

**PUNJABI SUBA AND THE SIKH STRUGGLE  
(1947 A.D. – 1966 A.D.)**

A

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the

Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo

In Partial Fulfilment for the requirements of the award of the degree of

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

IN

**HISTORY**

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BATHINDA (PUNJAB)**

**2017**

## **CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in the dissertation entitled "PUNJABI SUBA AND THE SIKH STRUGGLE (1947 A.D. \_ 1966 A.D.)" in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Faculty of Arts, authentic record of my own work carried out during the period from 2015 to 2017 under the supervision of Dr.Sukhjit Kaur Bhullar.

The matter embodied in this dissertation has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other University/Institute.

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This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my/our knowledge.

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The M.Phil Viva-Voice examination of Ms/Mr Manpreet Kaur has been held on 8 Dec 2017 and accepted for the award of M.Phil Degree.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

For help and guidance in the execution of this study, I am highly obliged to Dr. Sukhjit Kaur Bhullar, the gracious intellect, who inspired me to conduct the study in hand and guided me at every step. I am indebted to Dr. Daljit Kaur and all the faculty members of the Department of History of Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo (Bathinda), for their constructive, helpful criticism and valuable suggestions, which have added unlimited grace to the value of study.

I am equally obliged to the Punjabi University Patiala, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar, and Sharomani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar for providing me the necessary study material and enhancing my knowledge about 'Punjabi Suba'.

I am also thankful to my Parents and Best friend and Colonel Magh Singh Barnala who helped me in so many ways and whose love and affection always inspired me to complete this study.

**Manpreet Kaur**

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## **PREFACE**

The Topic "The Punjab Suba Movement 1947A.D-1966A.D" is the factual and organized study of cheated and Chandigarh was made the new capital of Punjab. Punjabi Suba, which was at the centre of Politics in Punjab from 1947A.D till 1966A.D. It has been at the basis of an extra-ordinarily long and massive political conflict between the Congress and the Akali Dal. The press played a significant role during the partition and post-independence of 1947A.D. Though the Punjabi Suba movement came into prominence after the partition but its origin can be traced back to the earlier years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, 1909 A.D. to be precise, when the principle of separate electorate, which provided prescriptive majority to the Muslims in the Punjab Legislative Assembly was introduced. Since then, the Sikhs had been making efforts to protect their political interests in Punjab. The partition of Punjab in 1947A.D and subsequent distribution of population in East Punjab was such that the Akali party was forced to launch the Punjabi Suba movement to carve out a Sikh majority state on the basis of Punjabi Language. The Sikhs wanted to have a province where their identity would be safeguarded. They had a deep-rooted fear of their assimilation into Hindustan. To achieve their objective, the Akalis had to encounter tough opposition from certain sections of the Hindus. The Hindus considered the demand of Punjabi Suba by the Akalis to be an attempt to establish the Sikh political hegemony. The Government of India always considered the demand suspiciously. There was some lurking apprehensions that such a state of Punjabi Suba may later on become the base of a secessionist movement, especially when had a hostile neighbor along the border. The Akali leadership raised the demand for the creation of Punjabi Suba through adoption of numerous resolutions, holding of various *morchas* at different times, frequent meetings with leaders of the political parties and men at helm of affairs in the Indian Government e.g., the Prime Ministers themselves, and employing different strategies (e.g., voluntary imprisonments and 'fasts unto death'). Their ceaseless efforts finally bore fruit and the ultimate goal was achieved when the 'Punjabi Suba' was formed on 1 November 1966A.D.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The literature of this period had been studied of various scholars who dealt directly with the activities of Punjabi Suba movement. The details are given below :-

The first important book -`**SIKH HISTORY**` , Navyug Publishers, 2003 was written by **DR. KHUSHWANT SINGH. Volume –I** of the this book gives us information about historical background of Punjab, from the time of origin of Sikh religion to the period of partition of Punjab.Information is provided about Minton Morley, Lucknow post, Government of India Act 1919 and,also mentioned is Montague Chelmsford Reforms Act. The first volume also mentions about the social and religious conditions of the Sikhs.The second volume of the book mentions about events in Sikhism and the development of the movement for demand of Punjabi Suba.

The other important book -`**PUNJAB DA BATWAARA**` , published by Singh Brothers was written by **DR.KIRPAL SINGH**. From this book, we learn about various names of ancient Punjab, information about elections and the boundaries of Punjab in 1947.

Next book on the subject-`**PUNJABI SUBA**` ,Published by Lokgeet Publishers, Sirhand, 1992 was written by **DR. AJIT SINGH SARHADI**. The story of struggle is the study of the demand of a Punjabi Suba.This book tells us about the period after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, emergence of the Gurudwara Reforms movement and Sharomani Akali Dal. The book describes the demand of the Sikhs for a Punjabi province on the basis of language. The writer was a politician and an eminent leader in the Sikh politics. As such, the book has more of political inclination.

Other important book is `**DYNAMICS OF PUNJABI SUBA MOVEMENT**` , New Delhi, 1999, written by **DR. KRISHAN GOPAL LAMBA**.The book deals with the political History of Punjabi Suba movement, its riots and ramifications and Hindu response. It deals with the Sikh struggle for the demand of a Punjabi State. However,the writer had not discussed the impact of partition on the Sikh Community in detail.

The fifth important book is `**AJ DE PUNJAB DI SIKH RAJNITI, ( 1947- 1977)**, written by **DR. DHANNA SINGH GULSHAN**,Published by Sardar Gurcharan Singh Dhaliwal, Rampura Phul, Bathinda. He was one of the most famous of t he Punjab politicians and was among the front lines fighting for the welfare of people and the rights of Punjab. Much information is found in this book about major events of the Sikh struggle, reorganization of Punjabi Suba, Regional Formula , Akali Conferences etc.

**VIHVEEN SADEE DI SIKH RAJNITT** of **DR. AJMER SINGH**, Published by Narinder Singh,Chandigarh, 2003 is another important document which gives details of the Sikh struggle for Punjabi Suba on the basis of language, Cripps Mission Report etc.

**DR. JAMSHID ALI'S** book **`PUNJAB DI RAJNITI`**, of Lokgeet purkashan, 2005, describes about the State of Punjab from the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present times, giving details of various aspects of the condition of people, especially the Sikh community of the state. It tells about their existence, role of the community in political affairs. It also mentions about the Reorganization Act of Punjab.

**`VIDWAANAN DI SAANJHI KALAMM TOUN, PUNJABI SUBE DE MORCHE DA ITIHAS`**, is a publication of Surinder Singh, Amritsar. In this book, mention is found of *Morchas* related to Punjabi Suba, Martyrdoms during these *morchas*, humiliations caused by the police on innocent protesters and the fasts observed by various participants in the struggle for Punjabi Suba.

### **SCOPE**

The scope of the struggle for Punjabi Suba is very vast. The struggle affected all aspects of life- Politics, social, religious and economic. The Punjabi Suba struggle was primarily a political event. The Sikhs and Akalis had demanded Punjabi Suba on the basis of language, because certain other states had already been formed on the same basis. Being in minority, no attention was paid to the demand of the Sikhs, whereas, historically, they had fought every time so bravely in the front lines for Punjab. Events of the struggle for Punjabi Suba also had considerable effect on other states of the country. *Morchas* were held for attainment of Punjabi Suba, the Sikhs offered captivation, many Sikhs fell to the bullets of the police. The Congress party had come to power after Independence.

There was conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims before independence then their was embitterment between the Hindus and the Sikhs. The Congress had denied the rights to the people of Punjab after partition and the promises made by the Congress were never honored, which resulted in the situation in Punjab becoming more and more difficult and complicated.

The *Anddolan* ( struggle ) for Punjabi Suba was an event of the present times. It had deep impact on all the political parties. The religion, culture and the style of living of the Sikhs was different from the Hindus, and they could never survive under subjugation of the Hindus. To suppress the struggle, the government made and offered many plans eg. *`Sachar Formula`*, *`Regional Formula`*, *`PEPSU Formula`* etc.

PEPSU came into being as a separate state having eight smaller states. Sikh majority areas had been grouped under PEPSU and it was merged with Punjab by the government. An Act was also drawn for Reorganization of the states in 1955.

Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh had provided further impetus to the struggle with their `fasts unto death`. The conflict between the Akali Dal and the Congress Party had intensified. The Akalis had begun to fight for maintaining their position in politics and for their rights.

