Introduction
INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed great changes and new trends in the political environment of the Indian Sub-Continent. Indian National Congress which had so far adopted liberal and loyal attitude towards the British Government by demanding constitutional reforms, formation of democratic institutions and more and more representation of Indians in civil as well as other Government services, now thought it necessary to raise voice in favour of Swaraj (the Self-Government). Resolution was passed in this regard in its Calcutta session of 1906. In the mean time the Congress leaders were divided on this issue into two groups – moderates and extremists. And very soon, at the Surat Session in 1907, the extremists left the party. The whole political scenario was rapidly turning into anti-British atmosphere. Hindus of the country, who had been fighting so far, in an organized way, mostly under the banner of the Congress, were now politically more sound and strong than others. A number of attractive political personalities amongst them were endeavouring for the country’s liberation. As for Muslims, they had hitherto followed, most probably under the influence of Sir Syed’s advice, the attitude of non-cooperation with the Indian National Congress. Eminent Muslim leaders of those days, particularly Sir Syed’s successors and followers, came forward to found the Muslim League in 1906. However, a sizeable section of their population also felt attracted to Indian National Congress. Among the pioneers who took initiative in this direction and joined the Congress, Hasrat Mohani deserves special mention. Since the beginning of his political career, he was a man of hard principles and a staunch opponent of British government. He,
therefore, participated in almost all the movements of our freedom struggle. His whole life was full of struggle and sacrifice.

Born in 1881 in Mohan, a qasba (town) in the Unnao district, near Lucknow, in Uttar Pradesh, Syed Fazlul Hasan, commonly called Maulana Hasrat Mohani, occupies a significant place in the cultural and political history of modern India. He is held as one of the first-rank and top-most leaders of the twentieth century national movement. A graduate of the M.A.O. College of Aligarh, Maulana Hasrat was deeply inclined to Indian National Congress and started participating in the freedom struggle even during his College-days. It was on account of his pro-Congress political activities that once he was expelled from the Aligarh College. His deep interest in the anti-British political affairs of the country may be seen clearly in his step, that without waiting for the result of his B.A. final examination, he started publishing his famous Urdu monthly periodical entitled Urdu-i Mualla. Its first issue appeared in July 1903 from Aligarh, which was, in a way, the nerve center of Muslim intellectual life in India. Though initially, for some time, it was a literary magazine but very soon political topics dominated it. As pointed out earlier, many significant events were taking place, in the beginning of the twentieth century, in the political scenario of the sub-continent. The partition of Bengal in 1905, the Swadeshi and Boycott movements, the rise of terrorism and underground nationalist activities, the Simla Deputation of 1906, the formation of the Muslim League, the split in the Congress in 1907 etc. had exhorted great influence on the contemporary Indian society. Consequently, being impressed by the situation taking place, Hasrat Mohani, like other nationalist leaders, also could not keep himself aloof from this environment. He always exhibited a
revolutionary temper and came to the forefront with a spirit of sincere devotion and sacrifice. Being possessed of a sensitive nature about his surroundings, he not only absorbed the trendiest currents but also accepted the challenges as and when they came his way. Accordingly the articles written and published by him in the *Urdu-i Mualla* gave a fairly clear picture of his stand on the contemporary political issues of those days. The Indian National Congress was the only political body of importance in the country at that time. Therefore, Hasrat Mohani as mentioned above, at once took his stand with it and started vigorously participating in its activities. Soon after the completion of his education in the M.A.O. College, he started attending Congress sessions. This was the time when the Muslim community held aloof from it. There were very few people among the Muslims who favoured the Congress. Hasrat, in this turbid atmosphere, supported the Congress and spoke of independence with boldness and courage. As his voice rose from Aligarh, which was a strong center of anti-Congress Muslim political leaders and intellectuals, it seriously drew the attention of the Muslim community. He used his journal in an attempt to dispel the fears of the Muslims and to encourage them to join the Congress and take an active part in its support.

