

**Japan and Haiderabad:
Sir Sayed Ross Mas'ood's Visit to Japan and its Impact on the Educational System
of Haiderabad State in British India**

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The contacts between Japan and the South Asia on scholarly and intellectual bases can be traced in the beginning of the 20th century, though trade links between them had been in place since long and continued on the constant rise. The travel accounts, written by those who visited Japan for recreation, tourism or stopover, have presented the nature of such contacts as they contain valuable information in this context. It can be seen especially from the travel accounts that recorded at the end of the 19th century by the people of South Asia travelled to the Far East and Japan for sightseeing and tourism. A good example of such travelogues is *Museer-e Hamidi*,¹ written by Nawab Hamid Ali Khan (1875-1930),² the then Crown Prince of a Muslim Princely State Rampur³ in British India.

Later on, some other travelers, too, penned such travel accounts which appeared or published in the 20th century. It was through these travelogues that the knowledge about Japan's history, civilization and culture reached the common people of South Asia that resulted in an increase of their interest in Japan and its people. Japan's victory in the Russia-Japan war in 1905 was a pleasant surprise and delight for the people of South Asia as they had been a victim of the Western or European colonialism themselves and were boiling with the sentiments against Europe and the West. Japan's victory against Russia was a lesson in courage and self confidence for the people not only of the whole East but for the people of South Asia in particular. In those days, in the same year, 1905, the publication of a book in Urdu *Jang-e Roos wo Japan*⁴ by a leading Muslim politician, a popular Journalist and a renowned poet Zafar Ali Khan (1873-1956) on Russia-Japan war only increased greatly the feelings of the people of the South Asia against colonialism. Immediately after that in 1907,

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1 This travelogue was published in two volumes by Matb'e Mufeed-e Aam, Agra, in 1896.

2 Son of Nawab Mushtaq Ali Khan (1887-1889) became the ruler after his father's demise and took charge of the state in 1896. Being a ruler of his State he participated in Indian Government's administrative responsibilities and represented Muslims in their nationalist matters.

3 North India's prominent princely State founded in the early 18th century and held the status as one of the representative Muslim States till its annexation with the Indian Union in 1949. It remained loyal to The British Indian Government. Its ruler Nawab Yousuf Ali Khan (1855-1865) favoured British rule during War of Independence of 1857. His son Nawab Kalb e Ali Khan (1865-1887) followed his father and joined The Indian Council.

4 This was written as a stage drama, consist of 4 acts and 39 scenes, and first published in 4 parts in monthly *Deccan Review*, 9, 10, 11, 12 (1905) and later as a book in the same year in Haiderabad, but became so popular that its second (actually third) edition appeared in Lahore in 1914.

the launching of an effective *Sawdeshi Movement* or the Indigenous Movement in India, a movement for the boycott of the British goods, can also be viewed as one of the results of Japan's victory against Russia, and a silent and peaceful 'war' against British colonial power by the unarmed people of India.

South Asia, especially India at that time was under the affection of nationalist movements. The nationalist leaders with their radical and revolutionary thoughts were active in their different strategies and tactics to organize and stir up their people against British Government. It was a common analysis of almost all educated and well-versed leaders that the nation could not get independence unless it will not gain national consciousness and awareness which can only be possible by getting education. Beside this approach, they were confirmed that the only education is needed that covers its own requirements at large. At this stage when Japan defeated Russia and became a centre point for depressed nations and appeared as a symbol of national progress that how it achieved such a great goal of prosperity with in a few years after Meiji Restoration (1868) When they looked for the reasons of this remarkable achievement and found education as most influential and effective, they thought of such kind of educational progress and the Japanese educational system. At that time Vivekanand (1863–1902), Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866–1915) were prominent and effective political leaders who preferably considered Japanese educational system suitable and fruitful for their nation and started advocating for that. M.K.Gandhi (1869–1948) also appreciated Japanese educational system but Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) went further when he visited Japan several times observed its educational institutions and talked with Japanese educationists and inspected specially women's educational set ups, tried to include Japanese *Judo* games and *Ikebana* in the courses of his own established *Vishua Bharati* in Bengal.⁵

Besides these leaders, Muslim leaders as well, who had been always keeping themselves in front line and more prominent in the political history of British India, also considered

5 Prof. Hironaka Kazuhiko has dealt with this subject in his highly informative studies, like:

a) "International Educational Partnership: India-Japan," in *Comparative Education*.21.; Fukuoka, 1995.

b) "Indian National Education Campaign and Japanese Education," in *So-Sui*. 4.; Fukuoka, 2003.

c) "Birth of a Girls' College in India: India Japan Partnership in Education," in *Bulletine of the National Institute for Educational Research*. 121.; Tokyo, 1992.

