusion into it of those discoveries in Art and Science and in Philosophy that distinguish Europe and that will help to awaken the native mind from the sleep of centuries".[5] The same view was expressed in the Woods Despatch in 1854 where in Sir Charles Wood had recommended that the indigenous elementary education institutions viz Maktabs, Madrasas and Pathshalas with some modifications be recognized as the elementary level feeder institutions for the modern system of education. Indian Education of 1882 also had expressed similar views, but it was destined not so happen. For Muslims, traditional education institutions of Maktabs and Madrasas which were essentially needed by the community for fulfilment of its religious education needs, it was further the biggest challenge of the time. However, they were able to withstand it, to whatever limited extent possible, only through the devoted and far-sighted efforts of the Ulama. The changed circumstances and the use of politico-social forces against the Madrasa system did, however, succeed in banishing them from the status of mainstream formal education system to only an additional or non-universal system of education.

With attaining independence in 1947, the Madrasa education system in India, and more particularly in North East India, got a new dimension in spite of facing so many new problems. Prior to independence, Madrasas were depending, except a few govt. Madrasas, on the resources derived from the members of the Muslim society who were economically weak. After independence, Mass exodus of Muslims

to Pakistan and more particularly to East Pakistan from the leading towns of Assam including large number of those who were educationally and economically in better position, abolition of Zamindary system, widespread unemployment among Muslims etc. further crippled the economy of the Madrasas. The intensive campaign for free and compulsory modern elementary education under the constitutional directives and some other relevant developments brought new challenges for the education system. It is only the Ulama and other conscientious members of the community that stood strongly[6] to restore the traditional Madrasa education system and resort to alternative models of non formal and part time Maktab and Madrasa education in India in general and in North East India in particular. For the convenience of the discussion, the whole chapter is divided into the following three main points.

2.1 Teaching of Arabic in Different Types of Institutions During the pre - Colonial Period.

Before discussing about the educational institutions of pre-colonial period imparting Arabic teaching, the end of the pre-colonial period must be identified. The beginning of the colonial rule is the end of the pre-colonial era in Assam. Assam as a whole came under British colonial rule in 1826 under the privilege of the Treaty of Yandaboo signed between the British rulers and the Burmese on 24th Feb, 1826.[7]

One thing is to be cleared here that the entire Sylhet, as was a part of Bengal, came under the colonial rule in 1765 with the take over of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by the British East India Company, after eight years of Battle of Plasey.[8] The present Assam including the whole of Sylhet came into existence as a full fledged British Indian province in 1874.

There would be a slip of pen if the annexation of the Cachari Kingdom is not mentioned. The Cachari Kingdom which included the present North Cachar Hills district ,Cachar and Hailakandi districts ; was annexed to British empire in 1830.[9]

In pre-colonial period, teaching and learning of the Arabic language in the area of present boundary of Assam can be found in two types of institutions: 1) Traditional Maktabs. 2) Madrasas.

a) Maktabs: Traditional Maktabs are the extension centres of ***Khanqahs*** or ***Dargahs***. With the advent of Islam in this country,

arrangement of Arabic learning began through Makatib (plural of Maktab) because "***Makatib*** and ***Madaris*** were the elementary schools which were located in the Mosque premises and the saintly establishments – the Rabats and Khanqahs of different orders and individuals" [10]

With the coming of Islam to India as a permanent political force in the last decade of the 12th century, it brought in its wake its own system of education and in the succeeding years , educational institutions on that pattern came in to existence .[11]

Under the patronage of the great Mughals, Maktabs & Madrasas were established and run by the state and the individual alike. [12]

Maktabs were very common during the Mughal period. Elementary education was thus imparted in Maktabs often attached to mosques. It is observed that the Maktabs of pre-Mughal period and that of the Mughal period have a slight difference in respect of their syllabi. Of course, Arabic was the main subject of study with other religious & secular subjects. This system prevailed in the boundary of Assam province of British India where Islam began its appearance in the 13th century.

With the above discussion, we may easily come to a conclusion that in the pre-colonial period wherever a mosque was established, a traditional Maktab necessarily came into existence .As in other parts of the world, the beginning of the Maktab took place in the premises of the

concerned mosque .Gradually a separate house came in to existence for shifting the Maktab.

As there was no easy communication system available, and no organization of modern form originated; hence, Maktabs were run according to the design of the local people & the suggestions of the Moulvi.

The subject matter of teaching in Maktabs generally continued memorization of Kalimah's, verses and chapters of the holy Qur'an, occasional & non-occasional supplications & other necessary contents for prayer and religious activities. The syllabus included the Arabic alphabet, words, spelling, reading surahs (Qura'nic chapters) with syllable analysis. In some places, the syllabus included writing of the Arabic words and sentences; that inspired the learners to pursue higher learning, in later period, in Arabic as well as Islamic studies.[13]

b) Madrasas: Behind the establishment of Madrasas, a long evolutionary process continued in this region in the pre-colonial period. With the passing of time, population grew up, and need for "Imams" arose. In the beginning, Moulavies were coming from North India .This situation prevails in both the Brahmaputra valley and Barak valley. This is evident from the fact that in most of the Maktabs 'Urdu Qaida' was introduced along with Arabic and other subjects .This tradition of Urdu learning is still observed in many places of Assam.[14]

The mosque-attached Maktabs played the vital role in originating the idea of Madrasa education and establishing Madrasas in this region,

The Imams of the mosques who completed their studies in North Indian Madrasas were pioneers in establishing primary Madrasas in this region. Initially the mosques were the premises where Madrasas were started.[15]

As the situation changed, so the regional feeling naturally arose and people of this region felt prestige and proud in being Imam of mosques and even in delivering lectures in various religious occasions. So, the learners, after completion of their studies in Maktabs, got inspired and their guardians too, were encouraged to send their wards to North India for pursuing higher studies in Madrasas especially in Rampur, Delhi, Lahoor, Karachi etc.[16] The task of sending children to those places was not an easy one . So the number of learners was very small in comparison with the number of learners from other parts of the country.

The above mentioned process was a bit more advanced in the Surma Barak valley than in the Brahmaputra valley, because the former had been a part of Bengal and hence the part of Delhi Sultanate and in later period a part of Mughal India. The Brahmaputra Valley and the Cachari Kingdom were independent kingdoms. Again, the impact of Shahjalal Mujarrad's spiritual activities was directly functioning in the Surma Barak valley. The size of Muslim population was increasing far and far in the Surma Barak valley than in the Brahmaputra valley and the Cachari kingdom.

For easy identification and investigation of the existence of Madrasas during the pre-colonial period, the whole of the Surma Barak valley, the Cachari kingdom and the Brahmaputra valley and other hilly

areas are divided in to a number of parts so as to indicate the places where Madrasas were established during that period.

i. Surma Barak valley.
ii. Cachari kingdom.
iii. Khasia Jointia Garo Hills.
iv. Lusai Hills.
v. Naga Hills.
vi. Brahmaputr valley.

Of all the above, Muslims had been living only in the parts mentioned in number 1, 2, & 6. Again, no Madrasa was established in the parts mentioned in number 2 & 6, during the pre-colonial period.

It is only the Surma Barak valley where we find that a number of Madrasas were established during the pre-colonial period. The oldest Madrasa established in this region is the **Phoolbari Alia Madrasa** at Phoolbari near Sylhet which was established during the Sultani period.[17] This Madrasa became a senior Madrasa during the British period under the department of Public Instruction, Assam. This Madrasa became a famous centre of Islamic religious and spiritual learning in greater East &North Sylhet. In later period, Moulavi Ajiruddin, a zamindar of Phoolbari reconstituted the infrastructure of the Madrasa and adopted the syllabus of famous Calcutta Madrasa and he took up the responsibility of its expenditure in mid 19th century, As such this Madrasa was renamed as "***Ajiria Alia Madrasa***".[18] The famous Islamic scholars of greater Sylhet in 19th and 20th century were

the students of this Madrasa. The prominent Sufis Shitalongshah, Ibrahim Tashna, too, were studying in Phoolbari Madrasa.

Other important Madrasas are:

Taraf Madrasa: The oldest seat of Islamic learning in greater Sylhet was Taraf (Laskarpur). At the end of the 14th century, a number of Madrasas were established at Laskarpur, where Qura'n and Sunnah were taught. Arabic as well as Persian was included in the syllabus.[19]

Mufti Madrasa: During the reign of Jahangir, Moulabi Ziauddin of Mufti family of Sylhet established this Madrasa.(tentatively in 1625). The Mughal Emperor allotted 542 'Hall' land without tax to meet the need of this Madrasa. The Madrasa was a seat of learning the Arabic and Persian languages. Both Hindus and Muslims learnt Persian in this Madrasa.[20] In 1835 Persian was replaced by English as the court language and this Madrasa was closed, the land property allotted for he Madrasa was acquired by the British government.

Syedpur Shamsia Madrasa: This Madrasa was established tentatively in the last decade of the 15th century at Syedpur, a village in Sunamganj, adorned with the memory of Syed Shamsuddin Baghdadi, one of the 360 disciples of Hazrat Shahjalal (R). It was the first Madrasa in Sunamganj to introduce Dawrah-e-Hadith.[21]

In spite of the above, there were Madrasas in greater Sylhet region; however none was within the boundary of the part of Sylhet that remained as a part of India.

2. 2. The Arabic Language Teaching in Colonial Period and its Impact on Social and Political Changing.

The colonial rule continued in India for about two hundred years starting from 1757 up to 1947. The history of British colonial rule in India may broadly be divided in to two phases .The first phase up to 1857 is termed as company rule while after the revolt of 1857 up to 1947, the period may be termed as the British Crown's rule.

As it was discussed earlier, the seats of the Arabic language teaching have been assumed to be the Maktabs and Madrasas. With appearance of Islam as a permanent political force in India at the last decade of the 12th century, Muslim scholars and learned men either started their own private classes or circles of studies or were appointed to schools and collages throughout country run by private donations or run by the state.[22]

This tradition of establishing private centres of studies, classes at Maktabs attached to mosques and even separate independent Madrasas, continued by the Muslim scholars and learned men throughout centuries, and in the first phase of the colonial rule we find the same process available in eastern part of India. In the Sylhet district, at several places small or large Madrasas were established either by scholarly persons or by zamindars by inviting Islamic scholars from other parts of India. It is found that at Jhingabari and other places of Sylhet there were Madrasas where students from other parts of the

region went for studying Arabic and other Subjects of Islamic learning.[23]

In the beginning of the 20th century, the impact of Bengal Renaissance reached the eastern part of India and the education of Surma Barak valley was greatly influenced by the same.

In 1892, ***Murari Chand College*** (Popularly known as M.C. College), was established at Sylhet.[24] This was the first institute of higher studies of western form in this part of India ,and in 1901, ***Cotton College*** was established at Guwahati.[25] In both the colleges, Arabic was introduced at the beginning.[26] In 1913, ***Sylhet Government Alia Madrasa***, in the design of Calcutta Madrasa, was established at Sylhet, following which, other Madrasas were established in later times.[27] With all the above three institutions of higher learning, a new era began in the educational scenario of Assam.

