INTRODUCTION

The present research work entitled “Influence of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith on the Arabic Prose Literature in Medieval India” has been undertaken with the sole objective to show the influence of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith in the development of Arabic language and literature in Indian subcontinent and the outstanding works done by Indian scholars in Medieval India.

The research work begins with the study of Semitic language and its other offshoots. Among them Arabic is the youngest representative, which is cultivated in most of the Arab world and its gradual progress has not been left out in India also. We are aware of the fact that the influence of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith on the Arabic language and literature is inevitable in the overall linguistic and literary scenario of the Arab world, because both the corpora are regarded by the linguists as to contain the pure Classical Arabic Language (اللغة العربية الفصحى) which has become the most standard model for literary usage as well as literary guide and linguistic authority.

History gives witness that the contacts between the Arabian peninsula and India date back to very ancient times. After the advent of Islam and from the early part of the eighth century, the settlement of Muslim people in India continued and Indo-Arab relation took place through trade and commerce, invasions and propagation of Islam. It is known to all that the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith are the basic and fundamental scriptures of Islam. So, both the corpora became indispensable for the Muslims to learn and practice in their religious day to day life. As such, some Arabic learned Muslims and Sūfi-saints...
who were the torch-bearers of Islamic civilization in India, endeavoured their utmost to make the Muslim populace familiar with the study of the Holy Qur’an and the Hadith with further religio-literary works for imparting the clear knowledge of Islam. Under such circumstances, a good number of theological works i.e. Qur’anic Tafsir, Tajwid al-Qur’an, Commentaries of Hadith, Fiqh, Farā‘īd, Kalām, Taṣawwūf; Arabic language i.e. Ṣarf, Nahw, Lexicography, and Balāgha i.e. Ma‘ānī, Bayān and Bādi‘ and Arabic prose literature i.e. (Khutba, letter, literary selection, belles lettres, fiction etc.) were produced in Arabic language right from the period of conquest of Sind (in 711 A.D.) and continued onwards until the modern period. In such a way, the Medieval India saw the proper development of Arabic language and literature, wherein prosaic form of Arabic literature got the priority. As such, India earned the distinction of inexpressible credit in the realm of Arabic language and literature.

In order to carry out the research work a good number of published books, periodicals, theses, dissertations etc. have been consulted. It would not be out of place to mention the names of some of the important books such as Subhata ‘l-Marjān Fī Āthār Hindustān; Musallam al-Thubūt; Hujjatu ‘l-lughah al-Balighah; al-Fatāwā al-’Ālamghirīyya; Tabṣīr al-Rahmān wa Taisir al-Mānnān etc. The detailed study on these books follows in later chapters. Names of other reference books have been furnished in the bibliography.

The present work has been divided into seven chapters. These are as follows:

(1) The first chapter deals with various aspects of Arabic language and literature.
(2) The second chapter deals with overall discussion on the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith.

(3) The third chapter deals with the literary contributions of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith.

(4) The fourth chapter deals with linguistic influences of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith on various branches of Arabic language and literature.

(5) The fifth chapter deals with the growth and development of Arabic language and literature that produced in Medieval India.

(6) The sixth chapter deals with the influence of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith that has been fallen on Indo-Arabic Prose literature specifically in Medieval period.

(7) A conclusion to the present work has been drawn in the seventh chapter which aptly shows the influences that has been exerted by the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith on the Arabic prose literature in Medieval India.

In fine, it may be stated that this research work concerns with the Arabic language and literature which was produced in the Medieval India. According to the nature of this work, it falls on the type of historical bibliographic research. Therefore, this research has been spanning over from A.D. thirteenth to eighteenth centuries only. It is hoped that this humble endeavour would be of use to the seekers of knowledge to pursue their studies in the field of Arabic language and literature.