In these articles Prof. Hironaka has discussed the thoughts and opinions of Vivekanand, Lajpat Rai, Gokhale and some Indian educationists and appreciated Tagore's interests and efforts. According to his research Bengal's Bhudev Mukhopadhyay (1827–1894) was first person who took interest in Japanese education system and applauded this concept of Meiji Restoration that in education there should be 'mind of West and Soul of Japan' which we, Indians, should accept and adopt in our education system (2003, pp. 18, 31n). After him, Dhondo Keshav Karve (1858–1962) was first Indian who read an article: *Japan's Womens' University, its Past, Present and Future*, published in 1912 in University's brochure both in English and Japanese, sent to him by one of his friends from Tokyo in 1915. Reading this article about this university, founded in 1901 in Tokyo, Karve was so impressed that he himself established a *Indian Womens' University* in Pune in 1916 and later in Mumbay which is still running under the present name: *Shrimati Nathi Bai Damodar Thakersay*. Later, Karve visited Japan in 1930 (2003, p. 23.).

education alone a basic tool for reforming, betterment and awareness of their nation. These leaders, either modernists, like Sayed Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) and Nawab Sayed Abd al Latif (1828–1893), or traditionalist (*ulama*), they all, with their own point of views and thoughts, had been active in establishing and organizing educational institutions of their interests. They were aware of Japanese progress and cultural significance and they had applauded too but the idea of getting benefit from its educational system was not clearly apparent until Sayed Ross Mas'ood (1889–1937), the grand son of Sayed Ahmad Khan and an off-shoot of his educational movement, specifically not only took deep and constant interest in Japan's impressive progress in general and in its educational system in particular, but when he luckily got a chance to observe closely its educational system, he applied and executed successfully in his jurisdiction at a great extent.

Apart from political and national leaders, as early as in the beginning of the 20th century, Japan had gained the reputation among the common educated people of South Asia as a courageous, civilized, developed and a model country. The urge to acquire knowledge about Japan's history and culture, therefore, became quite common amongst the educated people of South Asia and resulted in appearance of a number of books on a variety of subjects with reference to Japan were either translated or written. The newspapers and magazines began publishing articles, features and poems presenting Japan's victory in War and economics and soon the significance of education in Japan and its educational system was perceived as exemplary and fit to be considered as a role model. The efforts to improve the educational system in *Mumlikat e Asifiya* (Hyderabad State)⁶ by benefiting from Japan's experience in the field of education especially Sir Sayed Ross Mas'ood (1889-1937)'s interest in the promotion of Haiderabad's education and its quality and prominence is the topic of this study.

Sayed Ross Mas'ood, *knighted* by the British Government in 1932, was an eminent intellectual, administrator and educationist. He was the grandson of Sayed Ahmed Khan (1817–1898), the most influential and active Muslim reformer, intellectual and statesman of modern India. Sir Ross Mas'ood received his early education and training in an atmosphere created by his grandfather's influential reform and educational movement, known as *Aligarh Movement*, and under the supervision of its prominent leaders. He had his early schooling at Aligarh, the nerve-centre of the *Movement*, and then proceeded to England for further and higher education. In 1910, he got his B.A. (Honours) from Oxford and, in 1912, completed his *Bar at Law* from London, taking full advantage of the opportunity to be benefited from the British

⁶ *Mumlikat e Asifiya, Haiderabad* was an independent dominion State established in the fourth decade of the 18th century, during an era when the powers of the Mughal dynasty were waning. Known as the *Mumlikat-e Asifiya*, it remained a developed and stable princely state, both economically and administratively, till 1948 when it was forcibly annexed with India by the military action. The Haiderabad State maintained its friendly ties with the British colonial government and took commendable steps towards maintaining law and order, public welfare and general economic well-being of its subjects.

educational system and the British culture, excelling both at education and sports.