So, in colonial period in Assam, the institutions where Arabic got its place in the syllabi are classified as follows:

a) Qaumi Madrasas.
b) Government Madrasas.
c) Secular institutions. i.e., schools and colleges.

a) Qaumi Madrasas: The Madrasas which are started by the Islamic scholars with the financial support of the philanthropists of the concerned locality and are ventured for the social, educational

and spiritual upliftment of the society are known as Qaumi Madrasas.

In British Assam, the Qaumi Madrasas are found to be of two kinds. First, those Madrasas which were established in the areas that were parts of Bengal prior to 1874. Second, those Madrasas which were established after 1874 within the area of newly constituted Assam. Apart from the Madrasas at Phoolbari and Jhingabari, there are some other Madrasas flourished in the area which still remained within the present boundary of Assam. These Madrasa are detailed bellow:

i) **Kanakpur Faiz-e-Ãam Alia and Hafizia Madrasa**: It was established in 1842 at the village Kanakpur in the district of Karimganj. It is reported by Md. Najmul Islam, the Secretary of the managing committee, that Moulana Muhammad Alim of Madhya Kanakpur who came from Makkah, established the Madrasa with a view to spreading Islamic education in general. So, he adjectified the Madrasa as "Faiz-e-Aam". Muhammad Alim was known as "Bora Moulavi" and his younger brother, Moulana Ishaq was termed as "Huru Moulavi" in the locality that means the elder Moulavi and the younger Moulavi respectively. The first appointed teacher was Moulavi Wazid Ali of Kaliganj who taught there for a few decades. Moulana Abdur Rahman is the present Head Moulana of the Madrasa. The Madrasa runs up to 'Kafia' and the academic activities are controlled by the "All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qaumia. The present Karimganj district was a part of Sylhet since the pr-Mughal period, and as such, it was a part of Bengal Province of British India. This Madrasa served the purpose of feeder section to

renowned Phoolbari Madrasa in Sylhet and other North Indian Madrasas. Many scholars are reported to have begun their primary Madrasa education here at this Madrasa and then proceeded for further studies at Phoolbari near Sylhet or at Rampur in north India.[28]

ii) **Ashraful Uloom Ratanpur Madrasa**: It was established in 1856 at Ratanpur in the then Cachar district administered under Dacca Commission. Now it falls under Hailakandi District. One Moulana Azraf Ali (R) was an Imam in a local Mosque .Moulana Azraf Ali came in this place from Jaintiapur of Sylhet. He made all arrangements for establishing this Madrasa at Ratanpur. During that period one Moulana Sadar Ali came back from Rampur Oriental College after completing his studies there .This Sadar Ali along with the Imam Moulana Azraf Ali established the Madrasa in the Mosque at Ratanpur on the bank of the river Katakhal, 5 km. eastwards from Hailakandi.Then it was decided to establish the permanent house of the Madrasa on a piece of land on the bank of the river Katakhal. But a dispute took place among the pro-Madrasa and anti-Madrasa groups .Then five Philanthropists came forward to materialize the idea of Moulana Sadar Ali and Moulana Azraf Ali. They were 1) Ghulam Yazdani Choudhury (Ghulam Indani Choudhury) of Ratanpur, 2) Irfan Ali Laskar of Nitainagar, 3) Arzad Ali Mazumdar of Bandukmara, 4) Master Asraf Ali and others who purchased the land and donated to the Madrasa and a permanent building was constructed and the Madrasa was shifted there.[29]

As narrated by the present Shaikul *Hadith Moulana Zia uddin, who is also known as 'Bara Huzur' in the locality. The Madrasa was imparting Islamic and Arabic education up to Sharh-e- Jami' when he joined as the head of the institution in 1959. Moulana Zia uddin was a classmate of celebrated Muhaddith Anzar Shah Kashmiri and Adib Moulana Wahiduzzaman Kiranawi at Darul Uloom, Deobond .In 1970 Dawra-e-Hadith was introduced in this Madrasa and it has been serving in the same position.*

In post 1857, a remarkable change is observed in the history of education in India. The British Government established three universities at Bombay (Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata) and Madras (Chennai) on the one hand, and it suppressed the Muslim Ulama, their educational set up and everything which was of importance for their Islamic identity, on the other. The Muslim thinking began to be deteriorating with the end of golden age of the Mughals, especially after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. It hits its nadir after the revolt of 1857.[30]

In those difficult times, the leading lights of Indian Muslims strengthened their existing Madrasa education system which was in no way a match to the western education system.[31] The establishment of ***Darul Uloom at Deoband*** in 1866 is an unsurpassable milestone in the history of Madrasa education in the Indian sub-continent and hence in the world at present. Ranked as the greatest institution of its kind in Asia and perhaps second to the famous ***Al-Azhar University***, this great seat of Islamic learning has had an unrivalled place amongst the

Muslim religious institutions for over a century and later on this Darul Uloom Deoband created a new dimension in the thinking of Muslims.[32] After 1857, the Muslims could understand that the transfer of power did not mean a mere substitution of one political power for another, rather it meant the destruction of a particular culture and a basic source of empowerment of the Muslim community in social, economic, cultural and emotional domains.[33] The Madrasa education in vogue at that time was preparing the people for the then prevailing way of life which was now changing and taking a new direction. Madrasas were a few social institutions which received the bitter taste of this change at that time. But the surviving Muslim scholars did not lost their courage and started to establish Madrasas in every corner of the country. Muslim saints contributed a lot in this regard as their ancestors did earlier.

Following the mainstream flow of the Islamic movement started with the establishment of Darul Uloom at Deoband, the Muslim scholars and eminent personalities established Madrasas in eastern part of Bengal and especially in greater Sylhet, even its wave reached up to the upper part of the present day Assam.[34] A number of Madrasas were established during the British period in undivided Assam where Arabic teaching dominated the main part of the syllabi.

The following Madrasas are prominent among those which were established in Assam during the period from 1857 up to the end of the British rule in India:

- **Nayagram Ahmadia Madrasa**: It was established in 1870 at Nayagram near Tantoo, a village in the present Hailakandi district of

Assam. The influential family of Moulana late Azizur Rah man, a Sufi of Naqshbandia order, was behind establishing this Madrasa. It was due to the fact that the wind of Darul 'Uloom Deoband movement reached this region very fast.[35]

- **Madinatul 'Uloom Baghbari**: Situated at Baghbari, a village 2 Km. eastwards from Kaliganj and 15 KM away from Karimganj, the Madrasa was established in 1873. Late Moulavi Najib Ali (R) whose ancestors came from ***Ghour***, a province of Afghanistan in Mughal period and settled down at this place .Moulavi Najib Ali was a disciple of late Haji Imdadullah Muhajir-e-Makki (R), a saint of Chistia Naqshbandia order. After the revolt of 1857, Najib Ali migrated to Makkah. There he saw a dream at one night that the prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) directed him to return to Hindustan and continue his mission of preaching Islam and spreading Islamic education. Gradually he was ready to come back to India .After coming back, he started the Madrasa at his own house at Baghbari.[36] The Madrasa was named after him as Madrasa-e-Najibia.It continued its functioning in the same house near about a century. In 1960, the Madrasa was shifted to its present site and is still continuing its service to the nation.[37] For over half a century the level of study was up to 'Sharh-e-Jami'. In 1992 Dawra-e-Hadith was introduced in Madinatul Uloom.

- **Purahuria Alia Madrasa**: It was established in 1877 AD at Purahuria village near Fakirer Bazar or Fakira Bazar in the western part of Karimganj District. Moulana late Firoze Ali Choudhury and

others were behind the establishment of this Madrasa .It is narrated by Mr. Abdus Salam Choudhury a grand son of Moulana Firoze Ali Choudhury[38] that the latter, first pursued for higher education at Rampur Alia Madrasa and then he went to Darul Uloom Deobond. After completing his education he came back to his native place and inspired people to be associated with him, to establish a Madrasa for imparting Arabic and Islamic education. This Madrasa still serves as a premier institute in the western part of Karimganj district. At present this Madrasa has been provincialized and affiliated to the State Madrasa Education board.

- **Cheraghia Qaumia Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1882 at Sherpur village near Baroigram .The place where the Madrasa is situated is named as Cheraghi or Charaghia Bazar near Sherpur village. Late Munshi Sharif Hussain, a prominent personality of Arjunpur near Cheraghia once saw in a dream some fire burning at the site of Madrasa and people were coming to the place of fire to get benefited. Next morning, he invited the prominent persons of the locality and sought their suggestions. Finally he gave his opinion that the light of knowledge should be distributed from the site, and as such the arrangement of a Madrasa be made so that the purpose would be fulfilled. All the people who were present supported him overwhelmingly and the Madrasa-e-Qaumia came in to existence. The Persian version of 'the light' is 'Cheragh' that was seen in dream, so the Madrasa was named as 'Cheraghia Qaumia Alia Madrasa'.[39] Many a renowned scholars studied in this Madrasa that has been serving the society for over a century. Moulana Ajiruddin of village Baghan near Karimganj is the Head Moulana of the

Madrasa. The Madrasa is situated at 25 km. southwards from Karimganj near the National Highway 44.

- **Madrasa-e-Nasiria**: It was established in 1885 at the village Bakharshal five kilometres eastward from Karimganj, the headquarters town of Karimganj district. The Madrasa was established by a celebrated Sufi late Qari Nasiruddin , who was a disciple of Haji Imadadullah Muhajir-e- Makki, and a descendent of a celebrated Sufi late Badruddin Muhammad who along with his Sufi brother Kamal Muhammad came from Parchak Pargona of Sylhet and settled on the bank of the river Kushiyara and were preaching Islam and spreading Islamic education .After Qari Nasir uddin , his son late Moulana Jalal Uddin took over the Charge of the Madrasa and continued the functioning of the Madrasa up to 1955. As Moulana Jalal Uddin was associated with Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind as its Secretary of Assam provincial unit, he had to travel throughout the state for organizational works. As such, he could not look after the Madrasa properly. Therefore, the Madrasa was closed in 1955.[40]

- **Rabbania Madrasa:** It was established in 1886 at West Hasanpur, a part of greater Mahakal village, by the Zamindar family of Mahakal. The Madrasa was named after its founder Ghulam Rabbani Choudhury. Renowned scholars like Moulana Shaikh Ahmad Ali had been a student of Rabbania Madrasa as reported by the president of the present managing committee of the Madrasa .Now this Madrasa got government's recognition and has been converted into a Senior Madrasa.[41]

- **Gandhai Bazar Rafiul Islam Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1890, by some local Islamic scholars as reported by the present head of the Madrasa, Moulana Muslehuddin. This Madrasa could not reach the full perfection at any age and some how continues on a weak axis.[42]

- **Asimia Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1895. First, it was a Maktab established by Asim Shah at the holy shrine of Hasan Shah, a disciple of Hazrat Shahjalal Mujarrad. This Maktab was upgraded by Muhammad Alim, the adopted son of Asim shah. Then after a few years it was shifted at Bagarshangan village near Asimganj Bazar. A few years later, it was again shifted to the southern part of present Asimganj Bazar in a Kachcha house. In 1942, the Madrasa was burnt down by fire. At that time it was shifted to the permanent building at the present site.[43] It is to be mentioned here that this Madrasa was recognized by the government in 1943 as asserted by the present Superintendent by showing documents. In 1965, this Madrasa was provided Deficit grant in Aid along with other Madrasas of Assam.[44] It has become a premier Islamic institute in eastern India that produced several hundred scholars who served and have been serving the society and the nation in various designs. Moulana Abdur Raqib was the Head Moulana of the Madrasa from 1942, and Moulavi Sajidul Haq was the Asstt Head Moulana of the Madrasa till 1971. About six hundred students are at present enrolled in the Madrasa.

