INTRODUCTION

The region under review is an ancient land with a rich and varied cultural heritage. History and legend have contributed to lend its glory and splendour, fill its annals with spectacular facets of adventure, altruism, religious fervor, social advancement and cultural efflorescence. From times immemorial, this region has melody of balled songs and spiritual out pouring of the sages and saints, as well as epics and scriptures unfolding the wisdom and knowledge accumulated in ancient past.

Some places of the region are pride of India i.e. Kashi and Prayag (Allahabad). Kashi; the city of lord is believed that lord Shiva and his associates live invisibly in the rhythm of the city. This city also denoted by different names at different times, the two names Kashi or Varanasi are most common. It possessed the spirit of divinity, the myths and traditions have maintained the vibration of life since time immemorial. Another, Prayag, is eulogized in Puranic mythologies as the Tirathraj, the King of all sacred places among Hindu masses, situated picturesquely at the confluence of rives Ganga, Jamuna and invisible Saraswati. The tradition of Rama, sita and Lachmana are very closed to this place. The unique contributions of Malik Mohd. Jaisi, Tulsidas Dharamdas, Malukdas and Raidas whose impact on literature and folklore, popular
songs and music, growth of Rama cult and vaishnavait and Shaivait ideology has been profound and abiding.

**Historical importance of the region:**

The region under review, throughout the medieval period was the centre of political activities. In 1194, after the defeat of Jaichand of Kannauj, Muslims advanced to places like Kara, Banaras Manikpur etc. and in 1202 after the capture of Kalinjar Muslim supremacy gradually established in this region. In 1225AD. Sultan Iltutmish appointed his eldest son Nasiruddin Mahmood governor of this region who subdued local chieftens of the neighboring areas. Now Kara became the capital of region and it retained the position till the foundation of Allahabad more than three centuries later.

Ulugh Khan (later Known as Balban) proceeded on his victorious expedition against a Hindu chief, Daluki Maluki, who held the territory Jamuna & Kalinjar, the territory was handed over to Mubark Aibak (Brother of Balban) in 1253 A.D. From this time Kara was usually combined with Manikpur so that the government must have extended for some distance to the north of the Ganges. During his strong reign, no mention is made about any special event in this region. After his death, in confusion Malik Chhaju, Balban’s nephew proclaimed himself Sultan at Kara and assumed the title of Mughis-uddin, marched towards Delhi but in the way, was defeated by Jalaluddin Firoz Khalji. He had appointed his
nephew Alauddin Governor of this region who later on followed Malik Chajju footsteps, collected huge force and went victorious expeditious in South, leaving Alaul Mulk incharge of Kara. Though warned as to his nephew's designs the Sultan Jalaluddin Firoz came to meet Alauddin for his success at Kara on the north bank of Ganges, was brutally murdered. Alauddin ascended the throne of Delhi.

In 1325, Muhammad bin Tughlaq led his army ravaged areas from Kannauj to Dalamau. The governor of Kara, Nizam Main raised a revolt but speedily over thrown by Ain-ul-Mulk who then command of Awadh. Firoz Shah Tughlaq had visited Awadh in the course of expedition of Bengal and it was during his stay of six months that he founded the city of Jaunpur. Some territorial readjustments and administrative reassignments were affected in this region.

The King granted Iqtas to nobles in the vicinity of Jaunpur which was made headquarter of the district. As the city population and prosperity grew, it became prominent in the eastern region.

The process of disintegration that had set in during the last decades of Muhammad bin Tughlaq’s reign acquired dangerous dimensions after the death of Firoz Shah in 1388 A.D. Central authority collapsed. Taking the advantage of this state of flux Khwaja Jahan on whom Firoz Shah’s Younger son Muhammad Shah had conferred the title of Sultan-us Sharq,
founded Sharqi kingdoms in this region in 1394 AD. five years before the invasion of Taimur.