After returning to India, he established his law practice, only to abandon it and to join *Indian Educational Service*. From 1913, he remained engaged with imparting the education in India's North Eastern regions of Bihar and Orissa. His reputation as an extremely able and highly intelligent educationist reached Haiderabad State where, during the reign of the State ruler Mir Usman Ali Khan (1911–1948), the administrative, economic and educational reforms had become a high priority. The Haiderabad Government requested the Government of India for a deputation of Sayed Ross Mas'ood's services and he was appointed there as Director of Public Instruction. As soon as assuming the charge, Ross Mas'ood infused the new spirit into the educational system with his hard work and sincere devotion. He introduced new reforms in educational system, reactivated and reorganized the education department and established a considerable number of new schools in the State. His efforts not only resulted in an increase in literacy rate and its standard in Haiderabad but also changed its educational system and curricula in a positive way.

Ross Mas'ood was among the intellectuals who stressed the basic education and enthusiastically favoured the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. As a result of his efforts, the basic education was made free in the State in 1921. He wanted it to be compulsory as well but the announcement to the effect could not be possible during his tenure there. His enthusiasm and determination for adopting mother tongue as a medium of instruction was so great that he chalked out a plan even up to the higher education in all subjects were to be imparted in the mother tongue. At that time, just like these days, the Urdu language was a *lingua franca* and a widely spoken language in the entire South Asia. So, when *Jami'a-e Usmania* (Usmania University) the first university of this kind in the whole South Asia was established in 1918, Urdu was declared the medium of instruction for its all levels and faculties and when Ross Mas'ood joined the assignments in Education Department and Government of Haiderabad, he became, as he had been initiated in its establishing, natural choice to be headed *Jami'a-e Usmania* in making policies for its commencement.

As Ross Mas'ood's greater emphasis was on the basic education and all his plans were fully backed by the State, when he took steps to improve the system of basic education and promote the teaching in mother tongue, the State decided to support and strengthen those measures. In this context it was decided to send Ross Mas'ood to Japan so that he would be able to observe for himself the economic and educational progress that Japan had achieved and to evaluate the impact of education on the overall progress and development of the nation. The entire expenses of the journey were borne by the Government of Hyderabad.

He left for Japan on March 9, 1922. During his stay in Japan, he especially observed and evaluated Japan's educational system and recorded in his journal his impressions and the details of his activities and engagements, in the English language, under the title *Travels in*

Japan. The journal was published in 1968, a long time indeed after its penning, in Karachi.⁷ Besides the journal, he wrote a detailed report in English, soon translated by Inayatullah Dehlavi in Urdu under the title of *Japan Aur us ka Ta'leemi Nazm wo Nasaq* (Japan and its educational system) was published in 1924 by Anjuman Taraqqi-e Urdu, Aorangabad.

Ross Mas'ood had a remarkable interest in Japan. He was deeply impressed by the Japanese, their culture and their nature and progress. Though he had lived and was educated in Europe, he appreciated Japanese culture and civilization and its educational system so much that when he had to select an education model to follow he decided in favour of Japan. Aside from this official tour, when he had another chance to travel he visited Japan again on his own expenses. For him Japan was, as he used to call it *The Asia's horizon of hope*.⁸ His writings on Japan, one finds, are over-flowing with eulogizing words and laudatory expressions about Japan, its culture, its people and their way of life.

The purpose of visiting Japan, as mentioned by Ross Mas'ood himself, was:

1-To observe what difficulties Japanese had to face in giving technical and scientific education in the Japanese language, as Japan had translated various technical and scientific books into Japanese language during the last century. And also to look into the ways and means they adopted to surmount those difficulties.

2-To study Japan's current strategy and the tactics to find a way out in such problems.

3-To look out the ways and means adopted by the Japanese Education Department to promote and develop trade, agriculture and industry through basic education.