Various Commissions were constituted so that the Sikhs did not demand a Punjabi Suba. However, the government conceded to the demand after a long struggle of the Sikhs and the Akalis. At this stage too, by cheating the Sikhs for creating a Punjabi speaking state, the government raised the proxy rivals of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. Debates also took place in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and the bills were presented regarding Punjabi Suba. Various committees were also Constituted concerning Punjabi Suba.

Sikhs had come to majority with the formation of Punjabi Suba in November 1966. Hindi and Punjabi speaking areas were bifurcated. Punjab was first divided in 1947, which had altered the map itself of India ( when Punjab was divided into West and East Punjab ).It was again divided into small fragments. in 1966.

In spite of such a long struggle, the Sikhs did not get the full Punjabi Suba. Haryana and Himachal were created with common links in them. Punjab got settled as a small piece of land. The struggle for Punjabi Suba was such that influenced all the aspects of Punjab and its entire geography got changed. All the parts of Punjab had been affected with this struggle.

## **THE NEED FOR STUDY**

The formation of Punjabi Suba is an important movement and event in Indian History. The ideas got planted in my mind about this unique event, compelling me to go deeper in its study and carry out research on this significant topic. I am convinced that the research will enhance the knowledge of readers, as would of my own, about this Historical phenomenon called Punjabi Suba.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

It is intended to accomplish the following aims and objectives with this research :-

- To explore the back ground of formation of Punjabi Suba.
- To learn about the political condition of Punjab from 1947 to 1966.



- To learn about various *`morchas`* ( agitations ) of Punjabi Suba.
- Be able to understand the contributions made by the Akali Dal for Punjabi Suba.

## **THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The perspective of my research is Historical. The study is based on proceedings of the Government of India, work of the SGPC, Report of various Commissions, Newspapers, Oral Statements, Gazettes, Reorganization Act 1955, 1966 etc. Relevant information had also been gathered from secondary sources such as books, journals and unpublished Thesis works. And I have done my work

## **CHAPTERISATION**

The study had been divided into five chapters for the sake of convenience. The first Chapter highlights the History of Punjab and covers the period upto 1947, when it was divided in two parts. The second Chapter deals with the Sikh struggle when the Congress party had come to power in Punjab and PEPSU had been formed. It informs us about the demand of Akalis and the Sikhs for a Punjabi Suba on linguistic basis. We come to know about the work done and role played by various political leaders in the freedom struggle and demand of a Sikh state.

The Third Chapter concerns the Sikh and Akali *morchas* from 1955 to 1966 and the fasts under-taken by Mster Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh for the demand of Punjabi Suba. This was the time when the Hindi Service community had started agitation against *`Regional Formula`*. The fourth Chapter highlights the formation of Punjabi Suba. The government became a link between the states of Haryana and Punjab. The Sikh and Akali leaders opposed the *`Reorganization Act`*

The fifth and the last chapter concludes the research study, which is based on the primary and Contemporary sources.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

'Punjab' had been known by different names at different times. The plane area around five rivers is called Punjab. Word *Sapt- Sindhu* i.e., land of seven rivers had been used in *Rigveda*. Thereafter, when foreign invasions started, Punjab came in contact with the outside world and change took place in the name of Punjab. *Bharat* came to be called *Hindustan*. In the Pauranas and Mahabharata, Punjab was called *Panchnadda* i.e., the land of five rivers.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Iranians called Punjab *Haftaa-Hinddva* after the Aryan name. When the seventh river dried up after some time then the name of Punjab was changed to *Pata Potamia* (combination of two Persian words *Panjj* and *Aab* ie five and water), for the areas of the five rivers to North West of the Indian empire. Punjab was called *Lahore Suba* in the medieval period. Punjab was divided into two provinces - Lahore and Multan during the rule of Akbar. Word *Lahore Raaj* was being used for Punjab during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It was named 'Punjab' from the time when it was annexed by the British in 1849 AD into the Indian Empire. Other than the areas of this state, Punjab included the *Desi* (native) states of Patiala, Jind, Nabha, Kapurthala, Faridkot, Kalsia, Malerkotla, etc.<sup>2</sup> Delhi and Hissar were also included into Punjab after the revolt of 1857 AD. *Gurus* and *Pirs* (religious teachers and holymen) took birth on the land of Punjab and many empires ruled over it. The birth of different religions and castes also took place on the land of Punjab.

Similarly, the Aryans came into Punjab and the Hindu religion was born and preached here. Islam came into being alongside. Mahmud Gaznavi invaded Punjab and subsequently came Gauri, Tughlak and many other tribes of the Afghans. As such, the frame work of Punjab would get changed after every new conquest by various tribes or invading rulers. The structure of Punjab would get changed after every victory. The compositions of *Rigveda* and the *Gita* also took place on the land of Punjab only. 'Guru Granth Sahib' - the only *Granth* of the world was also incarnated on the land of Punjab. Considering it to be its common legacy, it had kept the writings of Baba Farid, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, other Sikh Gurus and the saints in safe custody for the coming generations.<sup>3</sup>

Prof. Puran Singh :

“Punjab na Hindu, na Musalmaan,  
Punjab saara jeenda Guraan de naam te.”<sup>4</sup>

Guru Nanak Dev ji was born in 1469 and the Sikh faith came into being. Sikhism is also called *Teesra -Panth*. It is a history of approximately 239 years. The Sikh religion crossed many stages during this Period. By improving the *Gurmukhi* script Guru Angad Dev ji separated Punjabi from other languages. In times to come in 1604 A.D., by editing and publishing the first Sikh Granth- Guru Granth Sahib in Punjabi language and *Gurmukhi* script. Guru Arjan Dev ji had developed *Gurmukhi* as a separate script.<sup>5</sup> From here commences the historiography of *Gurmukhi*. The Sikhs become strong facing the pointed ends of swords of the Muslims. Guru Arjan Dev Ji became target of the eccentricity of Jahangir. Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji fell prey to the cruelty of Aurangzeb. The younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were bricked alive under the influence of this religious insanity. And then, following this, many Sikhs such as Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Mani Singh etc were martyred. Approximately 20,000 Singhs were killed, in one day, in *Vadda Ghallukara* (the great holocaust) by facing the atrocities of Ahmed Shah Abdali. In *Chhota Ghallukara* (the small holocaust) too, many Sikhs had attained martyrdom. The rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was established after countless sacrifices and *Ghallukaras*.<sup>6</sup> Under the command of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs established a strong empire by uniting the scattered power.<sup>7</sup> Guru Gobind Singh Ji lit a new flame in the monarchial rule of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by declaring *Maanas ki jaat sabbhey ekko pehchanvo*.<sup>8</sup> Maharaja Ranjit Singh created a common empire of the Sikhs the Hindus and the Muslims under the same illumination. The geographical boundaries of Punjab, which went beyond the *Khaibar* river, extended from Sind to China by establishment of the Sikh empire (which had never happened before this). At close of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Punjab had been divided into seven districts of Lahore, Multan, Sirhand, Dipalpur, Sultanpur, Jalandhar and Samana. The state of the Sikhs had become considerably strong during the times of Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh's contact with the English had been established in 1800 itself, though in actual fact, the relationship with them had begun only in 1805-06 A.D. A treaty was signed at Amritsar between the English and Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809 A.D. The Sikh states could not interfere in the areas to the North West and East of the Sutlej river.<sup>9</sup>

Ranjit Singh died in 1839 A.D. There was no able person to take care of the affairs of Punjab. The state of 140 years came crumbling down like a house of card-board Taking advantage of the disorder and anarchy of the Lahore empire, the English fought two wars with the Sikhs. The first war was fought in 1845-46 A.D and the second in 1848-49 A.D. Sind had been annexed to the British empire in 1843 A.D and Punjab in 1849

A.D. The Sikhs and Hindus got closer to each other by Punjab coming under the English. No sooner the power slipped from the hands of the Sikhs and went into the hands of the English, the Hindus, being in large numbers, recommenced their customs and rituals.<sup>10</sup> As such, a new unit of Punjab was established in which two language groups were included. Due to this, problems had been created in history of the state. Whether it was rule of the Muslims, or of the Sikhs, or of the English but Punjabi could not get the honor of becoming the state language in its own home. Many problems came up before Lord Dalhousie when Punjab was annexed to the British empire. He constituted an administrative board of three officials. This board re-organized the administration of Punjab in its short tenure of four years from 1849 A.D to 1853 A.D. After that, John Lawrence was made governor of Punjab and firmed the roots of British empire in Punjab. Due to his policies and actions, the revolt of 1857 A.D. could not spread in Punjab. The British managed schools and colleges in Punjab, the standard of education improved and the Western education and Western thinking spread in Punjab. Many social and religious movements emerged to oppose the effects of these views *Nirankari*, *Singh Sabha* and *Ahmadiya* movements got formed. The *Singh Sabha* movement aimed at protecting the Interests of the Sikhs. With this emerged the 'Arya Samaj' and 'Ahmadiya' movements, due to which, the Hindu religion and Islam also became strong. However, the three proved disastrous. Communalism emerged in Punjab.<sup>11</sup>