- **Darul Uloom Banshkandi:** It was established in 1897 at Banshkandi. One celebrated Hafiz Akbar Ali of Banshkandi; a

disciple of Haji Imdadullah Muhajir-e-Makki went to Makkah for pilgrimage in 1894. After performing Hajj, he stayed there and submitted his hands to celebrated Sufi Haji Imdadullah Muhajir. The Sufi Haji Imdadullah taught him lessons on spiritual ideology. After three years, the Sufi saint asked Hafiz Akbar Ali to leave for India and to spread Islamic education. Hafiz Akbar Ali came to Banshkandi and met the prominent persons of the locality, such as Hafiz Ali, Noor Ali and Nena Dhan Mia. They together started the Darul Uloom under a tree to follow the beginning circumstances of the famous Darul Uloom, Deoband. Hafiz Akbar Ali pioneered the Madrasa as its teacher while Nena Dhan Mia was the President. This Madrasa remained up to Middle stage till 1947. After 1947, a new trend came to Barak Valley and this Madrasa was upgraded to Alia level in 1950. Then the meetings and conventions of Jamiat Ulama were held frequently at the locality, and the Madrasa got a new life with the touch of those celebrated Ulama, especially with the visits of learned Sufi Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmad Madani.[45]

In the meantime, many developments took place in the Madrasa education scenario. Moulana Ahmad Ali was one of the disciples of Shaikhul Islam. So, he was asked by his celebrated saint to work as a teacher in Darul Uloom, Banshkandi. After observations of the formalities, Moulana Ahmad Ali was appointed as Muhaddith at the Madrasa in 1950. In 1957, the Dawrah-e-Hadith section was inaugurated formally by Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmad Madani during his last visit to Assam. The late Syed Madani wished the Madrasa to be the second Darul Uloom or the Darul Uloom of Eastern India. The long time Muhtamim of the Madrasa was Haji

Mia Dhan Mia. Moulana Ahmad Ali had been the longest time Shaikhul Hadith till his last in 2000. This Madrasa is a full residential one and the only Madrasa of this kind in Assam till date. About two thousand students and around 50 teachers, all are residing inside the campus availing the free fooding facilities. Hon'ble President of India, late Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad visited this Madrasa in 1975. A number of Central as well as State Ministers, like Santosh Mohan Dev, Kabindra Purkayastha,, Hiteswar Saikia (while he was the Chief Minister of Assam), Abdul Muhib Mazumdar and others visited this Madrasa at different occasions. At present, Moulana sheikh Abdul Bari is the Shaikhul Hadith while Moulana Yahya is the Rector.[46]

- **Deorail Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1898 at Bundashil village by Moulana Yaqub Badarpuri. After a break of a few months it was again started, at the present site near the NH 44 at Deorail in present Badarpur, in 1931. In 1942, this Madrasa was provisionally recognized by the government and as such it was converted into a Senior Madrasa. In 1938, Dawrah-e-Hadith was started where Moulana Mushahid Biompuri was a Muhaddith. Afterwards, in 1947 the Title Madrasa section was totally separated from Deorail Alia Madrasa.[47]

- **Assam Jamiul Uloom Madrasa, Dibrugarh:** It was established in 1903 at Dibrugarh, a premier town in Upper Assam. The Madrasa was established by Moulana Mirza Ziaur Rahman Beg son of Moulana Abdur Rahman Beg. His ancestor Mirza Nawab Beg, an Arab origin, a resident of Rampur in UP. Was an officer in British

army. In relation to his service he came to Upper Assam and then left the service and settled at Bishwanath Chariali. His descendent Moulana Mirza Ziaur Rahman Beg who studied at Darul Uloom at Deoband took initiative to establish the Madrasa.[48] On 9th January, 1903 the Madrasa was started at Dhakai Patty Masjid. Then Major H.W.G.Cool, the then Deputy Commissioner allotted a piece of land in the midst of the town. On 6th December, 1905, the Madrasa was publicly inaugurated by Major Cool. Its junior section was recognized by the government and an adhoc grant of Rs.1000/- was sanctioned annually.[49] At the time of independence the Madrasa could not retain its recognition because it remained closed for a few years due to the set back occurred of the partition of the country.

- **Idgah Isha'atul Islam Madrasa:** It was established in 1920 near Mullaganj Bazar, also near a large Idgah. Now it has become a provincialized Senior Madrasa.

- **Kazir Bazar Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1922 at Kazir Bazar one kilometer away from Ratabari police station .It has become a Senior Madrasa at present.

- **Katarihara Mazharul Uloom Madrasa:** It was established in 1930 at Katarihara. The place is also known as Jaleswar. 6 miles away from Lakhimpur in the District of Goalpara. Syed Nasiruddin Baghdadi Qadri (d.1936 AD), was a great and learned Sufi of Qadria order. First he came to Bombay, then visiting so many cities and towns he reached Maymanshigha. The mission of Baghdadi was to impart education both Islamic and modern. With this view in

mind he established this Madrasa which has become, now-a-days, a senior Madrasa under the State Madrasa Education Board.[50]

- **Assam Darul Hadith Joynagar Madrasa:** It was established in 1932 at Joynagar about 5 kilometers eastwards from Nilbagan on Nilbagan-Bokolia-Diphu road in the district of Nowgaon. One Faqir Dhan, a pious man who migrated from Joynagar village of Cachar districts and settled at Joynagar in Nowgaon, was the pioneer in establishing this Madrasa. During the late 20s and early 30s of the last century new settlements took place there and government was allotting land to public. Faqir Dhan applied for a piece of land for establishing a Madrasa there.[51] The govt. allotted the same; Faqir Dhan started a Maktab there in a hut and started processing for a Madrasa very soon. A few teachers were appointed and the Madrasa began in the year 1932 .Faqir Dhan used to visit house to house with a Hand Cart (Thella Cart) and collect goods (rice ,paddy etc) for Madrasa. He did service for long 65 years.[52] Another pioneer Moulana Masaddar Raghib was contributing behind setting up this Madrasa. The fame of Joynagar Madrasa is spread in every village and town of Assam. Not only this, but this is the first Madrasa existing in post independent period in Assam where Dawra-e Hadith was started first. Moulana Abdur Rahim of Manipur was the first Shaikul Hadith in this Madrasa. After his departure Moulana Abdus Sabur was the longest period Shaikul Hadith in this Madrasa.[53] The Joynagar Madrasa serves the society and the nation with full perfection.

- **Hailakandi Alia Madrasa:** It was established in 1938 at the eastern part of the town. Up to the end of the British rule this Madrasa served as Qaumi Madrasa. In 1961 this was recognized as a Senior Madrasa and was provincialized along with other Madrasas in 1992. The celebrated Sufi scholar Moulana Tayyebur Rahman Barbhuiya was a student there in post independent era. He served this Madrasa as teacher and Superintendent respectively for more than 35 years and retired in 1995.

- **Bhanghasharif Markazul Uloom Madrasa:** It was established in 1942 near Bhanga Motor stand .It is one of the premier Madrasas in Assam.[54]

b) **Government Madrasas**: At the same time, there flourished a Madrasa education system introduced by the East India Company government in Bengal which was later on extended in Assam too. With the British East India Company in power with their victory in the battle of Plasey, there started a new dimension in the history of education in India. After the civil administration of the country had come into the hands of the East India Company, every English judge supposed to be ignorant of the people, their manners and the spirit of the law which had so long been administered to them, had a Moulavi in his court to assist him in his work.[55] But it was difficult to have a clever Moulavi. To supply this want and partly to reconcile the Mohammedans to the British rule, Lord Warren Hastings, the Governor General ordered to establish the Madrasa Alia (Calcutta Madrasa) in 1780 which has been a celebrated institution in the history of education in Indian sub-continent and

has since been not only one of the very few leading institutions in the eastern part of the country, but also had the unique distinction of being, in addition to being a teaching institution itself, an affiliating body for the various large and small Madrasas of Islamic learning in undivided Bengal. Its principal also acted as the Registrar of the Central Madrasa Examination Board, which conducted three examinations namely Junior ('Alim), Senior (Fadil) and Title (Mumtaz) after six, eight and ten years respectively.[56] As Sylhet had been a part of Bengal administered under the Dhaka Commission, the Madrasa education system in Sylhet was influenced by the Calcutta Madrasa. The centuries famous Phoolbari Madrasa had been following the syllabi of the Calcutta Madrasa with the initiative taken by Moulavi Ajiruddin Choudhury, the famous zamindar of Phoolbari who willed the whole of his wealth for the cause of the Madrasa.[57] In 1874, the entire Sylhet along with Cachar district was separated from Dhaka Commission and was adopted to Assam and Assam became a full fledged province of British India. Now we got a new phase in the history of Arabic education in Assam. Assam has become a vast state starting from Sadiya to Dhubri and from Tejpur to Habiganj since 1874 to 1947. In this period we find Arabic connected with the learning of almost all the subjects in Madrasas, though there were other language subjects in the syllabi, such as Persian and Urdu as Urdu has been related with the Muslim aristocracy in India and Persian was the court language till 1837.[58] So, Muslims had a nerve relation with Urdu and Persian. On the other hand, Arabic is the language of the prophet Muhammad, it is the language of the holy Qur'an, the source of all branches of Islamic learning. So, this language is necessarily learnt in all Islamic

institutions. After 1857, the Muslims got inspired only by the 'Ulama and the education imparted in the Madrasas were meant for Muslim education. The Muslims at large considered the Madrasa education as indigenous one. The British Government could understand that the Muslims have a great weakness for Arabic language and Madrasa education. In 1913, the government established the famous Sylhet Government Alia Madrasa at Sylhet.[59] The study level of the Madrasa began with Junior and senior stages. A number of Madrasas were recognized and affiliated to the Sylhet Government Alia Madrasa. Immediately after the establishment of the Government Madrasa at Sylhet, the centuries old famous Phoolbari Madrasa was recognized by the government in 1914. Other recognized Madrasas were (a) Jhingabari Madrasa, (b) Gachbari Madrasa, (c) Naraping Madrasa which are at present not the Madrasas of Assam. The Madrasas which were recognized during the British period and are situated within the boundary of present Assam are:

i) **Asimia Senior Madrasa:** It was established in 1895 by Muhammad 'Alim in a separate house near the mosque of Hasan Shah's Dargah which was renovated by Asim Shah. In 1919, Moulana Imdadur Rahman of the village Bagershangan took over the charge of the Madrasa. Qazi Muhammad Kamil of village Mullagram and Muhammad Azu Mia of village Bagershangan were the president and the secretary of the Madrasa respectively. Then the Madrasa was shifted to Asimganj Bazar in the same year. After Moulana Imdadur Rahman, Moulana Irfan Ali of Patharia became the head of the Madrasa. After his death,