4-To conceive the planning and efforts made by the Japanese nation to keep its educational characteristics intact despite having adopted the western educational methods, the western sciences and the branches of knowledge developed in the West.

5-To evaluate the scale and depth of the help provided to the nation by establishing the industrial and educational institutions.

These were the basic objectives that Ross Mas'ood carried in mind while visiting

⁷ This Diary was edited by Jaleel Qidvai and was first published in Karachi by Ross Mas'ood Education and Culture Society of Pakistan.

⁸ *Urdu* (Aorangabad, October, 1937), *Special Issue on Sir Ross Mas'ood*, pp. 823–824.

Japan. During his stay there, he tried to find out the answers to these queries by meeting and interviewing the concerned officials and personalities and inspecting the relevant institutions. In addition to his report on Japan's educational system, his observations, feelings and engagements can be seen in his book *Japan ka ta'leemi Nazm wo Nasaq* mentioned above. Besides his observations, his activities, his contacts and his feelings can be seen in his *Diary Travels in Japan* and in his another book *Rooh e Japan*. The latter one is a different and very impressive book consists of emotions, feelings and impressions of Ross Mas'ood who summarized these all in this small book about Japan and Japanese.⁹

Ross Mas'ood wrote his report, containing his observations and suggestions, in English as directed officially and then submitted it to the Government of Haiderabad. Moulvi Inayatullah Dehlvi, a renowned translator engaged in *Jami'a Usmania's Bureau of Translations*, rendered the report into Urdu and it was published under the title *Japan aur us ka Ta'leemi Nazm wo Nasaq*. It was a voluminous report, actually a monograph, and the translated version consisted of 24 pages in 482 pages. Aside from Japan's educational system, the text elaborates on a number of issues and topics that include Japan's geographical location, its people and their interests, their religions, the Japanese language, specifications of educational system, interest in western knowledge, the structure of education department, educational management, female education, female educational institutions, house hold sciences, universities, schools, teaching profession, schools for disabled, technical education and other related topics.

The report shows that Mas'ood had been extremely busy during his three and a half month stay in Japan. He spent most of his time in the education department collecting information and data, visiting educational institutions and meeting concerned officials. Whatever spare time he had after this busy schedule, he spent it on trying to comprehend the Japanese culture and society and to understand the nature of the Japanese people. He studied the Japanese history and civilization as well to understand the Japanese culture and environment.

Though Mas'ood was very fond of Japan, its people and culture and he travelled to Japan on two occasions, with his second journey being purely personal and for excursion, his experience of sailing on a Japanese ship *Wakasa Maru* from Bombay¹⁰ and looking the Japanese people for the very first time on board was not too pleasant for him. He writes: "*when I saw the Japanese men and women there for the first time, they did not fascinate me.*"

⁹ This book is a translation of his lecture he delivered in a gathering of *Teachers' Association of Haiderabad* on 24th June, 1926, on the occasion of a farewell reception in his honour at his relieving from the services in the Education Department of Haiderabad State. *Rooh e Japan* was in 1345 A.H. at official press Matba e Sarkar e A'li. It was translated in Urdu by one of his subordinate and a renowned poet and author Azmatullah Khan. Sayed Ali Akbar, Ross "Mas'ood aor un ki ta'limi Khidmat," in *Sh'la e Musta'jal*, ed. by Jaleel Qidvai (Karachi, 1982), p. 34.

¹⁰ March 12, 1922, Sunday.

Even the way Japanese women walked was quite different from what I had imagined. Neither could I see any grace in their mannerism.” Later on, however, his style is a bit more careful and he writes: *“maybe people living in Japan are better than these people”*.¹¹ Then he writes: *“I was dismayed to see the ugliness of Yokohama city and thought it could not be ignored. I was disappointed to see the European architecture aped by the Japanese. The use of red bricks with cement was horrible to watch. Moreover, the items displayed in the shops gave the impression that the Japanese had no sense of proportion and symmetry, which is a must for beauty”*.¹²