In the census of 1855 A.D, of a total population of 35 lacs in the five districts, which were considered to be the strong hold of the Central Punjab- Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sialkot and Gujranwala, the number of Sikhs was approximately one lac and eighty thousand only. John Lawrence, who was appointed chairman of the administrative board when Punjab was annexed to the British empire, received support and loyalty of the large parts of the Sikh *Panth*. Population of the Sikhs increased to more than five lacs, eleven thousand in 1855 A.D. Due to the Western influence, there was decline of 4% in the census of 1881 among the Sikhs of five districts (which were considered to be the centre of Sikhism).<sup>12</sup> In 1901 A.D.-1911 A.D., the population of Sikhs in Punjab increased from 21 lacs to 29 lacs. There was considerable decline in the population of Hindus and Muslims. According to the census of 1921 A.D., the population of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims was 12 %, 35 % and more than 50 % respectively. From the point of view of population of the undivided Punjab, the Sikhs were in lesser numbers from other religious categories. The total Sikh population in

Punjab was 50-55 lacs, which was less than even 12 % of the entire inhabitants. As such, the number of Sikhs was much less. The condition of Punjab was different from other places, where the struggle was confined between two communities- Hindus and Muslims. However, in Punjab, the conflict was among three communities– Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.<sup>13</sup>

A council was constituted under the Act 1861 A.D in which the Maharaja of Patiala was appointed a member. However, the British officials kept the *Gurudwaras* directly under their control. The British administration got the control of *Darbar Sahib* (revered by Sikhs as the most sacred) and *Akal Takht*, important *Gurudwaras* and institutions. These are came to be managed by the *Mahants*.<sup>14</sup> While, according to the Aokaf Act of that time, the places of worship and religious institutions of other communities were permitted to be managed by the people of brotherhood associated with those places. But, the historical places of the Sikhs were kept under control of the administration, and idols of Hindu gods and goddesses were installed at religious places of the Sikhs.<sup>15</sup> Beginning with the sixties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, various movements were originated continuously for improvement and re-establishment of identity of the Sikhs. The latter patriotic activities had also induced political awake -ning and religious reformations among the people. Prof. Gurmukh Singh got the education of Punjabi language started in 1878 A.D. He also started newspaper of *Gurmukhi* in Lahore in 1880 A.D.

These two- Harsha Singh, who was a colleague of Bhai Gurmukh Singh created a *Punjabi Parcharni Sabha*, which was exclusively dedicated to the Punjabi language in Punjabi script and spreading it. *Shahid* was the first Punjabi newspaper.<sup>16</sup> 'Singh Sabha' movement was a significant movement of that time. The first creation of Singh Sabha took place in Amritsar in 1873 A.D. The first president of Amritsar Singh Sabha was Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia and the first secretary was Giani Gian Singh. Main purpose of the creation of Singh Sabha was reintroduction of sanctity of the Sikh faith, spreading of knowledge in Punjabi language and introduction of newspapers and periodicals in Punjabi language. This was followed by creation of the Singh Sabha at Lahore on 2 November 1879A.D. Its president was Buta Singh and secretary Bhai Gurmukh Singh. Punjabi language was introduced as a subject in Oriental College with the efforts of Gurmukh Singh. He had assisted Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia and Kanwar Bikram Singh in infusing new life into the 'Amritsar Singh Sabha'. The Singh Sabhas kept forming by and by.

The period between the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century can be called especially the time of preaching of *Gurmat* when many religious preachers made efforts to spread Sikhism. Considerable awareness was spread about Sikhism and Punjabi language due to Singh Sabha.<sup>17</sup> A central organization was established in Amritsar in 1883 A.D. to conduct the affairs of Singh Sabhas. 'Chief Khalsa Diwan' was created in 1901 A.D. in Amritsar. Certain tussle also went on for some time between 'Chief Khalsa Diwan' and 'Khalsa Diwan Lahore'. 'Khalsa Diwan' (Lahore) gradually vanished and the 'Chief Khalsa Diwan' Amritsar became more powerful.<sup>18</sup> 'Chief Khalsa Diwan' organised 'Sikh Educational Conference' at Amritsar.<sup>19</sup> The conference made concerted efforts for preaching of Punjabi language. During this time only, the 'Arya Samaj' movement originated, which was organized by the Hindus on apprehending danger to their identity due to the Sikhs having gained increased esteem and due to preaching by the Singh Sabha. A new turn took place among the Sikhs due to efforts of Singh Sabha and Chief Khalsa Diwan. Sharomani Akali Dal, the prominent political party of the Sikhs was born as a result of activities of Singh Sabha and Chief Khalsa Diwan.<sup>20</sup>

A powerful movement started among the Sikhs for their faith and religious places from 1920 A.D to 1925 A.D. The 'Central Sikh League' passed a resolution in 1919 A.D, that only the *Panth* should have control over the *Gurudwaras*. A convention was held on 15 November 1920 A.D. by the Sikhs at *Akal Takht*, where a committee was formed and named it *Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee*. After getting the Gurudwara Act passed by the Assembly, the Government gave the control of all *Gurudwaras* in the hands of *Sharomani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee*(S.G.P.C) the body elected by the *nirol* (baptized) Sikhs. The *Akalis* formed the S.G.P.C for administration of the *Gurudwaras*. Another institution was formed on 20 December 1920A.D. by the name of *Sharomani Akali Dal*, which aimed at bringing the Gurudwars within the hold of *Panth* under moral pressure. Baba Kharhak Singh had become new president of the S.G.P.C. Baba Kharhak Singh, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, Master Tara Singh, Jathedar Udham Singh, Giani Kartar Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh and their friends contributed profusely towards the 'Akali' movement.<sup>21</sup> The difference between Akalis and the Congress arose after the partition only.

The history of *Sikh Panth* has been divided into four parts :

- 1 Period of the earlier *Gurus*
- 2 Period of the sacrifices of the *Panth*

3 Period of the rule of the Sikhs

4 Period of Singh Sabha and the Akali movement.<sup>22</sup>

For reforms of the *Gurudwaras*, the Sikhs organized various *morchas* (agitations), such as *Rakab Ganj Gurudwara Agitation*, *Chaabian da Morcha*, *Guru ka Baag Morcha*, *Jaito da Morcha* etc. and gave many sacrifices for years on end. At last, Government presented the Sikh Gurudwara Bill in the legislative council, which was passed. By this bill, control of all the *Gurudwaras* of Punjab was handed over to the 'S.G.P.C' the body elected by the Sikhs. The Gurudwara Act had been passed in 1925A.D.

Indian National Congress was formed in 1885A.D, by an Englishman A.O. Hume. With this, the apprehensions arose in the minds of educated Muslims and the followers of *Pirs* and *faqirs* (the mystic, religious teachers of Islam). Sir Syed Ahmed Khan encouraged the Muslims to chalk out their future in the political structure of the country and the principle of 'Two-Nations' emerged to the fore.<sup>23</sup>

As a matter of fact, the process of disintegration of Punjab had begun in 1901 A.D. A separate *Suba* (area) of 'North West Frontier Province' was created in 1901 A.D. by cutting the districts of Peshawar, Bannu, Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan etc from Punjab. The partition of Bengal was done in October 1905 A.D. by Lord Curzon, the then viceroy of India, for administrative reasons. Bengal was divided in two parts East Bengal and West Bengal. By uniting the Eastern half of Bengal (The divisions of Dacca, Chittagong and Rajshahi) with Assam, Curzon formed a new province named as East Bengal & Assam. Dacca became the capital of this province. The Western half of Bengal, with Bihar and Orissa, became another province and Calcutta continued to remain its capital. 'The East Bengal & Assam' became a Muslim majority province. Thus, the Bengali Muslims were separated from the Bengali Hindus.

Pakistan had come into being on this basis only The Bengalis vehemently opposed this division. As a result of the partition of Bengal, the 'Nationalists' organized a *Swadeshi* and *Boycott* Movement in 1905 A.D. in various parts of the country. The dynamic movement by the Congress in favor of Bengalis forced the Government for re-uniting Bengal. The reunification of Bengal was done in 1907A.D.