Moulana Abdul Musabbir of Muradpur took over the charge of the Madrasa. In 1942,[60] the old Kachcha house was accidentally burnt down and was reconstructed by the help of the local people. In 1943, this Madrasa was recognized by the Education Department and was affiliated to Assam State Madrasa Board, Sylhet. Moulana Ansar of the village Balia became the head of the Madrasa in 1946. In 1947, Moulana Abdur Raqib of the village Batavia, a celebrated teacher of North East India, took over the charge of Head-Moulana. In his tenure, this Madrasa became one of the famous institutions in the whole state of Assam.[61]

ii) **Deorail Senior Madrasa:** The earlier mentioned Deorail Alia Madrasa became Deorail Senior Madrasa with the government's recognition obtained in 1942-43. Moulana 'Atiqul Haqq, the famous Muhaddith and a celebrated alumni of Sylhet Government 'Alia Madrasa, took over the charge of Shaikhul Hadith when Dawrah classes were opened in it. At the same time, Moulana Mushahid of Biompur of present Bangladesh joined as Muhaddith. In 1947, both of them left the Madrasa after the partition of the country. In the meantime, the Dawrah section was permanently recognized as a separate institution and was named as Deorail Title Madrasa. In 1947, Shaikh Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury took over the charge of Muhaddith in the Madrasa and within a few days he took over the charge of Shaikhul Hadith. In 1954, a separate building was constructed in the present site of Deorail Title Madrasa. Thus, the Madrasa was separated into Deorail Senior Madrasa and Deorail Title Madrasa.[62] The further promotion of Deorail Title Madrasa, its

contribution, a far extensive movement centring round it, will be discussed in appropriate section.

c) **Secular Institutions:** Secular institutions are those institutions that were established by the government or ventured by the willing public and recognized by the govt. for providing general education not on the basis of religion, but on the basis of worldly need. These are schools, colleges and universities. During the colonial period, no university was established within the boundary of Assam. The British government established Primary, Middle and High schools in district and sub-divisional headquarters. In the fourth decade of the 19th century a number of High schools were established in Assam. The prominent among them are the Government Pilot High School (Est. 1836) at Sylhet, Cotton Collegiate Higher Secondary School (Est. 1834) at Guwahati, Government Higher Secondary School (Est. 1834) at Dibrugarh. In all these three Arabic was introduced with its inception. Mr. Nooruddin of famous Mufti family of Sylhet established Mufti High School on 1stJanuary, 1876.[63] In 1880, this school became a national school. To attract the moderate Muslims, the system of High Madrasa education was introduced with the establishment of Assam State Madrasa Board, at Sylhet on the model of education in Bengal. The High Madrasa education is a parallel system with school education where Arabic and other Islamic religious subjects are taught and the system was controlled by the Assam State Madrasa Board. In 1892, Murari Chand College was established at Sylhet where, on the model of Calcutta University, Arabic was introduced in under graduate level. In 1901, the Cotton College was established in Guwahati with the initiative

by the then Chief Commissioner, Sir Henri John Steadman Cotton. Arabic was also introduced in the under graduate level in Cotton college. Moulavi Abu Nasar Muhammad Wahid of Sylhet was the first professor of Arabic in Cotton College. He was also one of the five founder teachers of the college.[64] Then the department included Arabic, Persian and Urdu and was designed as the Department of Islamic Studies. It is to be noted that Moulavi Abu Nasar Muhammad Wahid was the first Bangalee who obtained the Degree of M.A. in Arabic.[65] In 1946; the Karimganj College was established at Karimganj where Arabic was introduced in the model of Cotton College. So, we find Cotton College and Karimganj College are the two institutions of higher education within the boundary of present Assam, established before 1947 where Arabic was introduced from the beginning.

Impact of Arabic Language Teaching in Social and Political Changing: Teaching and learning of a language has many impacts in the society in every age and in every corner of the world. Arabic, as it is the language of unity has to put a deep impact in the hearts of its learners. Teaching of the Arabic language introduced primarily the teaching of the holy Qur'an, the lessons from the Sunnah or traditions of the holy prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) to its learners. The syllabus of the Arabic language and literature had been designed in those days for both Madrasas and other institutions with a view to cover (1) the Qur'anic verses related to humanity and maintenance of social justice and religious tolerance, (2) chapters from the traditions of the prophet which justify the dignity and empowerment of education, social justice, importance of woman,

promotion of equality among people, etc., (3) Classical Islamic Arabic poetry that draw attentions of the learners to the fact how morality developed among the Arab people, (4) small stories that promote the importance of maintaining morality in life, (5) Lives of the companions of the prophet Muhammad and also the Sufi saints.

With the introduction of Govt. run Madrasa education system in Assam and simultaneously the inclusion of the Arabic language and literature in the syllabi of schools, colleges and universities, a new way of thinking, among the learners in both the systems grew. A number of Madrasa graduates who completed their studies in Govt. Madrasas appeared and passed the Entrance Examination and promoted their higher studies in colleges and obtained graduation from the university. They were engaged in various services of higher design. Another number of Madrasa graduates who got introduced to the motives of the English people in India and participated actively in the Freedom Movement and subsequently took active part in politics. We find Moulavi Muhammad Daim was graduated from Presidency College, Calcutta in 1865, Moulavi Abdul Karim was graduated in 1886.[66] Shamsul Ulama Abu Nasar Muhammad Wahid, Khanbahadur Syed Abdul Majid were graduated from M.C. College, Sylhet in 1896.[67] In the first half of the 20th century, the wave of Bengal renaissance reached every leading towns and villages of plain land of Assam. People began to send their wards to Calcutta for higher studies. Muslim students were getting their way to Sylhet for higher studies. Madrasa students were interested to register themselves in Government Alia Madrasa at Sylhet. Many of them were marching towards Calcutta Madrasa or Darul Uloom at Deoband for higher studies. The students,

who stayed at Sylhet during their studies at Sylhet, were introduced to Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmed Madani, the great saint of the Indian sub-continent, who was the Shaikhul Hadith of Darul Uloom, Deoband. The Shaikhul Islam used to pass the whole month of Ramadan at Nayasadak Masjid, starting from 1925 till 1947.[68] During this period many a Madrasa graduates submitted their hands to Shaikhul Islam and took oath of practicing and leading a spiritual life. Among them were the illustrious Ulamas who were the inhabitants of present boundary of Assam are mentioned below:

(i) Moulana Jalaluddin (1903-1986): He passed the Assam Madrasa Final Exam from Sylhet Govt. Alia Madrasa in 1933. He actively participated in Non-Cooperation Movement launched by Gandhiji. He was sent to jail several times for his participation into students' movement, Salt Movement, Quit India Movement, etc.[69] He was General Secretary of Karimganj District Jamiat Ulama from 1942 to 1956. For his involvement with the Freedom Movement, he was arrested and sent to Karimganj Jail and Sylhet District in several times. He was well versed in Persian and composed a number of Persian poems on Islamic spirit and nationalism. Jail In 1957, he was selected as the Secretary, Assam Provincial Jamiat Ulama. In 1971, he was selected as the General Secretary of North East India Emarat-e-Shar'ia and NadwatutTa'meer.He continued his social and religious service under this organization till his last in 1986.

(ii) Moulana Ahmad Ali (1916 – 2000): He passed Assam Madrasa Title Examination (M.M.) in 1940 from Sylhet Govt. Alia Madrasa. Then he went to Darul Uloom, Deoband for further studies.

After coming back from Deoband, he was travelled to Makkah and Madinah and other places. At last he attached himself with the teaching of Hadith at Darul Uloom Banshkandi Madrasa in 1950. From 1957 till his last, he was the Shaikhul Hadith of the same Madrasa. He was a great disciple of Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmad Madani.

(iii) Moulana Abu Muhammad Abdun Noor (1923 – 2006): He was born and brought up at village Bakharshal of Karimganj district. He passed the Assam Madrasa Title Examination (M.M.) in 1943 from Sylhet Govt. Alia Madrasa. Soon after completion of his studies, he joined Karimganj High Madrasa. In 1956, he became the Superintendent of the Madrasa. He obtained the Degree of B.A. in 1968 and M.A. in Arabic in 1972, as teacher private candidate. He was conferred the National Award in 1988.

(iv) Moulana Muhammad Tahir (1924 – 1994): He was born and brought up at Village Shingaria in the district of Karimganj. He passed Assam Madrasa Title Examination in 1943 from Sylhet Govt. Alia Madrasa. Then in 1946, he joined Deorail Title Madrasa as Muhaddith. In 1950, he was requested by Moulana Azad to join the Calcutta Madrasa. Accordingly, he went there and served as Muhaddith. He wrote more than twenty five books on various Islamic topics.

(v) Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury (1925 – 1989): He was born and brought up at village Turk Khola in Renga Pargana of Sylhet. He passed the Assam Madrasa Title Examination (M.M.) in1941. Then he proceeded for further studies to Darul Uloom, Deoband. He actively

participated in anti-British movement in all its phases. Several times he was sent to several jails. He was the General Secretary of Assam Provincial Jamiat Ulama from 1943 to 1960. From 1952 to 1985, he was elected Member of Assam Legislative Assembly except in two terms. He was also the Shaikhul Hadith of Deorail Title Madrasa from 1949 to 1989. He was one of the outstanding disciples of Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmed Madani. He had been in centre of the movement for preserving the chastity of Madrasa education in Assam.

At the same period, some other learners chose their route to Rampur and Deoband in UP. They felt it a matter of proud to be the students of those Madrasas at Rampur and Saharanpur. The Ulama, who studied at Rampur, were respected as the seas of knowledge at every part of India. A few of those Ulama who studied at those Madrasas, contributed to the Arabic literature following the then contemporary trend. They will be introduced in appropriate section.

The number of Madrasa graduates was growing during the first half of the 20th century and the Muslims in large number began to participate in political movements. The Madrasa graduates were in front parts of those movements in Sylhet. An educational uprising wave was flowing among the Muslims. The visit of Shaikhul Islam Syed Husain Ahmed Madani affected this uprising flow of education. At different places of present boundary of Assam, he established temporary Khanqahs where people gathered to have a lesson of his spiritual teaching. Such a Khanqah used to be held at Batarashi Jami' Masjid in the district of Karimganj where thousands of people stayed for several days to see and meet the Shaikhul Islam. He inspired them towards

anti-British non-violence activities and to participate in the movements launched by the Indian National Congress. Behind the establishment of the temporary Khanqa at the village Batarashi was Shaikhul Islam's deep relationship with one of his disciples, Moulavi Sa'id Ali of Batarashi who studied at Pholbari Madrasa and Sylhet Govt. Alia Madrasa and served as Khatib (Pesh Imam) at Nayasadak Masjid where Syed Madani used to deliver lectures on Hadith classes during his visit there. Thus we find a political and social uprising among the Muslims created by the growing number of Govt. Madrasa graduates, their active participation in anti- British political movements and the expansion of activities of Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind in this north-eastern region of India which later on created and promoted an expanded ground for establishing more Madrasas in the state of Assam at the eve of independence of the country. Again, we see that after the successful completion of studies at Govt. Madrasas, the learners in more numbers created a ground before the colonial rulers to introduce Arabic in schools and colleges which had a far reaching result in the history of Arabic teaching and learning in secular institutions in the state of Assam.

It is an established fact that these schools, providing the scope of Arabic teaching, served and have been serving as the feeder sections for the Arabic Departments in the colleges. It is also a fact that the colleges supply the inputs for the university. So, this way, Arabic teaching in schools occupied a prominent place in the field of Arabic education in Assam as it does in other parts of India.