However, as we go on reading his journal we feel that his perception about Japanese is gradually changing to a favourable opinion and then very soon we see him appreciating and eulogizing Japanese at every level and in every walk of life. The more contacts he makes with the Japanese his feelings become more positive and the less biased. Much earlier than his return from Japan, Ross Mas’ood can be seen praising Japanese style of living, culture and beauty. He ostensibly refutes his previously held wrong impressions and admits that *“undoubtedly there are no artists in the world as good as Japanese. After seeing Kyoto and whatever the artists from there create, there is a total revolution in my thoughts about Japanese art and artists. They are great artists but it is not befitting for them to imitate the western architecture or other western arts”*.¹³

Ross Mas’ood’s travelogue (Journal), his experience of Japanese society and observation of Japan’s educational system are testimony to the contention that no development is possible without depending on a language that is indigenous and one’s own. He so much believed in the correctness of his conclusions regarding teaching in the mother tongue that he, with a view to render technical terminology and scientific material into Urdu, compiled with the help of a Japanese friend a brief vocabulary of Japanese-English technical terms while he was still in Japan.¹⁴

His travel account (Diary) begins at Bombay on March 12, 1922, with his boarding on the ship for Japan and ends, while still incomplete, with the entries of July 13, 1922.¹⁵ It contains some appendices at the end that give the details of Mas’ood’s meetings and interviews with different people, along with the details about the questions and answers. It also contains notes on the usage of technical terms in Japan and introductory write-ups on

11 *Travels in Japan* (referred to as TJ henceforth), p. 9.

12 *TJ*, p. 22.

13 *TJ*, Introduction, p. 22.

14 *Ibid*, pp. 121–122. The glossary is appended at the back of Ross Mas’ood’s Urdu book *Japan aur us a Ta’leemi Nazm-o-Nasaq*.

15 *Ibid*, pp. 85–86; This Diary was, among other scattered and unpublished personal papers of Ross Mas’ood, in the possession of his daughter Nadira in Karachi. Edited by Jaleel Qidvai, it was published by Ross Mas’ood Education and Culture Society of Pakistan, Karachi. Unfinished, it would have been far more helpfull and informative had it been completed.

Kyoto's Imperial University and Tokyo's *Keio* and *Waseda* Universities. Other appendices deal with the modern technical and industrial education in present Japan and the education and culture in the ancient Japan.

Apart from his journal, Ross Mas'ood's Urdu book *Japan Aur us ka Ta'leemi Nazm-o-Nasaq* is more coherent and comprehensive and gives more details and information about Japan and Japanese culture and society. It not only includes detailed, varied and all-embracing information about Japanese people but also about their history, civilization, culture, politics, society, industry, economy and government and besides such all topics, he dealt with the subjects of education, its system and institutions exclusively.

Ross Mas'ood had a very profound experience of Europe before visiting Japan and keenly observed the Japanese society and its systems during his stay in Japan. His acute observation convinced him that there was a great similarity of habits and temperament between the Japanese nation and the British. The soberness and the reticence, for instance, that the British had very much a part of the Japanese characteristics. He also noticed that the acumen of trade through sea and the ability to surmount the difficulties through valour, toughness and endurance were the traits shared by both the Japanese and the British. He believed, however, that there were two unprecedented qualities that made Japanese unique and different, Firstly, they adore their Emperor; secondly, there had been many attempts by the foreign aggressors to conquer Japan but all of them were defeated and were repelled. Extreme sincerity and sympathy for national cause and unflinchingly good wishes for the country were the most prominent features of the Japanese characteristics and, according to Mas'ood, these were the traits that laid the foundations for Japan's progress and prosperity. He noted that Japanese considered their nation as one family and the Emperor as its head.

In his book, Mas'ood has written detailed chapters on the prominent aspects of Japan's history, its culture and educational system as well as a detailed chapter on the Japanese language. Japan's reliance on its national language for education was so attractive for Mas'ood that he was lured all the way to Japan just to see how a nation can depend solely on its language and how it can achieve progress on the basis of its language. He writes "*The Japanese had understood that their survival lay in increasing the standards of the education and bringing it at par with that of the developed nations. To accomplish that first they coined equivalents in their language for the western technical terms and asked their scholars and academia to do the task.*"¹⁶ He observed that by using their own terminology for scientific and technical terms Japanese relied upon their own language for education and reaped rich benefits from it. In addition to Japanese language, Mas'ood was thoroughly impressed by Japanese educational system and he believed that the biggest positive side of the system was that it created equality amongst the Japanese people. Another quality of the system