This was the time of beginning of the movement of 'Separatism'. Pakistan came into being after 41 years on the basis of this policy only. It was first experiment of the division of India.<sup>24</sup> Lord Minto gave separate areas for election to the Muslims in 1909A.D. and all the three seats of the assembly went to the Muslims. Of the 11 seats, not even one came in the hands of Sikhs in 1916. 'Lucknow agreement' was reached in

1916 A.D. and reconciliation was affected between congress and the Muslim league. 'The Congress- League' agreement of 1916A.D. was an important mile-stone in the history of constitutional progress of the country. The seed of division of India got sown in Lucknow itself. Due to lack of experience, the Muslim leaders agreed for equality in Punjab and for living in minority in Bengal and other areas.<sup>25</sup> Had the Hindu leaders disagreed with the views of the Muslim leaders, the differences between both the factions would have been negligible. Even so, the route was opened by these conditions for the creation of Pakistan, and a large part of Punjab and Bengal was lost. According to the 'Montague Chelmsford' report in 1919A.D, arrangement was made, other than the Muslims, for separate constituencies for election for the Sikhs. An amendment was presented by a member named Gajjan Singh that it should be linked to claims of the Sikhs. Members of both the communities- Hindus and Muslims opposed this.

In a bid to pacify the increasing sentiments of revolt in the minds of Indians, the British Government sent 'Simon commission' in 1928 A.D, but the congress boycotted it. The Indians were not happy with this commission because there was not even one Indian in it. The Sikhs also boycotted it by following the Congress.<sup>26</sup>

'Nehru Committee' was constituted under the leadership of Pandit Motilal Nehru in 1928A.D, after return of the 'Simon Commission'. The Sikhs were ignored in this report. This report was also not satisfactory for the Muslims. However, the 'Nehru Committee' gave recognition to the communal constituencies and the 'majority' status got accepted for the Muslims. The only Sikh member in this committee-Mangal Singh, did not exert pressure for special rights for the brotherhood of his native state of Punjab and the centre. The only praiseworthy effort for preparing a plan and effort made on the basis of joint constituencies was done by S.R. Dass.<sup>27</sup>

The first round table conference was held in London on 17 November 1930A.D. The Muslim League was represented by Md. Ali Jinnah and the Sikhs by Ujjal Singh & Sampuran Singh. The Sikh demanded 30% seats, but this demand was opposed by the Muslims. They wanted to keep 50% for themselves but were not willing to give 19% seats to the Sikhs.<sup>28</sup> And, on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1930A.D was finalized the 'Gandhi-Irwin' pact. This pact had been arranged by Tej Bahadur Sapru. Gandhi agreed to take part in the second 'Round Table' conference and reached London. However, this conference could not materialize. The communal election constituencies were accorded recognition in it and the situation of Punjab kept getting further complicated.<sup>29</sup> The Prime Minister of England declared his decision for the solution of political situation of Punjab. This was



termed as a 'Communal award' of 1932 A.D. Provision was made in it for reservation of 51.42% seats for the Muslims, 27.42% for the Hindus and 18.85% seats for the Sikhs and separate election constituencies for them. The Hindus and the Sikhs were dissatisfied with it and they opposed this award. However, the British government paid no heed towards this. The provision of 'Majority' status for the Muslims in this award put the Congress in confusion. Due to lack of firmness with a strong will by the Congress leadership, it did not show courage for cancellation of the award, because the Congress coveted leadership at any cost or on any base. The Congress also accepted the communal *Muslim Ekta Board* award. Muslim members of the Congress had also declared that they accept the communal award. These were representatives of Sikhs- the *Shromani Akali Dal* only which passed a resolution by rejecting the award in to and showed resolution for affecting the change. However, the change did not take place because the Congress did not support the Akali Dal. The congress agreed to fight the elections by accepting, and on the basis of this award.<sup>30</sup> The third 'Round Table conference was called in 1932 A.D, by which time, the English government had prepared the draft for the 'Government of India Act 1935 A.D'.<sup>31</sup>

The entire situations changed with passing of the 1935A.D Act. Most of the parties rejected the Dual- league system. The Congress laid conditions for agreement in the matter of independence of the provinces too. They lost who had spoken openly against the flaws of this Act, when the elections were held in Punjab in 1936A.D-37A.D. The Unionists won. One of the reasons was the limited voting right, and also, the *Jagirdars* (fiefs) and '*Bhumipati*' (big landlords) who had come to power, were feeling endangered by the rising tides in Punjab.<sup>32</sup> Of the 175 seats, the Unionists won 86 seats as per the following details :

Total seats	- 175	
Muslims	- 86	(49.14 %)
Hindus	- 43	(24.57 %)
Sikhs	- 32	(18.29 %)

Accordingly, more Punjabi Muslims were present in the Unionist party. Shromani Akali Dal never consented for joining the Congress for fighting the general elections of 1937A.D. The English got more interested in strengthening the ministry of Unionists in Punjab. This interest of the Britishers got stronger when, later on, Mahatma Gandhi launched his personal *Satyagraha* movement in 1940A.D. Subsequently, the Britishers further strengthened the position of Sikandar by the compromise of Sir Sikandar Hayat

Khan with the Akalis through Baldev Singh.<sup>33</sup>

A convention of the 'All India Muslim League' was held at Lahore on 23 March 1940 A.D, in which a resolution, which was given the name of *Pakistan da Matta* (Pakistan Resolution) was passed. Every one had started to follow the Muslim League. Barring the Communist Sikhs, the plan for Pakistan was opposed, especially by 'Chief Khalsa Diwan', 'Central Akali Dal' State Congress and *Sharomani Akali Dal*. The Muslim population being more than 55 % in the state in 1940s, they had their predomination in the Unionist party. The Hindus, though being less than 30 %, but were ahead of everyone in business and vocations. The number of Sikhs was only half of the Hindus but they had significant role in the political, economic and cultural life of the state. This proposal was based on the assumption that the Indian Hindus and Muslims are two different nations. As such, the idea of 'Pakistan' the state of the Muslim majority, was in the air since 1930A.D. This communal tension increased further between Muslims and non-Muslims according to the census report of 1940A.D.<sup>34</sup>

The All-party Government of England sent a mission under the leadership of Sir Stafford Cripps Leader of the social movement. A deligation of the Akalis met Cripps. Baldev Singh, Ujjal Singh, Master Tara Singh and Sir Joginder Singh were the main members of this delegation. They projected the demand for safety of the Sikhs before Cripps. The 'All-party' working committee of Sikhs submitted a memorandum to Cripps, in which, by rejecting proposals of the British and by mentioning their other problems, they demanded a separate state from Pakistan. They said that the memorandum pertains to those people who would barely be 1% in India. Cripps assured the Sikhs of providing full co-operation and sympathy. This kindled a new hope among the Sikhs. The Congressmen were not much impressed from his plan because they had started to see clearly the seeds of division of the country in this plot. This mission recommended an interim government and a *Dur-Paar* agreement. Along with that, he recommended the grant of status of independence to India within the British Commonwealth. 'Cripps Mission Plan' was rejected by all parties, and the mission was subsequently called back. As a result of failure of the 'Cripps Mission' discontentment and disappointment got generated among the people across the entire country.<sup>35</sup>

A resolution was passed on 18 August, 1942 A.D for Quitting India. The Congress held many meetings to protest and took out processions. The attitude of Muslim League, Akali Party and Hindu Maha Sabha was not in favor of 'Quit India' activities of the

Congress. The Communist party and other parties also opposed this agitation. Gandhi Ji and a few other Congress leaders were apprehended in this agitation. Gandhi Ji, to show his displeasure, resorted to 'fast unto death' also against rigid policy of the Government in 1943A.D. Gandhi Ji was released in 1944A.D. Lord Wavell came as the new viceroy of India. He presented a proposal after a long dialogue with the Indian leaders at Shimla in 1945A.D. Muslim League only was accepted as representative of the Muslims in this proposal, due to which this proposal did not materialize. Government of Mr. Attlee was formed after this and he made efforts to solve the Indian problem. Along with this, the Akalis and the Nationalist Sikhs also got divided in two groups. Akalis were opposed to the Communists because Akalis had supported the Muslim League for their demand of 'Pakistan'.<sup>36</sup>

Only after this, Mr. Ali Jinnah demanded that Khizr Hyat should change the name of his Government from 'Unionist' to 'Muslim League Coalition Government'. Khizr Hayat refused to do so, as a result of which, the Muslim members started quitting the Unionist Party the party which had made them the members of Assembly.<sup>37</sup> In July 1944A.D, the 'Raja Ji-Gandhi' formula came to the fore, due to which the demand of Muslim League for 'Pakistan' got further support. Ever since becoming the Chief Minister, Khizr Hyat had believed in friendship of the Akalis. But, Khizr Hayat had to face difficulties when the Akali leaders demanded *Azad Punjab* at par with 'Pakistan'.