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2.3 The Arabic Language Teaching in Post-Colonial Period up to the End of the 20th Century in Madrasas and Other Institutions.

The development of Arabic teaching through different ways up to the end of the colonial period and the appearance of groups of Ulama and their contributions established a firm footing for promotion and continuation of teaching and learning of the Arabic language in the state of Assam in the subsequent period. In post-colonial period a drastic change began to appear in every corner of the state. New schools and colleges were established. Simultaneous with this, Maktabs and Madrasas began to be set up in every Muslim dominated area. Socio-religious organizations propagated Islamic ideology and motivated people to establish those Maktabs and Madrasas where Arabic occupied a major place in the syllabi. New colleges were established where Arabic began to be taught. Side by side, Arabic was introduced in old colleges also. For a systematized discussion, the educational institutions imparting Arabic teaching are broadly divided into two heads: (a) Madrasas and (b) Other institutions.

a) Madrasas: With reference to the discussions made in earlier parts, Madrasas remained functioning under two streams: (i) Qaumi Madrasas and (ii) Govt. run Madrasas. Development of both the categories of Madrasas, their extension, the difference in their syllabi and the reason behind their establishments are discussed below:

(i) Qaumi Madrasas: Qaumi Madrasas have been imparting mainly Arabic and Islamic education among the Muslims for making them aware of the Islamic life style incorporated by the holy Qur'an and the traditions of the prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him). The pioneers of the Qaumi Madrasas assumed that those Madrasas are the factories of producing good Ulama who are the real descendents of the prophetic knowledge and wisdom. In post-colonial period, the Ulama attached with the Qaumi Madrasas initiated to establish new Madrasas in new places. Their target was to generalize the Islamic education to all Muslims in primary level. So, Maktabs began to be established in every village and Safila (Junior) Madrasas were established in new areas so that these would act as the feeder sections to the large Madrasas. The fact that the substance and extracts of Islam are hidden only in Islamic religious education is the main concept behind establishing new Madrasas.

The prominent Qaumi Madrasas that were established after the independence in the state of Assam are as follows:

- **Jamia Islamia Jalalia, Hojai:** It was established in 1956 at Gopalnagar in Hojai town. The pioneers of the Madrasa were Haji late Manaf Ali, Haji late Nisar Ali, Haji late Insan Ali, late Syed Abdus Sattar, all from the greater Hojai area and others. This Madrasa earned fame in case of spreading Islamic education in the state of Assam. About 50 teachers are working at present in the Madrasa, while 1500 plus students are in the roll at present. The Madrasa provides teaching up to Dawrah-e-Hadith. The first

Shaikhul Hadith was the celebrated Mufti Moulana Abdul Qayyum Kanakpuri who studied in Rampur Alia Madrasa, Rampur, U.P. A number of prominent Ulama were engaged in teaching at different times at this Madrasa, among them are Moulana Abdul Jalil Raghibi (Ex M.L.A.), Moulana Shamsuddin Bihari. However, Moulana Shamsuddin Bihari was a teacher in Ashraful Uloom Ratanpur Madrasa also. Now, Moulana Shamsuddin Bihari is the Shaikhul Hadith, while Moulana Abdus Subhan is the Head Moulana.[70] Moulana late Ahmad Ali, Rector Darul Uloom, Banshkandi and Moulana late Syed Asad Madani used to visit the Madrasa almost every year. The Madrasa has a land property of about 15 bighas. The Madrasa runs in four long double storied buildings of its own. At present, modern vocational courses like computer education etc. are being progressed.

- **Darul Uloom Guwahati:** It was established in 1966 at Garhigaon near Gauhati University campus on the south bank of the Brahmaputra. It was initiated by late Moulana Shaikh Abdul Haqq who hailed from Karimganj. Moulana Syed Asad Madani once visited this place in relation to a convention of Jamiat Ulama. He inspired the local Ulama to establish a Madrasa centrally at Guwahati. As such this Madrasa was established with a view to provide Islamic education to the children of whole of the state.[71]

- **Mirabari Jamiul Uloom Furqania Madrasa:** It was established in 1973 at Miarabari, 1 KM. north from Nilambazar in the district of Karimganj. The foundation stone of the Madrasa was laid down by Moulana Ojihuddin Khan of Rampur Furqania Madrasa. The

establishment of Jamiul Uloom has a long processing since the settlement of the family of the pioneer of this Madrasa. After 1857, Syed Mahmud came from Baniachang of Taraf of present Bangladesh and settled at Mirjapur near Nilambazar. After a few years he changed the place and resettled at Alamkhani. His son Syed Hasan started a Maktab where children from the surrounding area came to learn the Qur'an. After him his son Syed Anjab Ali continued the Maktab till 1940. In the meantime his son Syed Mudaris Ali returned home completing his studies at Rampur Oriental College. After performing Imamat at several mosques, Syed Mudaris Ali came home and continued the Maktab of his ancestors. This Maktab gradually got the shape of a Madrasa under the shadow of a Khanqah. Syed Mudaris Ali's son Moulana Abdun Noor is the present Muhtamim of Mirabari Jamiul Uloom. At present it has a network of Madrasas in the state of Assam. It started a girls' Senior Madrasa under its banner. It started a Computer Education Centre of its own where the girls students of the Senior Madrasa will learn the basic knowledge of computer.[72]

The Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind launched its programme of organized Maktab and Madrasa education, and as such a common syllabus was prepared following the Dars-e-Nizami in the late forties and early fifties of the last century.[73] Jamiat has been in action as the guardian of most of the Qaumi Madrasas. The number of the Qaumi Madrasas comprising small and large i.e. Safila, Alia and Dawra-e-Hadith reached about five hundred in the post colonial period up to the end of the 20th century in Assam. As the establishment of an autonomous Board for controlling the academic activities of those

Qaumi Madrasas was felt necessary, the All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qaumia was established in 1955 under the shadow of the Assam Provincial Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind. But because of no permanent office and the lack of modern communication system and above all the lack of sense of responsibility of the managing bodies of many Madrasas, the Tanzim Board could not show hopeful performance up to the mid-nineties of the 20th century. In the late nineties, the Tanzim was re-organized and a permanent office was established at Nilbagan in the district of Nagaon. With the changed circumstances, the Qaumi Madrasas in large number came forward and got themselves registered with the Tanzim Board and began sending their students to appear in the Board's examinations every year at the end of every stage of studies in Qaumi Madrasas.[74] There are two other boards, in addition to the Tanzim, that control the Qaumi Madrasa education in Assam. A list of these Madrasas is appended below.

Madrasas under All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qaumia are categorized under the following five heads: Category A, B, C, D and H.

A-category Madrasas are those where the study level starts at Maktab or primary stage and ends with the Kamil or Dawrah-e-Hadith, and Final Exams in all the stages, i.e. Primary (Maktab), Middle (Safila), Secondary (Alia) and Higher (Dawrah) are controlled by the Tanzim Board. In this category, altogether 7 Madrasas are run which are mentioned below:

The Madrasas are serialized below on alphabetical order:

Sl. No.	Name of the Madrasa	District in which the Madrasa is situated
1.	Assam Darul Hadith, Joynagar	Nagaon
2.	Ashraful Uloom Darul Hadith, Ratanpur.	Hailakandi
3.	Darul Hadith Parmaibeti Islamia Madrasa.	Nagaon
4.	Darul Uloom Balapara Madrasa.	Bongaigaon
5.	Darul Uloom Banshkandi	Cachar
6.	Jamia Islamia Jalalia, Hojai.	Nagaon
7.	Jamia Qur'ania Islamia Khanqah-e-Madani,	Cachar

B-category Madrasas are those where the study level runs up to higher secondary (Alia) stage. In this category, there are altogether 21 Madrasas which are district wise listed below:

Sl. No. and name of Madrasas:

Darrang District

1. Darul Uloom Kharupetia Madrasa, Kharupetia

Dhubri District

2. Darul Uloom Chapar. (Balajan)

Goalpara District

3. Jamia Dine Mansuria Madrasa, Joy Bhum

Hailakandi District

4. Al-Jamiatul Muhammadia South Aklarpar Madrasa
5. Darul Uloom Sahabad Madrasa, Sahabad

Karimganj District

6. Baitul Uloom Madrasa, Jarer Bazar
7. Faizul Uloom Muhammadia Madrasa, Roypur.
8. Madinatul Uloom Baghbari Madrasa, Baghbari, Kaliganj.
9. Markazul Uloom Bhanga Sharif Madrasa, Bhanga Bazar.
10. Cheraghia Qaumia Alia Madrasa, Cheraghi Bazar.

Lakhimpur District

11. Lakhimpur Deeni Alia Madrasa, Khutakatia

Nagaon District

12. Assam Markazul Uloom Barama Islamia Madrasa.
13. Ashraful Uloom Bechamari Madrasa
14. Anwarul Uloom Shibpur Madrasa
15. Darul Uloom Methigaon Madrasa, Nilbagan.
16. Kawaimari Islamia Arabia Madrasa, Kawaimari.
17. Mazharul Uloom Katpara Islamia Madrasa.
18. Tarabari Darus Sunnat Madrasa

Nalbari District.

19. Pub Barkhetri Alia Madrasa, Luharkata.

Morigaon District.

20. Buraburi Ahmadia Islamia Madrasa, Buraburi Bazar.
21. Jamia Islamia Darul Uloom Moirabari Madrasa.

C-category Madrasas are those where study level runs up to Middle stage. Classes are designed as Sal-e-Awwal (1st Year), Sal-e-Duwam (2nd Year) and Sal-e-Suwam (3rd Year). Only the district wise number of Madrasas is given below:

Sl.No.	Name of the District.	Number of Madrasas
1.	Bongaigaon:	7
2.	Barpeta:	6
3.	Cachar:	11
4.	Darrang:	10
5.	Dhubri:	30
6.	Dibrugarh:	1
7.	Goalpara:	6
8.	Gholaghat:	5
9.	Hailakandi:	11
10.	Jorhat:	2
11.	Kamrup:	3

12.	Karimganj:	19
13.	Kokrajhar:	2
14.	Lakhimpur:	4
15.	Morigaon:	6
16.	Nagaon:	28
17.	Sibsagar:	1
18.	Sonitpur:	9
19.	Tinsukia:	1
	Total:	162

The primary level Madrasas which fall under D. category of the Tanzim Board are very small in number. One each in five districts and only two in one district. They are : (1) Laskar Panchali Imdadia Islamia Madrasa, Laskarpathar, in the district of Nagaon, (2) Madrasa-e-Abu Huraira (R) Tahfizul Qur'an Suryakata Madrasa at Bilasipara in the district of Dhubri, (3) Jamia Islamia Mahmudia Darul Uloom Pathila Duha Madrasa in the district of Bongaigaon, (4) Lakhipur Husainia Madrasa, Misfala in the district of Goalpara,(5) Tengaguri Islamia Hafizia Madrasa in the district of Morigaon and (6) Darul Uloom

Furkania Madrasa, Goshaigaon and (7) Miftahul Uloom Teteliguri Madrasa in the district of Kokrajhar.