At the same time when he was struggling in his youth for the country's liberation, Hasrat Mohani also showed deep interest in the political developments of the contemporary Islamic world. Keeping in view the world brotherhood of Islam, he kept himself well informed of happenings in other Muslim countries. In this connection he published in *Urdu-i Mualla* a letter written to him in Persian by Maulvi Barkatullah Bhopali from New York. The latter had left India many years before the first world war and made Pan-
Islamism his life mission. Barkatullah in his letter has examined world power-politics and showed the role of the British in this context. The letter also vehemently emphasized the unity of the Hindus and Muslims by advocating the cause of the Indian National Congress. Similarly, in April 1907, Hasrat Mohani, being worried of the political condition of Egypt published an article entitled ‘The Egyptian Problem and British Conscience’. And after a year, in February-March 1908, he devoted a whole issue to the memory of the Egyptian leader Mustafa Kamal Pasha. This was followed in April 1908 by an article entitled ‘Educational Policy of Britishers in Egypt’ in which he badly criticized the British Educational Policy. At this time the British authorities took action. Debarring its contents objectionable they instituted a charge of sedition against Urdu-i Mualla. Hasrat was arrested and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment. A fine of five thousand rupees was also announced. On appealing to the High Court, the sentence was reduced from two to one year’s imprisonment, with a further six month in case the fine was not paid. The imprisonment began on 4\textsuperscript{th} August, 1908. In the beginning he was kept in Aligarh Jail, but after few days he was transferred to Allahabad Jail. From the very first day, he had to face a rigorous punishment – grinding wheat at the handmill, both in Aligarh and Allahabad Jails. As a matter of fact for almost the whole period of his imprisonment he had to grind one \textit{moun} (about 36.25 kg) every day, not generally given even to ordinary prisoners for more than one month or two during the same imprisonment. In Allahabad, he was kept for some time in the worst cell of the jail in which generally cut throats and dacoits were kept. It was in this jail that Hasrat first time met Swami Shivanand who was a true follower of Balgangadhar Tilak and had been sentenced to seven
years for sedition at Amrawati. In Hasrat Mohani’s own words his meeting with the Swami Ji in the imprisonment was one of the major temporal as well as spiritual benefits. After coming out of prison, Hasrat again took up residence in Aligarh, which had now become the headquarters of the Muslim League. He, however, remained firm in his allegiance to the Congress and never hesitated to criticize the League. The publications of Urdu-i Mualla was renewed and the first issue of the second period appeared in October 1909. In the next issue he openly favoured and supported the leaders of the extremists group in the Congress and declared that in politics he considered himself, and others like him, bound to follow in the foot-steps of Balgangadhar Tilak, the leader of patriots, and Babu Aurobindo Ghosh, the chief of freedom-lovers. In the same issue he vehemently criticized the leaders of the moderate wing of the Congress, the followers of the Muslim League and the founders of the Hindu Conference alike. In the issue of December 1909, he published a review on a booklet entitled ‘Aurobindo Ghosh Aur Un Ki Taleem’ (Aurobindo Ghosh and his Education) in which he paid his high tribute to the latter in these words : “In the circle of true patriots he holds, without any doubt, the highest position after Mr. Tilak”. The issue of January 1910 carried an article entitled ‘Apne Ahl-i Watan Ke Nam’ (To Our Countrymen). It was in fact a translation of a short article of Aurobindo Ghosh – published in English in his journal Karmayuga, Calcutta, in which it had been emphasized that the further progress of the country was entirely in the hands of the extremists. In the mean time the famous sufi and Urdu writer as well as journalist Khwaja Hasan Nizami, the sajjada nashin (custodian) of the dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia in Delhi made defamatory remarks about Aurobindo Ghosh in an article entitled ‘Khuni
Darwesh’ (The Bloody Saint). In this article Hasan Nizami had said that Sufis, saints and sanyasis should keep themselves aloof from politics. Hasrat Mohani severely criticised this stand in Urdu-i Mualla of February 1910. During the following year Hasrat wrote many articles in which he attempted to infuse a militant spirit into the Muslims and appealed them to join hands with the Hindus to work together for the freedom of their country. In 1911 and 1912 Hasrat published several articles on the worst political condition of the Muslims of different regions and attacked Britishers and their policies. His Urdu-i Mualla carried a number of articles in this regard. Accordingly it was in the early year of the second decade of the twentieth century that Hasrat worked more energetically than ever to spread the message of the boycott and to win over people to Swadeshi goods. In this connection he published a supplement entitled ‘The Boycott Movement’ in the issue of Urdu-i Mualla of April in which he argued quoting references from the Hadith and the Holy Quran, signifying that the boycott of foreign goods and adoption of Swadeshi Movements have religious sanction. In order to preach and popularize his ideas among the masses particularly Muslims in those days Hasrat travelled far and wide in the cities of western U.P. and eastern Punjab. Not only this he took a further step in this direction and established a Swadeshi Store at Russel Gunj in Aligarh for which Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, the famous merchant of Bombay gave him merchandise on credit on the recommendation of Maulana Shibli Nomani. It appears that Hasrat desired to see the establishment of a network of these shops by Muslims throughout the country. This was going too far and too fast for the Governments liking and action was now taken against him. A security of three thousand rupees was demanded from his press under the Press
Act of 1910. Consequently in May 1913 the publication of the *Urdu-i Mualla* came to an end.