*Azad Punjab* scheme was start in 1943A.D. Initially, the Akali Dal raised a demand which aimed at asking for an independent state for the Sikhs. In 1942A.D, Akali Dal raised the demand for an *Azad Punjab*, whose purpose was to re-demarcate the boundaries of Punjab in such a manner that the Muslim-majority districts were taken away and the Sikh population get included in it. Its purpose was to ensure that there should be no area which does not have majority of a particular community. By separating Gujarat, Shahpur, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attack, Mianwali, Jhang, Multan, Muzaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan, the population of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims would have been equal. The possibility of communalism also would have reduced. Master Tara Singh made it clear that the purpose of this proposal was to protect the interests of the Sikhs from the communal pressure of the Muslims. Akali Party, whose demand for an *Azad Punjab* was introduced to oppose the demand of Pakistan, did not support division of the country. The purpose of this move was to keep a check on the demand of the Muslims for Pakistan. This move had support of the 'Hindu Maha Sabha', too.<sup>39</sup>

The Congress leadership was more ambitious in wresting power from hands of the British, rather than laying stress on unity of India. Till this time too, the Sikhs had never demanded a separate 'Homeland' or any particular area. Even then, the Sikhs were not given their due rights.

At a meeting (20 August 1944A.D) at Amritsar, attended by leaders of all Sikh parties, speeches were made strongly criticizing Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. Giani Kartar Singh said, "Let us now give up the practice of looking up to Mr Gandhi for the protection of our interests." It was clear from the formula of Raj Gopal Acharya that Pakistan was in the making. This came to be known subsequently as 'Raja ji da Formula' (Formula of Raja Ji), and was presented to Jinnah in April 1944A.D. However, there was no provision anywhere in conditions of the formula for protection of the Sikhs.<sup>40</sup>

The English offered various plans for an agreement. First, Viceroy Lord Wavell gave his plan, followed by the presentation of plan of the council of ministers. Elections for the constituent assembly took place simultaneously. Interim Government was formed in 1944A.D, which resulted in serious conflicts between Hindus and the Muslims.

To protect their authority, the English Government sent a 'Cabinet Mission' of three members-*Pentthick* Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander. On 16 May 1946A.D, they sent one draft each, known as plans of the Cabinet Commission to all parties. It had two parts-Permanent and Temporary. Proposals mentioned there in were based on recommendations of the 'Cripps Mission'. This mission did its best to reduce the divide between Hindus and the Muslim League but could not succeed. The Sikhs were left at the mercy of the Muslims.

In the 'Permanent' part of the Cabinet Mission, the Central Government was to constitute a committee for the formation of Laws. This committee was to have equal number of representatives of the Hindu and Muslim majority districts.

The provinces were formed thus and India was to be a '*Sangh*' (Union) as Under:

- 1 Bengal and Assam
- 2 Punjab Sind, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province.
- 3 All the remaining districts, Orissa, Bihar, U.P, Bombay and Madras.

With this identification of areas, representation of the Punjab, North West Frontier Province and Sind was to be done on the basis of population. 23 Muslims, Hindus and 4 Sikhs were to be inducted. This mission did its very best to reduce the divide between Hindus and the Muslim league but could not succeed. The Sikhs were left at mercy of

the Muslims. This mission kept not only the non-Muslim areas under the power of the Muslims but the entire province of Assam, where the non-Muslims were in an overwhelming majority, was also kept with it. All this had been done only to please the Muslims, injustice had been done with the Sikhs and the Sikhs were over looked entirely. In spite of this, the Muslim League rejected the plan of 'Cabinet Mission'.

In the election manifesto of 1946A.D too, the Congress declared its support for demarcation of the provinces on the basis of language. Elections to Punjab Legislative Assembly were also held in 1946A.D. The results were as under:

Total Seats	- 175
Muslim League	- 75
Congress	- 51
Unionists	- 20
Akalis	- 22
Independents	- 07

As such, the Muslim League won maximum seats, whereas, it had won only one seat in 1937A.D. The seats of Congress increased from 18 to 51. Biggest loser was the 'Unionist' party, whose seats had gotten reduced from 95 to 20. Though the Muslim league had received maximum seats than other parties, yet, Khizr Hyat Khan- leader of the Unionist Party, formed a coalition council of ministers with the combination of Congress and Akali party. The leaders of Muslim league got agitated at it and launched a mission against the coalition ministry. Compelled by the circumstances, Khizar Hyat Khan had to resign on 3 March 1947A.D.<sup>41</sup> On 16 August 1946A.D, they announced for Direct Action for achievement of the creation of Pakistan. This resulted in communal riots in many towns of Bengal, Bihar and Punjab.<sup>42</sup>

The condition of the Sikhs was pathetic at that time. As such, Government of the Unionists (which had Muslims) attacked the rights of the Sikhs. The Unionist Party ruled over Punjab for nine Years from 1937A.D to 1946A.D. On the other hand, the Hindus tried to accommodate the Sikhs, and thus demanded for a 'Home Land'. However, this could not be given a practical shape. Chaos occurred every where.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the process of transfer of political power continued from 1942A.D to 1947A.D. The Congress leadership could not prepare any meaningful plan for future of the Sikhs. All 'Raja ji Formula', 'Gandhi-Jinnah Dialogue' and all conferences and activities were pointing towards the division of a kind, Somehow, in all these activities and conferences, there was never any mention of invitation to the third party– The Sikhs.<sup>44</sup>

On 20 February, 1947A.D, Mr Attlee– the Prime Ministe of England had declared to quit India by June 1948A.D. Lord Mountbatten came as viceroy to India in place of Mr. Wavell in March 1947A.D. He divided the old Punjab into two parts. Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and Sardar Baldev Singh met Mountbatten on 18 April 1947A.D. Mountbatten rejected the proposal for the Muslims to be 40%, and Hindus and the Sikhs to be 30% each. The other demand put forward was that the Punjab be divided. Baldev Singh said that the discussions have been held with Jinnah, and, that he agrees on the the principle of exchange of the population. However, Mountbatten asked for the subject of exchange of population to be submitted in writing. Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh, Baldev Singh, Ujjal Singh and Harnam Singh kept meeting the Chief of Staff of Mountbatten-the Viceroy. Sardar Patel consented to the division of the country. Nehru and Patel have been held responsible for division of the country. Abdul Kalam Azad says that, next to Jinnah, Patel was the Chief supporter of division of the country among the Congressmen.

Thus, after deliberating with various leaders over the constitutional implications, Mountbatten Concluded that :

1. If the power and purpose of Jinnah is to acknowledged, then the country will have to be divided.
2. The principle of dividing the centre applies to areas where the number of people of the two communities is generally equal.<sup>45</sup>

The Governor of Punjab- Sir E M Jenkins said that the Sikhs will be divided into two groups and Jinnah will not be satisfied with this plan when Mountbatten was giving final shape to *Batwara Plan* or '3 June Plan' then the Sikh leaders had submitted three demands o him :-

1. Punjab should be divided. Boundary of East Punjab be so drawn that maximum number of Sikhs are able to come into East Punjab.
2. The Akali Dal passed a resolution on 16 April 1947A.D that the population and property of the Sikhs be exchanged, as the riots have proved that the Sikhs cannot live in Pakistan.

Following be taken as base while at the time of demarcation :-

1. Population
2. Ownership of land and the provision of revenue.
3. Historical *Gurudwaras*.

Pandit Nehru said that land cannot be divided on the basis of property, but the

Gurduwaras of the Sikhs, which are in the area of Muslim majority, will be kept in mind. The land of Amritsar, which is so sacred, will definitely be given to the Sikhs. Keeping foremost in mind the intricate problem of Punjab and other issues, a meeting was called by the viceroy at Shimla on 11 May, 1947 A.D. The subject of Punjab was the agenda of this meeting. The viceroy informed in the meeting that Mr Jinnah had, in fact, asked for the entire Punjab for Pakistan, as it had the majority of Muslims in it. The Sikhs demanded division of Punjab and the Congress ratified it. The Congress based it on the principle that the districts having majority of the non-Muslims should not go to Pakistan. Viceroy said that the *Hadd-banddi* (delimitation) commission should be asked to keep the religious interests of the Sikhs in mind. Baldev Singh had not been invited to this meeting, because Mountbatten had understood that the Sikhs have decided to stay back in India, and that the Congress itself represents them. The right of the Sikhs over the *Gurudwaras* in West Punjab was not agreed to, and the plan for division was made due to the requirements of Mr Jinnah. The only demand of the Sikhs— the division of Punjab, had been agreed to, and that too, by keeping in mind the interests of the Hindus and the Muslims. The demands of exchange of population on the basis of property or on the basis of special rights over the *Gurudwaras* were rejected. Not only that, after returning from England and obtaining the last approval on the *Batwaara Plan* from the British government, the viceroy declared the 3 June *Batwaara Plan*. Giani Kartar Singh, who was president of *Sharomani Akali Dal* in 1947 A.D. had not accepted the '3 June' plan, and given a note to the viceroy about demands of the Sikhs.<sup>46</sup>

Under the '3 June' plan, there were four members of Punjab Demarcation Commission— Justice Din Muhammad, Justice Muhammad Munir, Justice Meharchand Mahajan and Justice Tej Singh. Its president was Redcliff, who became 'Lord' Redcliff later on.