Apart from the above there are 34 Madrasas for girls in the district of Nagaon run under the above mentioned Tanzim. They are mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Madrasa	Place	Category
1.	Assam Darul Hadith Madrasatul Banat	Nilbagan	A
2.	Ambari Ahmadia Madrasatul Banat	Ambari	B
3.	Assam Madrasatul Banat	Parmaibeti	B
4.	Burungatali Madrasatul Banat	Burungatali	B
5.	Hazrat Aysha Siddiqa (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Barhawr	B
6.	Hazrat Aysha Siddiqa (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Samorail No.7	B
7.	Hazrat Fatimatuz Zuhra (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Ambari	B
8.	Hazrat Fatima (R) Madrasatul Banat, Uttar	Dimrupar	B
9.	Hzrt. Fatimatuz Zuhra (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Dakin Samorail	B
10.	Hazrat Fatimatuz Zuhra (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Borbali	B

11.	Hzrt. Maryam (A) Madrasatul Banat Pub	Rawwarpar	B
12.	Hzrt. Khadijatul Kubra (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Joynagar	B
13.	Hzrt. Umme Salma (R) Madrasatul Banat,	Dakhin Mikirpara	B
14.	Jamiatus Salihat Madrasatul Banat,	Pub Jamunagaon	B
15.	Karaiuni Jalalia Madrasatul Banat,	Karaiguri	B
16.	Mahmuda Banat Paschim	Digaljhar	B
17.	Shilpa Udyug Deeni Madrasatul Banat,)	Nateswar (Nilbagan	B
18.	Tuktuki Kotahguri Madrasatul Banat	Tuktuki	B

The list of all the above categories of Madrasas is collected from the office of the All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qaumia, Nilbagan, Hojai,[75] and is justified by the relevant field survey.

The Assam Edara-e-Madaris Islamia is a Board with a different nature, existing with an autonomous character centring round the academic activities of Jamiul Uloom Furqania Madrasa at Mirabari near Nilambazar in the district of Karimganj. This Edara has formulated a syllabi starting from Maktab level up to Dawrah-e-Hadith (Primary level to Degree level). It is somehow a mixture or composition of Dars-e-Nizami and that of the New Scheme Madrasa education system adopted by the State Madrasa Education Board, Assam.

The Assam Edara-e-Madaris Islamia was established in 1995 which was registered under the Societies Regn. Act of 1860, in the year 1995-96. The various levels of studies as designed by the Edara are as follows:[76]

1. Maktab	(L.P.stage):	4 Classes
2. Dakhil	(Junior Secondary stage):	6 Classes
3. Alim	(Senior Secondary stage):	2 Classes
4. Fadil	(Degree/ Graduation):	2 Classes
5. Kamil	(Post Graduation):	2 Classes

The session starts from January according to the academic calendar of this Edara which had been used to be started from the month of Shawwal of the Hijira Calendar earlier.

There are altogether 12 Madrasas run under this Edara of which three are permanently and nine are temporarily registered and affiliated with it. Besides, there are thirty seven Maktabs which are run with the affiliation of this Edara. The Principal of Jamiul Uloom Furqania Madrasa is the Registrar of the Edara. So, adding the parent Madrasa, it is found that there are altogether 50 Madrasas and Maktabs run under the Assam Edara-e-Madaris Islamia which are detailed below.

A. Parent Madrasa.

1. Jamiul Uloom Furqania Madrasa, Mirabari, Nilambazar, District: Karimganj.

B. Permanently affiliated Madrasas:

2. Jamiul Uloom Nizamia Madrasa, Dalugang
P.O. Bidyanagar, Ramkrishna Nagar
District: Karimganj

3. Kharupetia Madrasa-e-Tamizia, Ujhagaon
P.O.Kharupetia, District: Darrang

4. Shah Chattawala Darus Sunnah Madrasa,
Bichingcha, P.O. Hailakandi: District: Hailakandi

C. Temporarily Affiliated Madrasas:

5. Al-Jamia Millia Islamia Madrasa, Kanakpur.
P.O. Nilambazar, District: Karimganj.

6. Darul Hifz Madrasatul Banat, Barbandh
District: Hailakandi

7. Hatiputa Darul Uloom Hanafia Madrasa, Hatiputa.
District: Bongaigaon

8. Jamiul Uloom Nizamia Alia Madrasa, Ratabari.
District: Karimganj

9. Jatua Purahuria Alia Madrasa, P.O. Manikganj.
District: Karimganj

10. Kalacherra Muhsinia Phoolbari Madrasa, Phoolbari. District: Hailakandi

11. Mohanpur Ahmadia Qaumi Madrasa, Ratanpur P.O. Bazartilla, District: Hailakandi.

12. Shah Jalal Emoni Alia Madrasa, Jalalnagar. District: Karimganj.

13. Sonapur Khalilia Madrasa, Sonapur. District: Hailakandi

Apart from the above mentioned 13 Madrasas, there are 37 Maktabs under the Edara. All those Maktabs are in the district of Karimganj.

(ii) Government Madrasas: With the partition of the country in 1947, the Government Recognized Madrasas in Assam faced a great setback. Though Sylhet was pushed to Pakistan under the privileges of the Referendum, yet three and a half Thaana area of the then Karimganj Sub-Division of the Sylhet district remained with India under the provisions of the Radcliff Commission. These three and a half Thaana constituted the Karimganj Sub-Division and was adopted with Cachar district.[77] Three Madrasas, already recognized by the government and affiliated to the then Assam State Madrasa Board, Sylhet, were situated within the boundary Karimganj Sub-Division of Assam. These are (1) Asimia Senior Madrasa (Recognized in 1943), (2) Deorail Senior Madrasa (Recognized in

1943) and (3) Deorail Title Madrasa (Recognized in 1946 and permanently recognized in 1947). Because of partition of the country exchange of people took place between the Hindus of East Pakistan and the Muslims of India. As such, many scholarly Muslims, especially teacher community migrated from Karimganj Sub-Division in large number. So, Moulana Mushahid opted to go to East Pakistan as his native village Biompur went into the boundary of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury an active Congressman and the General Secretary of Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind, Assam unit and a reputed freedom fighter migrated from his native village Turk Khola in Sylhet and settled at Badarpur, took over the charge of Muhaddith and then Shaikhul Hadith of Deorail Title Madrasa. The other recognized Madrasas got a re-birth when Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury took the initiative and the government constituted the State Madrasa Education Board for conducting examinations and formulating syllabus. As such, these above mentioned three Madrasas were recognized by the government temporarily up to 1947. Deorail Title Madrasa got permanent recognition in 1948. In 1961, another six Madrasas were recognized by the government. They are:(1) Shingari Senior Madrasa, (2) Hailakandi Senior Madrasa, (3) Sonai Senior Madrasa, (4) Rangia Arabic College (Amalgamated Senior and Title Madrasa), (5) Gomaphoolbari Senior Madrasa, and (6) Katarihara Senior Madrasa. Up to 1961, Deorail Title Madrasa remained as the only Title Madrasa in Assam and produced many celebrated Muslim religious scholars who served and have been serving the nation in various capacities. As many as fifty seven Moulanas passed the Assam Madrasa Title (M.M.) Examination and obtained the

prestigious title of Mumtaz-ul-Muhaddithin from Deorail Title Madrasa up to 1961.[78] In 1965, the above mentioned nine Madrasas were provided full Deficit Grant In Aid by the state government of Assam, and a new trend of establishing ventured Senior Madrasas began. Up to 1968, the curriculum of the Senior Madrasas remained as that of the Assam State Madrasa Board, Sylhet [79] under the British Government formulated with the creation of Sylhet Government Madrasa in 1913. In 1952, the Small Committee for Madrasa education was constituted with Moulavi Abdul Mutlib Mazumdar, M.A., LL.B.,M.L.A. as member and Chairman and Md. Shahabuddin, M.A., Secretary, State Madrasa Board, Assam as member and Secretary.[80] The Committee's task was to re-organize the Madrasa education course and syllabus for Senior Madrasas in Assam. This committee maintained communications with Muslim scholars, Muslim organizations especially Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind, Assam unit. The Assam provincial Jamiat Ulama conveyed meetings seminars etc. to find out a clear opinion of the Muslim scholars particularly Ulamas about the re-organization and re-structuring of the Madrasa education system in Assam. There were so many proposals in favors of the new system viewed by the committee. A small number of Islamic scholars were foreseeing the far reaching debacle in re-organizing the Government Madrasa education where proposals were in favor of inclusion of some subjects of School curriculum such as Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, English, Mother tongue, etc. Sacrificing the most necessary subjects relating to Islamic studies. In spite of the oppositions, the Madrasa Education Board formulated the new syllabus for introducing in the government run Senior Madrasas of Assam in

1962 which was later on introduced in 1968-69 that included the course up to the XI standard of School curriculum and was a course of eight years duration. After two years of simultaneous running of both old and new courses, the new one was nullified as the people debarred their children from sending to Senior Madrasas because they could not be satisfied with the course of action on the part of the State Madrasa Education Board. The old course continued till 1979 with a slight modification. In 1979, when Mr. Habibul Haqq became the Secretary of the State Madrasa education Board, he introduced a new syllabus adopting the High School course only beginning from Sr. 1st year to Sr. 7th year classes (Re-organized 3+4+3 system).[81] In 1987, Mr. Shafiqur Rahman the then Secretary of the State Madrasa Education Board made a slight change in general subjects. Again in 1996, Mr. Habibul Haqq the then Secretary, S.M.E.B.A., introduced a new course with a vigorous change in syllabus introducing modern literary topics and restructuring the examination system, introducing 3 public examinations in Senior Madrasa Course, i.e. Dakhil at the end of Sr. 3rd year, Alim at the end of Sr. 5th year and Fadil at the end of Sr. 7th year.

The action on the part of the government and the State Madrasa Education Board, regarding course and syllabus for Senior Madrasas in Assam, formulated in 1962, and introduced later on in 1968-69, offended many sighted Muslim scholars who felt that all was not well with the way Arabic was going to be taught in government Madrasas from then onwards. Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury was possibly the most distinguished among such scholars who took an unprecedented

stand and curved out his own ways and means to face such a challenge. With the support from a few other like-minded Ulama, anticipated the possibility of launching of a suitable curriculum based on the well known Dars-e-Nizami.[82] As a result "Edara-e-Ta'lim wa Tazkir" was set up at Badarpur centring round the Deorail Title Madrasa in the year 1962, that contained primary Islamic education. In the year 1964, it was renamed as "Edara-e-Ta'lim wa Tasnif" which later came to be known as "Assam Nadwatut Ta'mir" in 1972.