Khwaja Jahan took possession of nearly all the eastern territories including Qannauj, Kara, Dalamau, Jaunpur etc. His successors ruled the kingdom with vigorous ability and their strong government and patronage of local cultural institutions contributed to the prosperity and happiness of the people. For hundred years Sharqi kingdom enjoyed independence from external authority, till it came under heavily military pressure of the lodi kings and was finally liquidated by Bahlul lodi in 1484 AD. Sultan Bahlol lodi gradually brought the whole eastern land under his direct control and appointed his own faithful officers as Muqtas in the annexed territories. After the death of Bahlol the confusion was accentuated by quarrels among the ladies in 1488. Although Bahlul had be-queathed the throne to his son Sikandar but Barbak, who was installed at Jaunpur considered his claim superior and attempted to establish it by force. He was defeated, and his governor Mubarak Khan driven out but was captured at the crossing from Jhusi to Prayag. Sikandar under took an expedition against Chunnar, Kantit, Kara, Panna Banaras and Bathghora all the territories brought under his sway in 1499 A.D.

On the termination of Ibrahim Lodi’s rule over Delhi and Agra the whole of northern India did not come directly under the control and possession of Babar without hard and prolonged struggle. The Lohanis
and other clan reunited their forces and raised Bahadur Khan, the son of Darya Khan Lohani to the throne of Jaunpur. In 1527 Mahmud, a son of Sikandar lodi assumed the title of Sultan and led the confederacy of Afghan and Rajputs but were crushed by Babar. In 1528 Babur dispatched Humayon eastwards with the result Jaunpur was retaken. Babar soon realized that it is difficult to maintain vigilance over the activities of Afghans who were gathered under the command of Biyazid Bibon and Maroof Farmuli. He therefore devised the policy of conciliation with chief of the fallen dynasty by assigning them revenue on the obvious condition of their submission to his suzerainty. In pursuit of this, he granted Firoz Khan Sarangkhani one forty six Lakhs five thousands tankas from the revenue of Jaunpur. Like wise Shaikh Bayazid received grant of one Karor forty eight lakhs and forty thousands Tankas. Mahmood Khan ninety lakhs and thirty five thousands Tankas from Ghazipur. The administration of Jaunpur which had the total income of Forty Lacs Eight Thousands Thirty Three Hundred (400833) Tankas was placed in the hands of Sultan Junaid Barlas and Shah Mir.

When Babar died in 1530, Afghan forces restarted their political activities. In 1531 Mahmood Lodi enlisted his aid for the recovery of Jaunpur while Humayon was engaged in the siege of Kalinjar, on this condition Sher Khan joined Mahmood but later on treacherously with drew his troops to Chunar, Mahmood was totally defeated. In 1535,
Humayun returned from Gujarat and laid the siege of Chunar for six month and fortress fell into his hand. Beg Mirak was made over charge of it and Humayon halted sometime in Banaras.

Meanwhile, Sher Khan attacked the Mughal garrisons in the emperor rear, Banaras, Jaunpur captured by Sher Khan killed Mughal Governors and marched to Agra. Humayon was defeated at Kannuj from there he fled and in 1540 Sher Khan became ruler of Hindustan.

In 1556, Humayun returned and Akbar defeated Haimu, acquired Delhi and Agra. The conquest of east was accomplished gradually and in 1559 Ali Quli Khan drove out the Afghans from Jaunpur and Banaras and established Mughal authority over this legion.

Through out the early Mughal ruler in India, the rulers always paid attention to possess this region at any cost, due to its strategically importance from here, they can control all over Awadh, Malwa, Bihar and Bengal’s territories.

When Akbar conquered this territory he faced problems because Jaunpur and its adjoining areas were stronghold of Afghans and Uzbeks and time to time they create problems or raised the banner of revolt. Probably to reduce the political importance of Jaunpur, he formed a separate territorial boundary with its headquarter at Allahabad in 1580 and called it Subah Allahabad.
The geographical boundaries of the Subah extend up to the banks of river Ghagra in the north, Chausa ferry in the east, Ghatampur in the west and Kaimur hills in the South. The topography of the region can be divided into two parts as north and south. The north portion which lay between the river Ghagra, Jamuna, Ghatampur in the west was famous for its fertility and the south part of the Subah which lay between the river Jamuna in the north approaches Kaimur hills in the south. This portion of the Subah constituted Chunar, Kalinjar, Kantit, Bandogarh. There are detached rocks or hills scattered all over the area and covered with forests.