The Sikhs said that they rule over the land of Punjab and their demands should be met, and that the Sikhs had won many battles for the British government. But no one cared for the Sikhs and the Sikhs were betrayed. *Sharomani Akali Dal* decided to celebrate 'Nankana Sahib' day on 27 July, 1947 A.D. but the Punjab Government laid restriction over it. At that time, the Akali leader— Master Tara Singh wrote clearly in a memorandum to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru that if Hindus also want Hindu rule, the Muslims demand Muslim rule, then the Sikhs can also demand the Sikh rule. The Sikh state should encompass all that is related historically, culturally, religiously and economically to us. If Hindustan and Pakistan is divided in two parts then the demand

for 'Sikh Home Land'.<sup>47</sup>

On 15 August, 1947 A.D, the Muslims got their country- 'Pakistan' and the Hindus got *Bharat*. The Sikh nation got divided in two parts. Lacs of Sikhs got divided in two 'Punjabs'. The sixth river– the 'river of blood' flowed in the land of five rivers that flowed in it. The year of 1947A.D saw the blood of lacs of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims being spilled. Gandhi and Jinnah laid waste the beautiful garden of the Sikhs and the Bengalis.

Prior to the partition, Punjab had been divided into various divisions. There were many districts in each division. Total number of districts of Punjab was 29.

1. Ambala Division Gurgaon, Rohtak, Hissar, Karnal, Ambala and Shimla.
2. Jalandhar Division Kangra, Hushiarpur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Ferozepur
3. Lahore Division Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala, Shekhupura, Sialkot and Gurdaspur
4. Multan Division Montgomery, Layalpur, Jhang, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Dera Gazi Khan

After partition of Punjab, a 'Boundary' commission was constituted under the chairmanship of Radcliff for defining the boundary between the West (Pakistan) Punjab and East (India) Punjab. The declaration of Radcliff is known as 'Punjab Boundary Award'. Following areas were included in the two Punjabs according to this Award :

1. West Punjab -16 Districts were included in West Punjab, which became part of Pakistan as under :
  - a) Six districts of Rawalpindi Division– Gujrat, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attack, Mianwali and Shahpur.
  - b) Six districts of Multan Division– Montgomery, Layalpur, Jhang, Multan, Muzaffargarh and Dera Gazi Khan.
  - c) Four districts of Lahore Division– Shekhupura, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Lahore, Other than these 16 districts, Shakargarh Tehsil of Gurdaspur district was also included in West Punjab.
2. East Punjab- East Punjab, which became part of India had 13 districts in it as under :
  - a) Six districts of Ambala Division– Gurgaon, Rohtak, Karnal, Hissar, Ambala and Shimla.
  - b) Five districts of Jalandhar Division– Kangra, Hushiarpur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Ferozpur.



c) Whole of Amritsar District and three Tehsils of Gurdaspur District.

Other than these areas, certain area of Lahore of West Punjab was also included in it.<sup>48</sup>

In 1947AD, the population of Punjab was 1,58,66,888 with 33% Sikhs and 62.3% Hindus. The population of Sikhs in these 12 Punjabi- speaking districts came to 52%. At this time, a large population among the Sikhs was that of the refugees. The problem of the refugees got surfaced. They were rehabilitated and the government made arrangement of camps for them. Chandu Lal Trivedi issued a circular on 10 Oct, 1947 A.D to the effect that 'the Sikhs are a nation of the criminals and are a threat to the peace-loving Hindus'. Under the influence of language of the majority, religion, literature and nationality, effort was made in a system to obliterate the Sikh nation. The Sikhs started saying, "The Muslims got Pakistan: The Hindus got Hindustan, But what did we Sikhs get out of it ? With such a mental state, it was not difficult to dream of a *Sikh Raaj* by kindling the fire of hatred against destiny."<sup>49</sup>

The Western part of the British Punjab was under the Muslim domination, where as the Eastern part was under control of the Hindu 'Jatts' (The landlord farmers). Majority of the Sikh were in the Central Punjab. Four centres of the Sikh population– Ludhiana and Amritsar were in the British Punjab and Faridkot and Patiala were in the Sikh states. Sikhs were only 13 % in whole Punjab but they were held in full awe and were the biggest land-lords in the Cenral districts. 46% of the total revenue in Lahore division was collected from the Sikhs. The 'Jatts Sikhs' of Central Districts had developed the farming in lands of the districts of Layalpur and Montgomery.<sup>50</sup>

The Hindus started misbehaving with the Sikhs after the partition of Punjab. The Sikhs suffered the most due to partition of Punjab. The British resorted to the policy of 'divide and rule', which proved successful. The Hindus, who had acknowledged Master Tara Singh to be their *Sardar* and had pledged to follow his leadership, now started becoming apprehensive that the Sikhs may not start making demands of the promises which had been made to them. As such, they became anti-Sikhs. These promises had been made by Jawahar Lal Nehru and Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi. The Sikhs, too, had started demanding their own, separate state. Accordingly, Gopi Chand Bhargava was made Chief Minister and Sir Chandu Trivedi -the Governor of Punjab on 15 August, 1947 AD. Gopi Chand Bhargava remained the Chief Minister till 15 April, 1949A.D.<sup>51</sup>

In 1948A.D, the Government took two such steps which encouraged the concept of *Sikh Raaj*. PEPSU was formed by amalgamating the Sikh states, Malerkotla and

Nalagarh. The Sikhs became a 'Majority' in PEPSU and resorted to demanding their rights on the basis of 'Majority'.<sup>52</sup>

As such, Punjab kept changing with every Government. Punjab was ruled by the British for a considerable time and Punjab progressed significantly. Religious movements came to the fore in Punjab resulting in the emergence of communalism. Punjabi language was widely preached due to the movement of Singh Sabha. Sharomani Akali Dal and Sharomani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (S.G.P.C) were formed which started to protect the interests of the Sikhs. Various missions such as Simon Commission, Cripps Mission, Cabinet Mission were sent by the British. However, the atmosphere of India got worsened further rather than improvement. Three 'Round Table' conferences were held in London where special rights were demanded for the Sikhs. Declaration was made on 16 August, 1946 A.D for Direct Action for the attainment of Pakistan. The activities for changes in government kept happening from 1942 A.D to 1947 A.D but the Congress paid no attention to the interests of the Sikhs. Lord Mountbatten divided the country into two parts, which was very tragic for the nation. Devastating riots took place in East and West Punjab- before and after the partition, in which thousands of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims lost their lives. The 'Divide and Rule' policy was adopted by the British and Punjab got divided into two parts.