16 *Japan aur us ka Ta'leemi Nazm-o-Nasaq*, p. 215.

that impressed him most was that they emphasized the ethical side of the education and believed that the aim of an education ought to be improved the morals, sharpen the wisdom and gain good command over arts and industriousness.¹⁷ To achieve these objectives special educational institutions were established in Japan that imparted knowledge with these aims in mind. Mas'ood visited different kinds of schools and institutions and gathered necessary data and information regarding the system and curricula of such institutions and included them in his book at various places.

The purpose of Mas'ood's visit to Japan was to find out the ways and means to improve the educational system of Haiderabad by examining Japanese system. He summarized the gist of his findings in just three points:

1. A deep veneration for the ruler of the day
2. Patriotism
3. Reliance on the national language

While extracting these points, he was very clear that unlike Japanese the people of Haiderabad were not a homogenous lot. They were of the different races, followed different religions, had different cultures and spoke different languages. Japanese were totally different from the Indians and there were no such differences among them. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the education department, he believed, to prepare an educational system that would take into consideration all the differences and difficulties of the indigenous people and create a harmony, cohesion and shared values that may result in uniformity. He wrote that apparently it seemed impossible but whether it is possible or not, if any success or improvement was required then education alone was the means to achieve it.¹⁸ As the change in the system at such a grand level was not possible without huge funds and official patronage, Mas'ood cites the examples of Great Britain and Germany where, after destruction, preference was given to education and huge amounts of money were spent on education.¹⁹ He says: "Few things so deeply touched my heart as did the donations from the Emperor, which he endowed from his personal coffers for the purpose of education's welfare."²⁰ He thought, therefore, it was a must for the Government of Haiderabad to provide the education department with huge funds or the improvement in education would remain illusive.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 229.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 443–44.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 444–45.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 445. Here Ross Mas'ood has discussed in detail how the Japanese budget was affected due to the participation in the war and the global economic recession and how the Japanese Government allocated more funds for education preferably and gave huge amounts of money to the educational institutions.

1- Deep veneration for the ruler of the day:

In this regard, Mas'ood writes that no chance that may bring the Emperor closer to the students' heart is lost. The Emperor's educational manifesto, dated October 30, 1890, is the foundation on which the entire Japanese moral education is based. It says: "*O my people! You should obey your parents, love your siblings, behave with your spouse, spread your charity to all, acquire knowledge, learn craft, and increase your mental faculties and full fill the moral powers. Furthermore, increase beneficence to the public and promote the common interests. Always be considerate of others and observe the law. If needed, offer your services for your country bravely. Venerate and guard my royal throne which is as old as the sky. In this way you would remain my good and loyal subject and maintain the best traditions of your forefathers*".²¹

Ross Mas'ood wrote that there was no school in Japan without a copy of the Emperor's manifesto. Portraits of the Emperor and the Queen were also hung in every school and these pictures were paid respect as though the Emperor and the Queen were present there in person. Mas'ood further wrote that the education department had compiled rules regarding the pictures and manifesto. These rules directed that in every school on *Kigen Setsu* (birth day of earliest Emperor), *Tencho Setsu* (present Emperor) and the first day of January every year all students and teachers would assemble, recite the national song *kimi gayo*, bow before the pictures of the Emperor and the Queen to pay respect and then the Principal would read out and explain the royal manifesto.²² According to Ross Mas'ood, the constant exposure of students to such rituals impacted them in such a way that they perceived the Emperor and the Queen as life's living forces which would always remain with them and protect them.²³ Keeping in view this instance, Mas'ood had suggested that in Haiderabad, too, all schools should be provided with the portraits of the ruler of the day and the ruler may issue a royal command which must be sent to all schools.