It was in August 1914 that the First World War broke out. The situation took an even more critical turn. Indian revolutionaries saw British difficulties as their opportunities and intensified their activities even more. Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi went to Kabul and after making effort for few months with the help of other revolutionaries, succeeded in establishing Government of India in exile at Kabul in 1915. Raja Mahendra Pratap was appointed the President of India and the other great revolutionary Barkatullah Bhopali was elected the Prime Minsiter. Obaidullah Sindhi, Sardar Nasrullah Khan, and Amir Habibullah Khan were the members of the council of the ministers. Hasrat Mohani extended his full support to these revolutionaries. Likewise, some other Muslim extremists established another organization called *Junaid-i Rabbania* which was meant as revolutionary Muslim army for the liberation of India, Hasrat was appointed as one of its Lieutenant General. At the same time Hasrat also actively participated in the campaign for a Muslim University. It was because of all these activities that the Government of India regarded him as a very dangerous man. Therefore he was arrested for the second time on 13th April, 1916, at Aligarh. Still he was in jail that in December 1916 the Congress and the Muslim League held their sessions in Lucknow and agreed upon a resolution to solve the communal problem. This agreement is known in the history of our freedom movement as the Lucknow Pact.

Having been kept in the imprisonment in Lalitpur, Allahabad, Pratapgarh, Faizabad and Meerut for two years, Hasrat Mohani was released on
22\textsuperscript{nd} May 1918. At that time the war was drawing close and the conflict between the British Government and its Indian opponents was soon to come to a head. Both the Congress and the Muslim League had expressed dissatisfaction over Montague-Chelmsford Report. Hasrat also criticised this step. Similarly the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh also deeply shocked him.

It was the time when the Khilafat Movement was started by the Indian Muslims under the leadership of Ali Brothers – Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali – in support of the Sultan of Turkey who also held the position of the Khilafat-ul Muslamin, the spiritual head of the Muslims of the world. The first Khilafat Conference was held in Delhi on 22\textsuperscript{nd} November 1919. Hasrat played a most important part in the Conference. Here he once again strongly advocated a boycott of British made goods and the use of Swadeshi. In 27-30 December 1919 when both the Congress and Muslim League held their sessions at Amritsar, Hasrat Mohani, with the support of Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, played significant role in Muslim theologians decision that on the occasion of Eid-ul Azha Muslims should not sacrifice the cow, which is sacred to the Hindus. In fact Hindu-Muslim unity was at its highest peak at that time. In January 1920 he shifted from Aligarh and settled in Kanpur where he once again started the publication of the Urdu-i Mualla in January 1925. He also established a Swadeshi Store as a limited concern in Kanpur.

Hasrat Mohani, like other Muslim Congress leaders opposed the Nehru Report. He seems to have played no significant part in the important events which took place during the next five to six years. He also, seems in effect to
have held aloof from the political activities. However in 1929, he brought out an Urdu daily from Kanpur named *Mustaqil*. In August 1932 he presided over the U.P. Jamiat-ul Ulama Conference. It was in 1937 elections, after the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act of 1935, that Hasrat had become the active member of the Muslim League. But he could not reconcile himself completely with its programme because he had continued to develop his attachments to Communism and to the Soviet Union. He, however, remained a regular member of the working committee of the U.P. Muslim League. He went to attend the Palestine Conference in 17 October 1938 at Cairo as a member of the Indian Muslim delegation and in 1939 he went on a tour to some European countries. This journey brought Hasrat Mohani into direct contact with western world with all its glamour, and all its weak and strong points.

When in March 1940 the All India Muslim League in its session held at Lahore passed the Pakistan Resolution, Hasrat made great effort to avoid the country’s partition. According by in January-March, 1942 issue of *Urdu-i Mualla* he setout his views of the line upon which an independent India should be constituted. He now started his opinion that India should be composed of a number of republics grouped in five federations that along with one princely state (Hyderabad) should form an Indian confederation. Anyhow Muslim League succeeded in achieving Pakistan. While most of the League leaders shifted to Pakistan, Hasrat remained in Kanpur. He was an elected member of India’s Constituent Assembly. He fulfilled responsibilities with full courage and confidence. Leading a revolutionary life, Maulana Hasrat Mohani passed away on 13 May 1951 in Lucknow and was buried, as per his desire, in the
same city near the tomb of his spiritual mentor Maulana Abdul Wahab of Firangi Mahal.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present thesis, consisting of this introduction, seven chapters and a conclusion, proposes to study the following aspects and questions:

1. What was the role of Maulana Hasrat Mohani in the freedom struggle.
2. What was the place of Hasrat Mohani in the cultural and political history of modern India.
3. To analyse the role of Hasrat’s Urdu monthly, *Urdu-i Mualla* in the political scenario of the Indian sub-continent.
4. To study the role of Hasrat Mohani in the political development of the contemporary Islamic world.
5. To examine Hasrat’s role as an admirer and upholder of Hindu-Muslim unity.
6. To estimate Hasrat’s efforts to popularize the swadeshi movement.
7. To review Hasrat’s inclination towards the Communist Movement.
8. To study Hasrat’s endeavour to stop the partition of the country.
9. To assess Hasrat’s role after independence, to review and analyse his political ideas and personality.

Thus an attempt has been made in the following pages to present an account of Hasrat Mohani’s contribution during our freedom struggle. The thesis is entitled as “Hasrat Mohani: A Critical Appraisal of his Political Career and Ideology”. Initiating with the discussion of Hasrat’s family
background, providing details of his early political career and activities, and
highlighting his role after independence, a special emphasis has been laid in
this work on Hasrat’s political activities which took place during the first half
of the twentieth century and its impact on Indian life and thought. In this
context Hasrat’s *Urdu-i Mualla* has served as the most authentic source
material and has been properly utilized for our work. The British Government
official records preserved in the National and State Achieves have also
benefited us. Some material regarding his political ideology has been derived
from his poetical verses. Similarly, the letters of different political personality
of the freedom movement are also very helpful for the present work. Moreover
all modern works on Hasrat and on National Movement, both in English and
Urdu, are also of great significance and have been completely utilized. The
thesis, comprises seven chapters, the detail of which is as follows.

**CHAPTER – I**

**FAMILY BACKGROUND : EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION**

This chapter traces the ancestral chronology of Maulana Hasrat Mohani
in detail. The history of the town Mohan has also been dealt with. The main
factors responsible for the development of Hasrat’s personality were his family
background and his education which have been discussed in detail. His own
family tradition was one of scholarship and religious devotion and the
influence of family atmosphere, and of schooling combined to make a deep
impression on his young mind. His deep interest in poetry has also been
described. No only was he a great scholar of Arabic, Persian and Urdu but he
excelled in Mathematics also. His student life in the M.A.O. College and the
then circumstances and reasons for his expulsion from there have also been discussed in detail

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES 1903 to 1910

This chapter will deal with Hasrat’s career from 1903 to 1910. He started his career as a journalist by publishing an Urdu monthly entitled Urdu-i Mualla from Aligarh. It’s first issue appeared in July 1903. His efforts to change the Muslim political views prevailing at that time in the Indian subcontinent through his journal has been discussed in detail. All important political events during the above period and it’s impact on the people has been discussed. The partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon to create a gift between the Hindus and Muslims and its aftermath is described in detail. The resultant swadeshi movement and the tussle between the moderates and extremists, their difference of opinion and ideology, the foundation of the Muslim League and the point of view of its members, the Surat Congress and its significance, Hasrat’s first imprisonment in 1908 and the hardship faced by him in the jail are other important aspects discussed in detail in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN 1910 to 1918

An attempt has been made in this chapter to discuss in detail Hasrat’s involvement in the political activities between 1910 to 1918. On his release from Allahabad Jail Hasrat again started the publication of the Urdu-i Mualla from Aligarh in October 1909 and started his own printing press known as the
Urdu Press. This chapter discusses in detail the different articles published in the *Urdu-i Mualla* and its effect on the people. The significance of this journal as a medium to enlighten the people about the freedom movement and to illumine their minds against the British imperialism and its repercussions on the country men is an important theme of this chapter. The popularity of *Urdu-i Mualla* caused great insecurity to the British government who confiscated the Urdu Press in 1913 and fined Hasrat Mohani a sum of three thousand rupees. The Kanpur Mosque incident in which a portion of the mosque was demolished leading to protests and agitation of the people against the government. The havoc caused by firing on Muslims of Kanpur resulting in anti-British feelings all over the country has been discussed. Although the Hindu temple opposite the mosque did not suffer any setback during road construction, yet the Hindus of the city whole heartedly supported the cause of rebuilding the mosque. This incident brings to light the cordial relations and unity of the Hindu-Muslim community. The Muslim University movement, the freedom movement and beginning of the 1st World War, the Lucknow pact, the silk letter movement and Hasrat’s second imprisonment in 1916 and other important aspects discussed in detail in this chapter.