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- 51 Weekly, 'Punjabi Rattan', Ludhiana, 15 August 1957, p.5
- 52 Khushwant Singh, Op.cit., p.289  
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## PEPSU AND AKALI DEMAND FOR PUNJABI SUBA

After rejection of demand for constitutional protection of Sikh brotherhood, being a minority, by the Hindu-majority Legislative Assembly, the Akali leadership had concentrated their entire energy towards the demand for Punjabi Suba. After independence, the Akali leaders channelized all their efforts to get those promises filled which Gandhi and Nehru, including main leaders of the Congress had made to the Sikhs. The Congress had promised to create an organizational structure for India. The Sikhs had been hopeful of the Congress being secular and well-wisher of the public and that they would again get their rightful and respectable place in India after a struggle of 100 years. The Hindus had gotten Hindustan and the Muslims Pakistan, but the Sikhs got nothing and the Sikhs had continued to remain oppressed under the Hindus. The Sikh nation was getting lost among the Hindus. One were those dominant types who were considering the Sikhs to be a part of the Hindu brotherhood: the other from those powers who were fanatically bent upon the notion that a religion cannot be the basis of any nation. As such, the demand of Sikhs for a 'Home Land' had not been accepted. The Sikhs, therefore, had started the demand for Punjabi Suba on linguistic base. The issue of the freedom of the Sikh Panth under a Hindu majority rule after independence had become very complicated.<sup>1</sup>

Precisely 21 days after attaining independence, the Sikh leader Master Tara Singh had the first meeting with the First Prime Minister of India- Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, in which, it was discussed about fulfilling the constitutional and legal promises made to Sikhs during the struggle for independence. But, Nehru said that the earlier promises should not be to discussed and the situations had changed since then. According to Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Master Tara Singh got surprised and then said,

“But Pandit Ji, we ourselves have changed the situation, and have changed so that the English Government should go away and that you, becoming the rulers, should fulfill the promises made to us. We kept giving sacrifices as you were not in a position to fulfill your promises with the presence of the English. We should forget the assurance given by you. What sort of justice is this which you are going to give to the citizens of a free country ”? <sup>2</sup>

Pandit Nehru also said,

“We have decided to make the country secular in the circumstances which have so changed. No special privileges will be given to the followers of any particular religion. Consider the earlier matters discussed by us as cancelled. You will be happy if you mould yourselves to the changed conditions. All inhabitants will be Indians now, and not Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs.”<sup>3</sup>

Nehru also said that the minorities will not be discriminated against. There was argument on this issue between Master Tara Singh and Pt. Nehru. Master Tara Singh said that, “Your this decision will also be similar to the ones made earlier.” Whenever the Sikhs raised the issue of their rights and reminded about their earlier promises, efforts were made to silence them by declaring them to be sectarian, regional, separatists etc. Congress came to power with independence. All the Congress party, its leaders and the administration had abruptly changed their attitude. Sardar Hukam Singh commented by looking at it that,

“The Sikh leadership felt looted from all sides”.<sup>4</sup>

The Sharomani Akali Dal had started the demand for a separate state on the lines of demand for Pakistan by the Muslim league.

Had it been taken earnestly and seriously then some or the other solution would definitely have been found for the Sikhs. However, no attention was paid to the interests of the Sikhs. No step was taken to pacify the Sikhs politically. Due to the deceit meted out to the Sikhs and the discrimination shown to them after independence, the Sikhs had started to feel the inadequacy of their identity. Resultantly, they started demanding a separate state for themselves.<sup>5</sup>

The Akali leaders also got alerted. They also wanted to have their separate identity, away from the Congress. Giani Kartar Singh took two important steps soon after the independence on 15 August 1947 A.D. First demand for reorganization of the East Punjab and second, the joining of Akali members of the Legislative Assembly with the Congress Assembly Party.

The purpose of this move was to get the demands of the Sikh brotherhood approved, according to the advocated principles of the Congress, by sitting with the Congress and by taking the help of the Congress members. In the end of December 1947 A.D, Giani Kartar Singh had called for a united conference in the guest house of the factory of Sardar. Kundan Singh Reru (Jalandhar), in which, those present included Sardar Sadhu Singh Hamdard, Sardar Amar Singh Dosanjh, Sardar Amar Singh Ambalwi etc. Giani

Kartar Singh proposed that the reorganization of states on the basis of language is a principle being adopted by the Congress since 1931A.D, and that, we should now demand a 'Punjabi Suba' on the basis of this principle of the Congress.<sup>6</sup> The Akalis held a meeting at Amritsar on 20 April 1948A.D, in which, the demand for the creation of a 'Punjabi Suba' was made for the first time. Prior to this, on 17 March 1948A.D, the working committee of Sharomani Akali Dal ordered the *Panthak* members of the Legislative Assembly to join the Congress. Giani Kartar Singh was the president of Sharomani Akali Dal at that time. He had been providing guidance to Akali Dal in times of crisis.

The Akali Legislators had also joined the Congress in January 1948A.D. Giani Kartar Singh and Hukam Singh debated on the issue of separate representation of the Sikhs. The Congress and the Akalis had remained separate parties in the Government. Giani Kartar Singh had made considerable efforts to get rightful share to Punjabi language in the fields of education and public administration. The Congress wanted to create its own dominance. In all probability, the meanings of the legislative words would get changed in the constitutional dictionary of the Congress, whenever they were applied to the Sikhs. As and when the question of majority arose in Patiala Union, the Congress would reply that theirs was a secular country and there was no question of its share being given to anyone.<sup>7</sup>

There were about 600 local states at the time of India's independence. With his sagacity, Sardar Patel grouped these states in the Indian Union within one year and certain new states were created by combining them with each other. A new state of Punjab was created by combining all the sub-states. Rehabilitation was the cause of creation of this new state. Nowhere in the History of the world did so much uprooting of a community take place in which 40 % of the population became homeless and rehabilitated. The advantage that accrued to the Sikhs was that an area got created for the Sikh population.<sup>8</sup>

After India attained independence, the leaders of 'Prajaa-Mandal' demanded the merging of states of East Punjab with Indian Punjab. However, the 'Lok Sewak Sabha' opposed it, and the Akalis, too, favored it. The newly formed Lok Sabha became successful but the 'Prajaa-Mandal' remained unsuccessful. The sub-states of Punjab were permitted to retain their independent identity. The six Sikh states of Punjab were Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Kapurthala, and Kalsia. The government decided to make one state by combining all the sub-states of Punjab, Malerkotla and Nalagarh and



seven states were formed and given the name of PEPSU.<sup>9</sup>

PEPSU was organized by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel- the then Home Minister on 15 July 1948 A.D. Maharaja Yadvindra Singh of the sub-state of Patiala was made the '*Raj Pramukh*' and Maharaja Jagjit Singh appointed as the deputy '*Raj Pramukh*' of the state of Punjab. Background of these states of Punjab is linked to the Time immemorial of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The period of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the time of great upheaval for the Punjabis. A number of political events took place after eight years of the formation of PEPSU. Sardar Gian Singh Rarewala had become the first Chief Minister of PEPSU. After that, Colonel Raghubir Singh and Lala Brijbhan respectively became the Chief Ministers of PEPSU. There parties active at the time of the formation of PEPSU were Prajaa-Mandal, Akali Dal and Communist Party. Prajaa-Mandal merged with the Congress with the formation of PEPSU. The issue was related to the formation of interim government at that time. It was proposed that there should be a Sikh Prime Minister for a unified system. This proposal was opposed by the Hindu leadership. In this union of Patiala and East Punjab, including Malerkotla, all were the Sikh states, and it was not that there should be an interim government with Sikh leadership.<sup>10</sup>

The Akali Dal had claimed possession of PEPSU as it was a Sikh majority state. But, the central government appointed a retired official- Gian Singh Rarewala as the Chief Minister of PEPSU. Both- the Akalis and the Congress got agitated over it. After a few months, PEPSU Congress got divided in two parts. PEPSU became the first non-Congress state in India. However, this Government also did not last long as there were regular political defections by parties. Still, the Sikhs of PEPSU benefitted considerably and the Sikhs saw a new ray of hope and new opportunities emerged for them. Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava had been the Chief Minister these days. He remained the Chief Minister from 15 August 1947 A.D till 15 April 1949 A.D. Similarly, the Bhargava government made Punjabi and Hindi the mediums of education in June 1948 A.D.<sup>11</sup>

Sectarian conditions had emerged in Punjab due to the Hindu leadership having objected to the provision of any type of security to the Sikhs, due to which, the ministry of East Punjab had to agree for the constitution of a 'Minority Committee'. This committee had been appointed in the beginning of 15 November 1948 A.D with the unanimous vote of the House. Due to the constitution of 'Minority Committee' and existing conditions of that time, all the Sikh members of Assembly had prepared a demand letter for provision of protection. All Sikh members of the Punjab Assembly

signed the demand letter. Only Partap Singh Kairon did not sign this letter.<sup>12</sup>

Memorandum of the 13 demands included :

- 50 % representation in the state Government should be given to the Sikhs.
- 50 % share to the Sikhs in the Central government.
- Membership on the basis of census of 1941 A.D.
- One minister and one deputy minister should be from the Sikhs in the Central government.
- The appointment of 'Rajpal' and Chief Minister should be given alternatively to a Hindu and a Sikh.
- 40 % jobs should be kept reserved for the Sikhs.
- The district of Gurgaon and the area of Loharu should be taken out of East Punjab.