Assam Nadwatut Ta'mir's syllabi have a five tier structure which is as follows:

1.	Sabahi Maktab	5 years duration
2.	Title Part I	3 years duration
3.	Title Part II	5 years duration
4.	Title Part III	2 years duration *
5.	Title Part IV	1 year duration

Thus Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury was successful in introducing a unique scheme under the shadow of Assam Nadwatut Ta'mir, establishing a separate Madrasa in 1969, attached with the old Deorail Title Madrasa. He introduced his scheme of studies based on the Dars-e-Nizami in line with the leading Madrasas of India. But the Moulana's fight was not over. The government of Assam, though it recognized Nadwa's syllabus, refused to give its Fadil Examination the status equivalent to the F.M. Examination of Senior Madrasas. Finally Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury did not give up his mission. He approached the Government of India and obtained Education Minister's

order on his behalf. Finally, the State Government approved the syllabus of Nadwa and accorded its Fadil Examination, the status equivalent to that of F.M. Examination of the State Madrasa Education Board. Meanwhile, Assam Nadwatut Ta'mir's activities had got extended over the year to the other states of North East India and the same was again renamed as "North East India Emarat-e-Shar'iah and Nadwatut Ta'mir". Whatever that may be, everything with regard to the new syllabi and its adoption including the conduction of final examinations was left with the Nadwa that has its own Examination Board approved by the govt. and the State Madrasa Education Board. Moreover, the govt. also entitled the Nadwa to affiliate any other institutes that may come up within the purview of the same syllabi.[83]

Thus, Moulana Abdul Jalil Choudhury's aim to bring Deorail Title Madrasa at par with the leading Madrasas of India that have been enjoying international reputation since long past, came into success. With the adoption of Nadwa curriculum, Deorail Title Madrasa has been known as "***Al-Jami'atul 'Arabiatul Islamia***" (Islamic Arabic University). Moulana had to fight a tough battle to materialize the scheme from different angles. But his efforts and battles bore fruit as it has successfully attained the status of an excellent Islamic institution in the whole of N.E. India which is evident, among other things, in the large congregation that gather in its annual convocation every year.

A large number of new Madrasas were established during the last quarter of the 20th century and so also some of the old Qaumi Madrasas along with the new ones were recognized by the government and affiliated with the State Madrasa Education Board. In course of time,

gradually these Madrasas were brought under Grant In Aid scheme, time to time. In 1992, a total number of 78 Madrasas were provincialized by the state Govt. of Assam among which the old Deficit Grant in Aided Madrasas and 25 newly recognized Madrasas were brought under Assam Madrasa Provincialization Act 1992.

The Madrasas, under State Madrasa Education Board, are of three categories. These are as follows:

1. Title Madrasas: Imparting the teaching of Two-Years M.M. course only.
2. Arabic Colleges: Imparting the teaching of Ten-Years Pre-Senior and Senior Madrasa course and Two-Years M.M. course under one administration.
3. Senior Madrasas: Imparting teaching of Ten-Years Pre-Senior and Senior Madrasa course only.

Though in the early part of the post-colonial era, the Ulama were hopeless about the successful service of the Senior Madrasas, yet these Madrasas possessed a good place in the educational scenario of the Muslim community. This was mainly due to the dedication of many of the scholars (Ulama), who contributed in multi-dimensional ways, by propagating in favour of the Madrasa education, by keeping themselves engaged in teaching and so on other activities. They inspired the learners by their own contributions into the Arabic literature, either directly or indirectly. The most prominent contributors are introduced below:

1. ***Moulana Sajidul Haqq (1909- 1984):*** He was born and brought up at ***Isamoti*** village near Baroigram in the district of Karimganj. After completing his *Maktab* and *Safila* Madrasa education at *Taqwiyyatul Islam Alia Madrasa* at ***Nilambazar***, he proceeded towards UP and got admitted at Rampur Oriental College (Rampur Madrasa). After completing his studies there, he got admitted at Matla'ul Uloom for the study of Hadith. In 1928, he returned home. In 1939, he shifted his residence to Muradpur, a village situated at 4 Kms. Westwards from Asimganj on the bank of the river Longai. Moulana Sajidul Haqq joined the Asimia Senior Madrasa and served as teacher till 1971. He was an excellent teacher, especially in teaching 'Sarf' (Grammar and Etymology). His students all over Assam, remember him with full respect. He contributed a lot to the Arabic literature. He compiled all his writings and compositions in a hand note and entitled it as "Noorul Madamin" that includes 6 Qasidas, 68 Essays, 24 Letters, 23 Biographies, 10 Questions and Answers (Fatwa) and three welcome addresses.

2. ***Moulana Tayyibur Rahman Barbhuiya (1931---):*** Born and brought up at *Rangauti*, a suburban of Hailakandi district headquarters town. He studied at Hailakandi Senior Madrasa and passed the **Assam Madrasa Intermediate** and **Madrasa Final** Examinations in 1953 and 1955 respectively, securing the First Position in both the examinations. Then he studied 'Sihah Sittah' at the famous *Deorail Title Madrasa*, Badarpur and passed the examination for the degree of **M.M** in 1st class securing 1st position in 1957 under the State Madrassa Education Board, Assam. He had been a teacher and then the Superintendent of Hailakandi Senior Madrasa till 1995. During that

time, he absorbed himself, in addition to his teaching duties, in delivering lectures in different institutions at different occasions and in writing. Among his 13 books, three are in Arabic. The first one is "*Tarikhul Uloomil Arabiyyah*" in which he described the origin and development of the Arabic language with special mention of different sections of the pagan Arabs. He, then, mentioned all about the literary development of Arabic up to the Umayyad period. His second work in Arabic is "*At-Tahqiqatul Mufidah*". It includes six important and sensitive theological problems and their solutions on the basis of the holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. These problems were the subject matters of famous "***Munazarah-e-Jalalpur***" where he had participated from the progressive Hanafite Deobandi point of view. His third contribution in Arabic is "*Nukhbatul Adab*" in two volumes. The first volume has been adopted in the syllabus of Sr. 1st year class of Senior Madrasas of Assam. It includes 18 stories and 20 poems of his own. The second volume is designed for the Sr. 2nd year class which is yet to be published. At present, he is *Ameer-e-Shariat* of North East India, a member of the *Muslim Personal Law Board* and an Associate Member of the "*All India Fiqh Academy*".

b) Other Institutions: In this work, other institutions mean the secular institutions. These are of three kinds as follows:

i) Schools

ii) Colleges.

iii) Universities.

During the period beginning with the country's independence up to the end of the last century, it is found that a tremendous change took place in the field of education. Schools, colleges and universities began to be established in different parts of the state. In major towns, the state government established Govt. High or Higher Secondary Schools, while in rural areas, the people irrespective of their religious and caste identities came forward to establish schools which were recognized by the government.

For easy understanding of the condition of teaching and learning of Arabic in schools, colleges and universities, the discussions are made in the following heads: (i) Schools, (ii) colleges and (iii) universities.

i) **Schools:** In school curriculum it is found that there are four stages exist, i.e. Primary, Middle, Secondary and Higher Secondary. A simultaneous schooling system for Muslim education continues which was promoted in British period, i.e. Maktabs, ME. Madrasas and High Madrasas in primary, middle and secondary levels respectively. This system was not promoted up to Intermediate and Under Graduate levels where Arabic would have been a compulsory subject. Rather, the learners are entitled to take Arabic as an optional subject from among the subjects of optional category.

Arabic remained as the Elective subject in High School level as it was earlier in colonial period. In High Madrasa, Arabic remained as the compulsory subject. In 1964, the Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) came into existence to formulate the syllabi of school

education and to conduct the High School Leaving Certificate Examination (Formerly Entrance Examination). However, the High Madrasas were brought under the control of the SEBA in 1967. Earlier, the Assam High Madrasa Examination had been conducted by the State Madrasa Education Board and the course and curriculum also were formulated by the same Board.

In M.V. and M.E. schools, Arabic remained as an optional subject, while in M.E. Madrasas, Arabic remained as the compulsory subject. Though Arabic is optional in M.V. and M.E. schools, yet provision is not available in all the schools of these two types. In primary level, some Maktabs, which in British period served as the primary educational institutions with moderate Islamic character, were treated as the alternative L.P. schools. But at present, Arabic is wiped up from the Maktabs and these Maktabs are now-a-days no longer bearing the character of Muslim institutions; rather, they became primary schools wherein like L.P. schools, there is no scope of studying Arabic.

Arabic was also introduced as an optional subject in Arts stream in Pre-Degree level in colleges under Gauhati University, as it was earlier in colonial period and continued up to 1984. The scope of studying Arabic was also available in Higher Secondary schools which was conducted by SEBA. In 1984, Pre-Degree classes were abolished from the university curriculum and all the Pre-Degree classes in colleges and Higher Secondary schools came under the control of newly established Assam Higher Secondary Education Council. From 1985 onwards, the above mentioned council formulates the syllabus of

Arabic along with other subjects. In this +2 level under 10+2 pattern, Arabic is found to be containing literary pieces from all periods of Arabic literature maintaining the sequence of development.

ii) **Colleges:** In case of Under-Graduate studies in Arabic, Assam occupied a prominent place. Up to the end of the last century, there were as many 30 colleges offering Arabic major (Hons) and general (Pass) courses out of 191 deficit colleges in the state. However, through a personal survey, it is found that about forty numbers of recognized or permitted colleges have provided the scope of Arabic subject in their UG classes.

iii) **Universities:** The Gauhati University (Estd. In 1948) introduced Post Graduate course in Arabic in 1969. It provides the Research Studies for offering the Degrees of M.Phil. and Ph.D. also. The Assam University (A Central University, established in 1994 at Silchar) introduced Post Graduate studies in Arabic in 1997. This university also provides facilities of research studies in the fields of Arabic linguistic and literary development. The Cotton College, Guwahati has introduced PG classes in Arabic under Gauhati University, in 1992, as it has become a full fledged PG College.

The scope of teaching and learning of Arabic in secular institutions of various levels in Assam in post-colonial period may be shown through the following charts.

A. Primary Level

1.	Lower Primary Schools:	No scope of Arabic studies.
2.	Maktabs:	No scope of Arabic studies.

B. Middle School Level.

1.	Middle Vernacular Schools:	Arabic is provided to be taught as an Optional Subject
2.	Middle English schools:	Arabic is provided to be taught as an Optional Subject.
3.	Middle English Madrasas:	Arabic is taught as a compulsory subject.
4.	Middle Madrasas:	Arabic is taught as a compulsory subject.

Though the provisions of studying Arabic are there in category No. 1 and 2 above, yet the scope is available in a few schools countable in fingers. Again, the Middle Madrasas and the Middle English Madrasas were brought into a single category in the last quarter of the 20th century and are designed as Middle English Madrasas.

C. Secondary Level

1.	High Schools:	Arabic is taught as an optional subject (Elective/ Additional) of 100 marks in every class.

2.	High Madrasas:	Arabic is taught as a compulsory subject divided into one and a half papers of a total 150 marks in each class.