**CHAPTER IV**

**HASRAT IN KHILAFAT AND NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENTS**

This chapter reviews, Hasrat’s role in the *Khilafat* and Non cooperation movements of the Indian freedom struggle. The sultan of Turkey was considered the *Khalifa* of all the Muslims over the world. But as a result of the World War I the British put an end to the office of *Khalifa*. The *Khilafat*
movement was initiated to revive the Khilafat office. The Ali brothers i.e. Maulana Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, known in our history of modern period as the Ali Brothers, played most significant role in launching and popularizing this movement. Hasrat’s pivotal role in the Khilafat movement has been discussed. This chapter also discusses the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1919, which provided separate Muslim electorates, as envisaged in the Lucknow Pact of 1916. But Hasrat Mohani strongly opposed the report and the new constitution. The anxiety was growing in public mind over the Punjab atrocities as well as the Khilafat question. The Indian leaders reacted by launching the Non-cooperation movement in 1920. The methodology adopted by the Congress was not in accordance with Hasrat’s point of view Mahatma Gandhi and Hasrat Mohani differed in their views as regards the non-cooperation movement. The difference of opinion between Mahatma Gandhi and Hasrat Mohani relating to various significant political issues has been reviewed in detail in this chapter. Hasrat was imprisoned for the third time in 1922 and was inflicted with a lot of injustice and various false charges were put on him which has been discussed in detail.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL ROLE FROM 1924 – 1937

This chapter reviews Hasrat Mohani’s political role from 1924-1937. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 under the leadership of Lenin in Russia was a very significant historic event which put an end to the Czarist regime in Russia and established socialism which effected the whole world. The echo of this revolution was heard in India also. Hasrat Mohani was also attracted to the
communist ideology and several couplets related to socialist ideas composed by him have been used in this chapter to express the deep impression it had on his mind. The communist party was established in India in 1925 under the auspices of M.N. Roy and many more leaders of India, and Hasrat Mohani was one of these leaders who played a crucial role in organizing and forming of the Communist Party on Indian soil. The role of Hasrat Mohani in the various communist conferences has been elaborately discussed. The response to the Nehru-Report and his attitude towards civil disobedience Movement and his complete participation in it, the formation of the Azad Party by Hasrat Mohani and Maulana Azad Subhani, its aims and objectives and the publication of the ‘Mustaqi’, a paper published by Hasrat in 1928 are other important aspects discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

ASSOCIATION WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE AND PAKISTAN MOVEMENTS

Maulana Hasrat Mohani was deeply involved in the national political developments but simultaneously took keen interest in contemporary Muslim social life and politics of the country. It was because of this genuine Indo-Muslim political spirit that he always remained somehow associated with Muslim league since its very inception. His association with the Muslim League and his active participation in all its activities has been dealt with in this chapter. His complete participation in all the Pakistan movements also form an important theme of this chapter. His views of the lines upon which an independent India should be constituted has been discussed in detail. He aimed
at forming several Federated Republics which would be called the confederation of India and he laid down a general outline of the constitution of the Confederation. An attempt has been made in this chapter to analyse Hasrat’s scheme and programme for an independent India.

CHAPTER VII

HASRAT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After independence most of the Muslim League members made their way to the newly achieved Pakistan but Hasrat remained in India. The extracts from his personal diary have been utilized to illustrate his stand in this chapter. In 1946 he was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly of United Province on the ticket of the Muslim League. He also became the member of the constituent Assembly. This chapter aims to analyse his role as an active and responsible member of the constituent Assembly. His views are reflected in his speeches which have been quoted in this chapter to show his point of view on various significant issues discussed in the Assembly. Hasrat opposed Jawaharlal Nehru’s report on the Principles of the Union Constitution the reasons of which have been enumerated systematically in this chapter. Hasrat’s opinion on the adoption of the Preamble of the Constituent Assembly, the proceedings and various amendments related to it, his opinion on the Indian Constitution being Federal or Unitary and detail speeches related to it, his point of view on the issue of princely states, his last days are other important aspects covered by this chapter.

In the conclusion an attempt has been made to assess Hasrat’s personality and political career. An attempt has also been made to trace his
links with the political struggle and freedom movement of the country. The impact of his political ideas on the freedom movement has also been explained. His efforts to make the Muslim community a politically conscious and educated community has also been assessed.

The thesis also comprises a bibliography of both published and unpublished contemporary, semi-contemporary and other works utilized in its preparation. Moreover, there are some appendices also through which an attempt has been made to bring to light the original material regarding the subject.