PREFACE

The present study is planned to explore the Changing Patterns of Political Behaviour of Muslims in Uttar Pradesh since 1991. In it the researcher studied the different dimensions of political behaviour of Muslims.

Political behaviour refers to any form of individual or collective involvement in the political process, or any activity for that matter that has political consequences in relation to government and its policies. Political behaviour is defined in this research not in the narrow sense of voting behaviour only. The term has been used here with broader implications including any behavioural activities such as working in campaign activities, discussing politics, contacting public officials etc. The emphasis of the present research was on the role and place of the Muslim in the India political system as demonstrated by the nature of their political activities. Hence, the present study is planned to understand the determiners of political behaviour of Muslims in U.P since 1991. The relevance of the year 1991 is to my humble view needs to be defined. In the national and the politics of Uttar Pradesh the year is significant as it was the watershed year that marked a quantum shift in the nature of Nations political psyche especially for the Muslims. It was the year just before the black day of – Babri-Masjid demolition- in which the secular credentials of the Indian nationhood was severely tested. It was also significant in the sense that the Hindu extremism in the form Mr.Advani’s rath yatra and the Ram Janambhomi movement transformed the Indian political scenario.

The whole research work has been divided into six different chapters. The first chapter of the thesis incorporates the geographical and ecological profile of the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh. It deals with the
geographical features, climatic conditions, morphology of physical terrain of Uttar Pradesh, and demographical growth of Muslims, their ethnic and linguistic composition, their educational aspects. The historical growth of the present state of Uttar Pradesh and the historical background of Muslims since the inception of the state is also delineated upon. It also includes the economic conditions of Muslims and the rise of political consciousness among them after the independence of the country. It an accepted fact, that the growth and the progress of a country is consequent upon the overall growth of its citizens. The concept of inclusive growth includes in its fold, both the majority and the minority communities living in the country. The Muslims are a minority community in India and in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It becomes incumbent upon the state to make its minorities feel secure and protected. It keeps the minorities away from the feeling of alienation, and makes them politically active and to contribute in the wholesome growth of the nation. This holds true for the Muslims as well.

The second chapter of the thesis discusses the conceptual framework of the political behaviour. It also includes discussion about the different cultural orientations, different approaches to the study of political behaviour, and various factors influencing the changes in the trends of political participation.

The review of literature included in third chapter, is on the influence of various factors on political behaviour of Muslims. Methodological details of the thesis are also discussed in this chapter. In the methodology of thesis, a sample of 1200 Muslims was drawn randomly from the different parts of the state. In all 840 males were sampled, out of which 480 males were taken from urban areas and 360
from rural areas. Similarly, 360 females were interviewed, out of which 240 were in urban centers and 120 were from rural areas.

To measure the political behaviour of Muslims, a questionnaire used by the Centre for Studies in Developing Societies (CSDS) in various pre-Poll and post-Poll surveys was used by the researcher. It contains 66 questions and in all measured 17 dimensions of political behaviour. It also evaluates cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations of the respondents.

Data, thus, obtained from different groups of Muslims were analyzed in two phases on the bases of socio-economic variables like-region, sex, education, age and income. In the first phase percentages of all the dimensions were calculated. In the second phase, Bar diagrams were made on the SPSS package.

In the fourth chapter of the thesis, the results and its discussions are incorporated. This chapter deals with five different aspects of socio-economic status. It includes- urban –rural difference, education, level of income, age and sex difference that influences the political activities among Muslims. In the analysis it is found that the rural Muslims are more politically active then their urban counterparts. Educational and income difference are found to be a crucial factors in decision making. The role of sex and age in political involvement was also decisive.

When Muslim voters are compared on the basis of sex it is found that female political activity rates remain well below than those of their male counterparts. The results on education showed a curvilinear relationship i.e. turnout rises with rise in the level of literacy but decreases with a further rise in the level of education. The relationship between education and involvement in political activities holds a positive relation for such activities as taking interest in political matters,
discussing politics but not for such activities as voting or attending public meetings.

Age as a socio-economic variable of political behaviour is very significantly related with political involvement. It is found that as people grow old, they vote in greater number because of their faith in system which they come to identify with as they grow old. Advancing age is also positively related with mobilization to attending meetings, contacting officials to influencing decisions.

If we compare the voting participation of lower, middle and higher income groups of Muslims, it was found that beyond a threshold impact, the rise in the level of income is not significantly related to voting participation in urban area, however, in the rural area voting pattern shows a negative correlation with the income level.

In fifth chapter various dimensions of the political behaviour of Muslims of Uttar Pradesh are brought to fore. Every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientation to political actions. And Sidney Verba has classified these ‘politically relevant orientations’ as being of three type: “cognitive, evaluative, and expressive.” To these writers these orientations comprise the ‘political culture’. A society has a set of beliefs and behaviours towards political objects which are learned and shared. Individuals presumably have attitudes and beliefs about the actual nature of values and goals they prefer for the political system. To measure these three political orientations of Muslims different types of questions are asked.

Cognitive orientation is a very potent determinant of Political behaviour in which dimensions like –political information index (PII), issue and problem awareness (IPA), political interest (PI) and symbol and heritage awareness (SHA) are included. cognitive orientation of urban
Muslims are higher than rural Muslims. Since urban people are more literate as compared to rural people, and their exposure to mass media in urban centers are more than that of rural ones, so PII of urban Muslim is higher than rural Muslims.

Another dimension measuring cognitive orientation and which is directly influenced and determined by the level of education is symbol and heritage awareness (SHA). The urban Muslims have higher SHA. Nevertheless, the rural Muslims have high issue and problem awareness (IPA) and high level of political interest (PI) as compared to issue and problem awareness (IPA) and political interest (PI) of urban Muslims.

To measure effective orientation another set of four dimensions like- attitude towards system (ATS), attitude towards candidate (ATC), political efficacy (PE) and political trust (PT) are measured in both urban and rural areas. The urban Muslims have more positive and supportive attitude towards the democratic system of representation and governance as compared to rural Muslims. The increase in urban area could be due to the positive and more visible fruits of system in the form of better development and availability of economic opportunities.

In the second dimension of evaluative orientation i.e. attitude towards candidate (ATC), rural Muslims seem to take special and personal interest in contrast to urban Muslims. It shows that rural Muslims have more positive attitude towards candidate and take the capability of candidate to perform into reckoning while making voting decision.

The political efficacy (PE) and political trust (PT) both show leaning towards higher side. The political efficacy is same in both rural and urban areas, but the political trust among the rural Muslims is much higher than
those of urban Muslims. Which shows a strong commitment of Muslims vis-à-vis democratic institutions.

The third type of orientation concerns the extent of ‘attention’ to political matters. For the measurement of affective orientation, four dimensions namely, voting participation (VP), campaign participation (CP), communal activity (CA), political activity (PA) among the Muslims residing in urban and rural centers are investigated. The rural Muslims showed higher level of affective orientation than that of urban Muslims. Rural Muslims look politically awake as their overall affective orientation is high. Urban Muslims show less interest in campaigning and communal activities than that of rural populace. This could be due to the life-style of urban people who remain less interested in affairs of others.

In Chapter VI the political behaviour of Muslims has been studied in three phases. In the first phase urban Muslims are examined to find political behaviour on seven dimensions- voting participation, political information index, political trust, attitude towards system, political efficacy, mass media exposure and mobilization. Rural Muslims are studied in second phase on similar seven dimensions of political behaviour. In the third phase both urban and rural Muslims are compared to study party affiliation, voting preference and opinion decider aspect of political behaviour.