D. Higher Secondary Level

1.	Higher Secondary Schools:	Arabic is provided to be taught as an optional subject.
2.	Pre-University (Arts) classes in Colleges under Gauhati University:	Arabic was provided to be taught as an optional subject up to 1984.[84]

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End Notes:

1. Siddiqi, Prof. M. Akhtar; **Empowerment of Muslims Through Education**. Pp. 177-8.
2. Desai, Ziyauddin A.; **Centres of Islamic Learning in India**. P-49.
3. Siddiqi, Prof. M. Akhtar; **Empowerment of Muslims Through Education**. Pp. 191-2.
4. **Ibid**. p. 192. cf. Wahidi, Rashid Ali. Religious Education from Past to Present. (Urdu), New Delhi, Talimi wa Milli Conference, 1980. P-10.
5. **Ibid.** p-193. Also see V.P.Khonalker. **Elementary Education in India. A period of Expansion(1800-1921)**, The Indian Year Book of Education-1964, New Delhi, N.C. E. R. T. 1964, pp.5-20.
6. **Ibid.** pp. 194- 5.
7. Acharyya, N. N.; **A Brief History of Assam**. P- 210.
8. Rahman, Fazlur; **Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush**. (Bengali) P-93.
9. Acharyya, N. N.; **A Brief History of Assam**. P-89.
10. Desai, Ziyauddin A.; **Centres of Islamic Learning in India.** P- 5.
11. **Ibid**. p-9.
12. Srivastava, S. P.; **Social Life under the Great Mughals**. P-110.
13. **Field Survey**: I visited the *Cheraghia Qaumia Alia Madrasa* and **Moulana Mahmud** of Salehpur. I asked him to narrate what he knows about the initial condition of Maktab education in Karimganj sub-division. He narrated referring his learned father who died at the age of over hundred years. He described in detail as it is mentioned in the content. The interview took place on 16th June, 2006.
14. **Field Survey**: A hand written copy of Maktab Syllabus of 17th century adopted by Phoolbari Madrasa is found and observed which has been preserved in *Faiz-e-Aam Madrasa* at Kanakpur in Karimganj district.
15. Rahman, Fazlur; **Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush** (Beng.). p-153.
16. **Field Survey**: During the visit to the Cheraghia Qaumia Alia Madrasa, I collected the information from Moulana Shamsuddin, Muhtamim of the Madrasa.
17. Azraf, Dewan Muhammad; **Sylhete Islam** (Bengali). p-110.
18. Rahman, Fazlur; **Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush** (Beng.), p-151.
19. **Ibid.**
20. **Ibid.**
21. **Ibid**. p-152.
22. Desai, Ziyauddin A; **Centres of Islamic Learning in India**, p-9.
23. Rahman, Fazlur: **Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush** (Bengali). pp- 152-4.
24. Purkayastha, B.B.; **Srihatter Sreshta Santanera** (Beng.), Calcutta-1998. p-20.
25. Chakrabarty, Archana: **History of Education in Assam**, p-47.
26. Deptt. Profiles.

27. Rahman, Fazlur; **Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush** (Beng.), p-153.
28. **Field Survey**: I visited the Kanakpur Faiz-e-Aam Madrasa and collected these informations from the present Head Moulana.
29. **Field Survey:** I visited the ***Ashraful Uloom Ratanpur Madrasa*** and met Moulana Ziyauddin, the present Shaikhul Hadith. He narrated all these informations by consulting the scatteredly kept records and documents.
30. Aslam, Ejaz Ahmad; **Madrasas—Are They Serving the Society?** (Editorial), the Radiance Views Weekly, Vol. XL No. 24. October 30- Nov.5, 2005, p-5.
31. Ibid.
32. Desai, Ziyauddin A; **Centres of Islamic Learning in India**, p-19.
33. Siddiqi, Prof. M Akhtar; **Contributions of Madrasas in Historical Perspective** (Article), published in the ***Radiance Views Weekly***, Vol. XL No. 24. October 30- Nov. 5, p-35.
34. **Field Survey**: I visited the **Madinatul Uloom Baghbari Madrasa** and met *Prof. Shakir Husain Choudhury*, a great grandson of late Moulana Najib Ali, the founder of the Madrasa. He narrated the information indicating all evidences that are related with the Madrasa.
35. Mazumdar, Prof.A.H; **Madrasa Education in Barak Valley** (Article) Published in 'Neda-e-Deen', Vol XXVII No. 12, September-2006, p-26. (I also visited the Madrasa. Moulana Sharifuddin Laskar,Head Moulana narrated the information that tally with that of Prof. Mazumdar. The visit took place on 20th June, 2006.)
36. **Field Survey**: I met Prof. Shakir Husain Choudhury and collected the report from him.
37. Muhtamim, Madinatul Uloom, Baghbari, **'Baghbari Madrasar Itibritya'** (Beng.) pp. 3- 6.
38. **Field survey**: I visited Purahuria Senior Madrasa and met its Superintendent Moulana Najmuddin on 28th June,2005. He directed me to one Abdus Salam Choudhury, the grandson of late Moulana Firoz Ali Choudhury who was the founder of this Madrasa. Moulana Firoz Ali Chy. Studied at Rampur Alia Madrasa and came back home and started this Madrasa. This report is Also Supported by other learned persons of the locality, such as Janab Abdul Malik Chy., Janab Abul Lais Chy. and others.
39. **Field Survey**: I met the Head Moulana, Cheraghia Alia Madrasa and collected this report from him on 29th June, 2005.
40. **Field Survey**: I interviewed Moulana Abu Muhammad Abdun Noor, the Retd. Superintendent of Karimganj High Madrasa. He is one of the senior most residents of the village Bakharshal. He was a pupil of Madrasa-e-Nasiria as narrated by him. He informed all these things.
41. **Field Survey**: I visited the Madrasa. I interacted with the Zamindar family members. Ghulam Neki Choudhury, an ex-member of the Zilla Parishad, is the President of the Madrasa Managing Committee. He informed about all the matters related to the Madrasa.
42. **Field Survey**: I visited the Madrasa on 6th July, 2005. I collected the facts from the Head Moulana, Abdul Khaliq, who is happened to be a local scholar and also a descendent of the

founder of this Madrasa. Some receipts books were found where the year of establishment is mentioned.

43. Usman, Abu Muhammad; **"Asimia Senior Madrasar Itibritya"** (Bengali), an article published in 'Al-Ittihad', a yearly magazine published in 2006. Pp-

44. **Field Survey**: When I visited the Madrasa, I met Md. Ajir uddin, the Superintendent in-Charge, who had also been the Secretary of the Madrasa Teachers Association several times. He gave me all information regarding the recognition of the Madrasa and other relevant matters.

45. Muhtamim. 'Darul Uloom, Banshkandi' (Bengali), a documentary book, preserved in the Madrasa. Pp. 4-9.

46. **Field Survey**: I visited the Madrasa and met Moulana Abdul Bari (Also known as Abdul Bari Shaikh Sahib). He kindly narrated all relevant things that have been discussed in the content.

47. **Field Survey:** I visited Moulana Shafiqur Rahman, the present Superintendent, on 24th July. He narrated al the facts about the Madrasa.

48. Raghibi, Moulana Abdul Jalil; **Mashahir Ulama Awr Mashaikh-e-Assam** (Urdu).pp. 6-10.

49. Ahmad, K. Zaman; **'Smaranika'** (Asamese). Pp. 1-5.

50. **Field Survey**: I visited the Madrasa and met the present Superitendent, Moulana Shafiqur Rahman Pradhani on 16th June,2006. He narrated all the things that are discussed in the content. I also met Moulana Abdul Khaliq of Ganshamerchawk, who had also been a teacher in the Madrasa for long fifteen years. He justified the contents.

51. Raghibi, Moulana Abdul Jalil; **Mashahir Ulama Awr Mashaikh-e-Assam** (Urdu). Pp. 73-4.

52. **Ibid.** p- 74.

53. **Field Survey**: I visited the Madrasa on 13th July, 2006, and met the present Head Moulana. He informed me about all these matters.

54. **Field Survey**: I visited Bhanga Sharif Markazul Uloom Madrasa on 23rd July, 2006. Master Riazuddin, the member cum Convenor of the Managing Committee of the Madrasa informed all the matters showing some preserved documents.

55. Shastri Pandit Shivnath. A History of the Renaissance in Bengal. p-49.

56. Desai Ziyauddin A. Centres of Islamic Learning in India. P-49.

57. Azraf Dewan Muhammad. Sylhete Islam (Beng.). p-110.

58. Ibid. p-125.

59. Rahman Fazlur. Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush (Beng.). p-153.

60. Usman Abu Muhammad. "Asimia Senior Madrasar Sankipta Itibritya" an article (Beng.) published in 'Al-Ittihad' a yearly magazine of Asimia Sr. Madrasa, published in 2006.

61. **Field Survey**: I visited the Deorail Title Madrasa on 2nd July, 2006 and got the information from the Principal of the Madrasa, Moulana Yusuf Ali.
62. Choudhury Moulana Fariduddin Ahmad. "Hazrat Shekher Pranprya Pratistan Al-Jamia", a Bengali article published in 'Aan-Nadwa', a souvenir.
63. Azraf Dewan Muhammad. Sylhete Islam (Beng.). p-132.
64. Rahman Fazlur. Sylheter Mati Sylheter Manush (Beng.). p-265.
65. Ibid. p-264.
66. Azraf Dewan Muhammad. Sylhete Islam (Beng.). p-133.
67. Wakil Dr. Abdul. Unish Shataker Bangali Mussalmaner Chinta Chetonar Dhara (Beng.). p-132.
68. Luqman A.H. Ed. Shaikhul Hadith Hazrat Moulana Ahmad Ali (R) p-14.
69. **Field Survey:** A relevant certificate issued by Sri Rathindra Nath Sen the Deputy Speaker of Assam Legislative Assembly on 16th June, 1973 is observed and other documents that support the fact.
70. **Field Survey:** I visited Jamia Islamia Jalalia,Hojai on 20th June, 2007 and collected the relevant information from Moulana Abdus Subhan, the Head Moulana of the Madrasa. I also visited Moulana Abdul Jalil Raghibi who had been a teacher in the Madrasa in 70s and 80s. He also gave the same report.
71. **Field Survey:** I visited the Darul Uloom, Guwahati, Garhigaon on 21st June, 2007 and met the Muhtamim, Moulana Khalid Ahmad. He informed al the facts as he had collected from his father late Moulana Abdul Haqq, the founder Muhtamim of the Madrasa.
72. **Field Survey:** I visited Mirabari Jamiul Uloom Furqania Madrasa and met its Muhtamim Moulana Syed Abdun Noor. He informed showing all the relevant documents and records.
73. **Field Survey:** I met Moulana Abdur Rashid Qasmi, the General Secretary of Assam State Jamiat Ulama, and collected the whole Information of the organization's past activities.
74. **Field Survey:** I interviewed Moulana Abdul Qadir Qasmi, the General Secretary of the All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qaumia about the formation of the Tanzim and its functioning.
75. Qasmi Moulana Abdul Qadir. Tanzim's Annual Report. Ed.p-6
76. **Field Survey:** I collected the Edara sylabus and the Madrasa List from the Muhtamim Moulana Syed Abdun Noor.
77. Acharyya N.N. **A Brief History of Assam.** p- Also see 'Karimganj 1976 totha 20 dofa Kormoshuchi (Beng.) Ed. By Haran Dey. P-
78. Field Survey: I collected the Result Sheets compiled by the Madrasa Authority and got the information that are discussed in the content.
79. Govt. of Assam. Assam Educatin Department----Rules and orders. Vol. I. Revised edition. 1955. pp-96-103.
80. Govt. of Assam. Small Committee for Madrasa Education, Shillong. P-1.
81. Secretary, State Madrasa Board, Assam. Reorganised Senior Madrasa Curriculum, Course and Sylabus-1979. p 6-78.

82 Desai Ziyauddin A. Centres of Islamic Learning in India.p-14. Here a description of the famous Dars-e-Nizami is given. It was prepared by Mulla Nizamuddin of Sihal, who died in 1748. He was a great scholar and the ancestor of the famous Firingi Mahal family of religious scholars and divines of Lucknow. This syllabus was almost universally introduced in the Madrasas throughout the country.

83. Field survey: I visited Al-Jamiatul Arabiyyatul Islamia and observed the Recognition order from the Principal on 16th August, 2007.

84. Field Survey: I collected this report from the office of the Principal, Karimganj College on 4th August, 2007.

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