During Akbar’s reign Subah comprised ten Sarkars consisting 177 Mahals. Later on it were increased as 17 Sarkar, 269 Mahals till Aurangzeb’s time in 1707. A number of strong fortresses were in the region, Kara on the west, Mahoba, Kalinjar in the south-west, Bandogarh in the South and Chunar in the South-east. The Subah comprising the modern districts of Allahabad, Azamgarh, Banda, Banaras, Fatehpur, Ghazipur Hamirpur, Jaunpur Mirzapur, Rai Baraily and the Rewa State.

The purpose of present study to explore the socio-cultural environment of the Subah (1580-1707AD). A variety of sources have been used for the preparation of the present study, particularly Bhakti literature for the minute study of the region under review. The details of the works used are given in bibliography.
The study is divided into following chapters;

The first chapter deals with some major political events which had affected Mughal authority over this region under review. The Afghans and Uzbek problems due to which Akbar spent a good times in this region to consolidate the power. This Subah has seen prince Salim’s revolt who established parallel independent rule against his father Akbar. The war of succession and Mughal’s relations with local chieftains/Rajas, through out the Mughal rule in this region.

The second chapters deals with economic condition; Agricultural & industrial production as well trade & commerce. Textile industry especially cotton & Silk were in flourishing state. Iron and diamond mining was on moderate scale. Boats of good qualities were also made. The main trading centre Allahabad, Banaras, Jaunpur had developed land and river connections with all parts of India. A number of Sarais on trade routes were of great help to people as well merchants.

Due to its commercial activities there were many mints centred in the Subah like Kara, Manikpur, Jaunpur, Allahabad. Banaras.

The third chapter discusses about the social life of the Subah. In which I discussed about the nature of Hindu society, religious sects, beliefs, Muslim society, social ceremonies, position of women, important fairs and festivals, living condition of the common people and their pass-time amusements based on few Bhakti literature.
The fourth chapter deals with Emergence of development of Bhakti movement in *Subah*. Its two school *Nirguna & Sagun, Ramait & Krishnait*. Its important philosophers like Kabir, Dharamdas, Raidas Malukdas Saina. Their teachings of equality and fraternity. The fifth chapter deals with the origin and development of *Sufi* movement in this region. It’s chief mystic orders, philosophers the life of important *Sufis*, like Shaikh Muhibullah Allahabadi, Shaikh Tahir, Shah Mohd. Afzal, Shah Abdul Jalil Shaikh Qasim Qadri etc.

The sixth chapters, development of education in Subah deals with Hindu and Muslim education. It centers, method of imparting, curriculum, important teachers like Narayna Bhatta, Trimulla Bhatta, Lakshman, Kavindra Charya Saraswati, Maulana Abdur Rashid Jaunpuri, Shaikh Mahmood, Sheikh Mubarak etc. These scholars contributed a lot in the education and literary field of the *Subah*.

The seventh chapter ‘Monumental remains’ deals with architectural works which have been completed during Mughal rules, like, its forts, palaces bridges. Temples and tombs of the *Subah*.

The eighth chapter deals with paintings, although the *Subah* as particular had no specialty in this field but it was Prince Salim who established his atelier during the days of rebellion and produced a number of painting here. Some of them are included in his portion.
In ninth chapter some Mughal *Farmans* and inscriptions are included, which had a great importance in the development of Social life of the *Subah*. These Mughal Emperors granted revenue free land grant to the *Jangamvadi Math* of Banaras, temple at Chitrakut and some Muslim scholars for their spiritual and educational cause.