

Hasrat Mohani as First Political Prisoner of 20th Century

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Abstract:

Hasrat was always brilliant in studies. At the same time he also showed interest in the residential life of the College. He had tried his best to change the Muslim political views prevailing at that time in Indian Sub-Continent. Their majority considered Indian National Congress as opposed to the political cause of the Muslims. Hasrat performed his duties with great responsibility. During this period he organized a mushaira under its banner in which eminent poets were invited from all over the country. Hasrat's political activities were continued. Keeping in mind that Hasrat was played an important role in freedom struggle and the paper is prepared for that analysis.

It was within few months after the Surat Session that Hasrat wrote an article 'Educational Policy of Britishers in Egypt' in his *Urdu-i Mualla* in April 1908 in which he badly criticised the British educational policy. On the charges of writing this seditious article, he was arrested on 23rd June, 1908.¹ He was prosecuted under section 124-A

¹ *Urdu-i Mualla*, Aligarh, Urdu Press, January 1910, p. 9. It is significant to note that still there is controversy among the scholars on the issue as to who was the real writer of the above mentioned article, published in Hasrat's *Urdu-i Mulla* in April, 1908. It is said the article for which Hasrat was sentenced was not his own. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi believes that the writer of this article was Iqbal Suhail (Nadvi, Syed Sulaiman, op.cit., p. 112). According to Jalil Qidwai it was a mixture of Maulvi Abdul Haq's Urdu and Fazal Amin's English, which Iqbal Suhail prepared. It is also interesting to note that a 'parwana' was also sent from the court to Maulvi Abdul Haq, commonly known as Bab-i Urdu but it was not duly received (see Jaleel Qidwai, ed., *Muqadma Intekhab-i Hasrat*, Karachi, 1953, p. 3). But Syed Sultana Iffat Mohani herself wrote that this article was written by Fazal Amin of Patiala, who was at that time Vice President of M.A.O. College's Student Union (see Khursheed Sultana Ifat Mohani, *Risala Urdu-i Mualla* (ed.) Alle Ahmad Soroor, *Hamari Zuban*, Aligarh, Anjuman Taraqee-i Urdu