Moreover, the education department must include chapters in the text books of the primary classes describing the noble deeds carried out for the beneficence and welfare of the subjects so that students would understand that they were dear to their rulers.²⁴

2- Patriotism:

Mas'ood had suggested that lessons on the topic of patriotism should be included in the syllabi. In these lessons, he stated, the historical events that took place within the geographical

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 448–449; This tradition was compelled in Japan until the Second World War or the new constitution enforced in 1948. It is, later on, discontinued.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

²⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 450–451.

boundaries of Haiderabad State may be presented in such an interesting manner that they would highlight the greatness and bravery of the indigenous people regardless of their caste, creed or race. These school books could include, he suggested, the biographies and national services of local heroes in an attractive manner.²⁵

3-Reliance on the National language

Whatever Ross Mas'ood observed in Japan made him believe firmly that the real cause of Japan's academic and intellectual progress was the fact that the Japanese language had been the medium of instruction right from the beginning in schools. Whereas in Haiderabad there were several languages in use and it was simply not possible to declare all of them the medium of instruction. Therefore, in the beginning it was decided to declare Urdu as the medium of instruction for the time being. As he had seen for himself in Japan the benefits of getting education in the mother tongue, he stressed the implementation of Urdu as medium of instruction, with describing the additional benefits of Urdu as a binding force between the multi lingual and multi ethnic society of Haiderabad. Since English had long been the medium of instruction in India, Mas'ood especially emphasized the importance of mother tongue and the vernaculars, counting the merits of local languages and demerits of English in this regard.²⁶ Here Mas'ood has given the examples of the indifference and even ignorance that Japanese showed towards the foreign languages. Here he gave special stress on developing and further expanding the *Jami'a Usmania* where Urdu had been declared the medium of instruction and also suggested that there should be a bureau at *Jam'ia* that would prepare useful books for students, or get them translated, and publish.

To spread the education in the state of Haiderabad and to make it more useful, Mas'ood suggested that in the schools situated in the rural areas there should be some arrangement for agricultural training as the majority of the people living in the rural areas of the State were engaged with the agriculture for a living. He suggested that the schools should be provided with the pieces of agricultural land where practical training of agriculture would be imparted. It would, he said, in turn increase the agricultural production and would popularize the agriculture too among the rural population as their children would learn to not only read and write but would also get some useful know-how to become better and efficient farmers. To supply such rural schools with good teachers, Mas'ood's suggestion was to open a faculty of agricultural sciences at the *Jami'a Usmania*.²⁷

Learning from Japanese example, he also floated the idea of introducing the industrial and craft education at the primary level. The newly established faculty of craft and industry

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 451.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 459–462.

was, in his opinion, to provide the schools with the teachers for the relevant subjects.²⁸ His other suggestions advocated the establishment of faculty of education, setting up a college of trade and commerce and sending the government official abroad for training. With all such suggestions, he gave the example of the Japanese model. His suggestions related with the other fields of human activity, too, had Japan as model. He, for instance, suggested organizing the annual industrial exhibitions, awarding the artisans and workmen and introducing their work all over India and abroad, just as was done in Japan.²⁹

His other recommendations included introducing audio-visual means to inculcate awareness among the general public about basic concepts of health and hygiene. To achieve the purpose, he thought, the education department could workout the details in collaboration with the health department and mobile cinemas could be used effectively. Here he again kept the Japanese example before him, saying that the State of Haiderabad could benefit from the Japanese experience.³⁰

These proposals produced good results and the Government, after approving the recommendations, allowed him to take proper steps. The financial support was also increased considerably and the budget of the education department was enhanced from 1.7 million to 6 million. Hence, his efforts increased the number of students at school by three fold. Many large colleges were set up in addition to the establishment of *Jageer Dar* (agricultural) *College*, *Usmania Technical College*, *Teachers' Training College* and *Physical Education College*. Additionally, the adult literacy programme was launched for the first time in the history of the State.³¹

Through out his tenure at Haiderabad, Mas'ood kept before him Japan and its educational system as a model and kept on implementing policies accordingly. In his quest for the excellence in the field of education, and his interest in Japan, he again visited Japan in 1925 on his own and bore all the expenses himself. Till 1926, he kept performing his duties at Haiderabad and left the State in the same year after being nominated *Aligarh Muslim University's* Vice Chancellor. At the time of his departing from the State a farewell reception was given in his honour. Instead of making a formal or relevant speech on the occasion, he gave an extensive lecture on Japan's culture and society³² which later published in Urdu as previously mentioned under the title of *Rooh e Japan*. In this lecture he briefed his emotions,

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 472–73.

29 *Ibid.* p. 473.

30 *Ibid.* p. 481.

31 Syed Ali Akber, "Ross Mas'ood aor un ki Ta'leemi Khidmaat," in *Sho'la-e Musta'jal*, edited by Jaleel Qidvai, Karachi, 1982, pp. 31–33.

32 During the lecture, Ross Mas'ood specially arranged to present the photographs of Japanese natural and cultural scenes and shown the audience through *Soumnatou*, a lantern which can accommodate photographs around the candle that resulted in reflecting the images of the photographs on the screen or wall when it is lighted.

his feelings and his gratitude about Japan and Japanese people. According to his lecture no nation on this earth is equal to Japanese in these 4 qualities:

- (1) Tremendous love with ancestors, a symbol of this love is seen in their love with the Emperor,
- (2) Human characteristic and equality in social position,
- (3) Passions for Nature, and
- (4) A combination of the East and the West.

The services that Ross Mas'ood rendered for the cause of educational development and betterment in the Haiderabad State can be gauged from the practical work done by him. His recommendations, in the shape of his report and his travelogue, and his practical services gave a tremendous boost to the education in Haiderabad. All his services and efforts were a direct result of his studying and implementing the Japanese model. His policy of adopting the vernacular as a medium of instruction at *Jami'a Usmania*, too, was an idea he borrowed from Japan.

It would not be inappropriate if much of Haiderabad State's educational progress during the British era is attributed to the direct or indirect impact of Japan and its educational system as Mas'ood followed the Japanese example and was of the opinion that Japan offered one of the best models in the world. Though the sounds of appreciation of Japan's educational system and a desire for its adaptation among political and national leaders, during the political and social movements for upheaval and independence, heard continuously, to visit Japan more than one time for the specific purpose of observing and experiencing directly its educational system, to collect required information and relevant details, and then to apply them seriously and rigorously could become possible alone by Ross Mas'ood. Otherwise, we know Vivekanand appreciated Japan's educational system³³ and visited Japan in 1892 and several times later but did not go ahead to implement in any way and any where. Same we see with Lajpat Rai who admired it and visited Japan in 1915³⁴ but could not go further. Gandhi also praised Japanese educational system but just remained verbal. Among them all, only Tagore was a little different as, besides appreciation and connections,³⁵ implemented only 2 extra curricular courses in the scheme studies in his established institution *Vishva Bharati*.³⁶

33 He wrote articles on Japan's education system in *The Hindu* in 1897, vide Hironaka, 2003, p.19

34 And wrote his observations and experiences in detail *The Evolution in Japan*, 3 vols, *Ibid*, pp. 31–32

35 Not only travelled many times, he expressed and described his opinion and thoughts relating to Japan and its socio-political characteristic and role in the modern world in various writings. For example:

a) *A Visit to Japan*. New York, 1961.

b) *A message of India to Japan, A lecture delivered at the Imperial University of Tokyo*. Tokyo, 1919.

c) *The Spirit of Japan, A Lecture delivered at Keio Gijuku University, Tokyo*. Tokyo, 1916.

d) *Talks in Japan: A Collection of Addresses Delivered in Japan, 1916, 1924, 1929*. ed. by Supriya Roy, Shizen, 2007.

36 Hironaka has provided valuable details of the interest taken by these leaders in Japan and its educational system along with the nature of their contacts with Japan in his relevant studies mentioned above. For example: 2003, pp. 28, 31.

It is the significance only with Ross Mas'ood that he tried successfully to convert and modify almost the whole educational system of a State, which claimed and shown itself as to be a sovereignty, according to Japanese educational system. We can keep in mind here that Ross Mas'ood was a product of Sayed Ahmad Khan's political and national movement or an associate of Aligarh Movement. It is an unique and different example that how he saw Japan with an affection, love and belief and absorbed it not only in his own personality but made it a part of a Sovereign State's discipline.