In case these demands were rejected then permission should be granted to the Sikhs for the creation of a new 'Suba' by combining seven districts— Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Ambala. This one 'Suba' and PEPSU, where 50 % Sikhs could have joined should be given to the Sikhs. It was for the first time in History when the Sikhs had united themselves in a large area.

The 'Minority Committee ' meeting was held in Ambala. The 13-point demand of the Sikh legislators had been discussed in it. The 'Minority Committee ' could not reach any decision, due to which, a sub-committee had been appointed. What could the Sikh-minority hope for protection from this 'Hindu Committee' ? This committee had favored the non-grant of special privileges to the Sikhs. As chairman of the committee, Sardar Patel had rejected all these demands regarding the rights of minorities.

The Congress had taken the decision for making a one-language state in the country much before independence. The national consensus was of the view that, after independence, separate states would be formed for all the major languages and the same would be recognized as the state language.<sup>14</sup>

The demand for Punjabi Suba by the Akalis was not abrupt after independence. They knew for sure that, whether they demand or not, the 'Punjabi Suba' was certain to be formed. Even if one state was formed on the basis of language- Punjab was sure to be the one. The recommendation was made on the basis of language for Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh. As such, many states were formed after independence on the basis of language, and recommendations were being made for the formation of many more

states. Accordingly, the demand for Punjabi Suba had intensified. Master Tara Singh had raised the voice for Punjabi Suba in 1948 A.D. He held a conference in Delhi on 2 August and informed that he had written to the president of constituent assembly for Punjabi Suba to be made on the basis of language. Five demands of the Sharomani Akali Dal had been announced.<sup>15</sup> One of these demands wanted the Punjabi language to be made the court language and be medium of education in schools and college. The other demand was for the creation of a Punjabi speaking state. A proposal was made in the meeting of the Akali Dal, held on 15 February, 1949 A.D, that a state conference be held in Delhi for presenting the demands of the Sikhs and, that a *Shahidi Diwan* will be organized in *Gurudwara Rkaab Ganj*. But, Sardar Patel did not agree to even this compromising decision. Master Tara Singh had been arrested at Narela railway station on 20 February 1949 A.D, while on way to Delhi. It was a sort of symbolic beginning of the Akali struggle for a lingual state and the base had been made with this for the Sikh cause. Many processions and conferences had begun along with it. The Congress group had control over the *Gurudwaras*. Master Tara Singh spent a long time in the jails in UP. Later on, the agitation continued in PEPSU and Punjab, albeit nominal. The issue of Punjabi Suba was rarely discussed.<sup>16</sup>

The draft committee of constitution assembly had appointed a commission in India for the organization of states on the basis of language. The 'Dar Commission' had recommended against the organization of states on the basis of language. New rules were being found for revised demarcation of the country. This commission said very emphatically that the fresh demarcation of states should be done by according preference to administrative issues rather than the singularity of language.<sup>17</sup> The division of '*Subas*' was to be made on the following bases :-

- Geographical continuity and absence of certain parts and gaps of lands.
- Financial satisfaction
- Administrative facility
- Scope for future development

A great leap for people of concerned language of the state for partial compromise. Non compelling by persons of majority over minority for speaking the language of the new *Suba*.<sup>18</sup>

This report had been considered in a meeting of the Indian National Congress held at Jaipur in 1948 A.D. This issue was handed over to the 'JVP' Committee. The committee

was named after the names of its members and included Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. PattaBhi Sitaramayya. This report had been accepted by the Congress Working Committee in April 1949 A.D. It was assigned the task of submitting its views regarding the demarcation of Subas in the light of the report of 'Dar Commission'. The forward thinking organisations, especially the Communist party had contributed most for its closure.<sup>19</sup>

Discontentment of the Sikhs increased further. Hindus, too, had refused to accept Punjabi language. Though they lived in Punjabi speaking area but their language was Hindi. The religion, customs and culture of the Sikhs was linked to the Punjabi language. In June 1948 A.D, the first chief minister of East Punjab- Gopi Chand Bhargava had made an announcement that Hindi, along with Punjabi would be made the medium of education in schools. However, there were concessions for the Hindu-majority, because they, in spite of being speakers of Punjabi, would tell their mother tongue to be Hindi.<sup>20</sup> Accordingly, Master Tara Singh organized three camps for strengthening the Akalis :

- *Gurmat Maha-Samaagam* in Amritsar on 11 June, 1948 A.D.
- *Gurmat Maha-Samaagam* in Patiala on 1 and 2 September, 1951 A.D and
- *Japp-Tapp Samaagam* in Anandpur Sahib on 16 July, 1953 A.D.

In this manner, the Akali leaders also resorted to such steps as 'fast unto death' in favor of the demand for Punjabi Suba.<sup>21</sup>

Congress had become the leading party in East Punjab after independence. As such, all the Chief Ministers were related to the Congress party only. Three leading Akali legislators- Sarwan Singh, Ishar Singh Majhail and Udham Singh Nagoke had joined the Congress Assembly Party on 18 March 1948 A.D, much before the Akali Dal could give directions to all its members in the Assembly. The Government had initiated two steps, resulting in increase of the Sikh domain. One the PEPSU was formed and the second step had been taken by the government in 1951 A.D where the Sikhs got the excuse which they had been waiting for. Punjab was declared a bilingual state. Both- Punjabi and Hindi had been made the official languages. This resulted in increase of conflict between the Hindus and the Sikhs.<sup>24</sup> The Punjab government constituted a *Sadbhawna* (Goodwill) committee which had worked for full one year and had forwarded its report to the Punjab Government. Its two honorable members were Principal Jodh Singh and Jai Chand Vidiya Alankaar. This report was published by the

Punjab government and, along with it, a 26-member committee was formed to find solution of this report and the issue of language. However, the Sharomani Committee and the Akali Dal had boycotted this committee of 26 members. In brief, *Sadbhawna* (Goodwill) committee had visited various places between August 1958 A.D to May 1959 A.D and had met about 700 persons. It had recommended that there can be no solution to the Hindi- Punjabi tussle. Punjabi should be made a secondary language in the Hindi speaking areas. Punjabi education should not be made compulsory for those who do not wish to join any government service. Sikh members had walked-out in protest.<sup>22</sup>

After release from jail in 1949 A.D, Master Tara Singh had propagated the demand for Punjabi Suba with full vigour. A state which should have the Sikh majority, even in place of the Sikh majority, stress was laid on having Punjabi (in Gurmukhi script) as the official language.

Giani Kartar Singh, in contrast to Master Tara Singh fighting head on, was making efforts for a place of Punjabi language by political manipulations of make and break. A significant mile stone in this historical stage was the 'Sachar Formula', presented on 2 October, 1949 A.D. The Chief Minister of Punjab- Bhim Sen Sachar and Giani Kartar Singh prepared a plan (called 'Sachar Formula') to solve the language issue, stop the increasing sectarian feelings between the Hindus and the Sikhs and to satisfy both the parties. The Hindu-Sikh conflict had increased due to the announcement made by Gopi Chand Bhargava, where in both- Hindi and Punjabi were made the mediums of education and Punjab was declared to be a bilingual state. Another person of the 'Arya Samaj' ideology -Bhim Sen Sachar was made the Chief Minister of Punjab in place of Bhargava. The initial name of the plan was 'Sachar-Giani Formula', which was subsequently came to be called 'Sachar Formula'.<sup>23</sup> This formula had been made by two Hindus and two Sikhs, who were members of the Congress party at that time. Punjab had been declared a bilingual state. Sardar Patel was in favor of abolishing the reservation policy and the Muslim leaders, too, had opposed it. An act was made in 1949-50 A.D in which the reservation was meant only for the Scheduled castes. The Sikhs did not agree. Maulana Azad had spoken in favor of reservation. The demand for stopping the reservation by Ismail Sahib was also cancelled. Sachar Formula' had remained in force till the formation of 'Punjabi Suba'.<sup>24</sup> Three areas of Punjab were made on the basis of language according to this formula :

**Punjabi Area:** The district of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Hushiarpur,

Kapurthala, Ludhiana, that area of Hisar district from Ferozepur to the East towards the area of Ghaggar river in Patiala, two tehsils of Ambala district- Ropar and Khararh (PEPSU was a separate Suba at that time). Kangra district of Jalandhar division had not been included in the territory of Punjab.

**Hindi Area:** Other than the district of Kangra, Rohtak, Gurgaon and Karnal districts of Ambala division were included in it, Hisar district (to the South of Ghaggar), two tehsils of Ambala district- Jagadhri and Naraingarh.

**'Do-Bhaashi' (Bi-lingual) Area:** Ambala tehsil of the district of Ambala and Shimla (which was a part of Punjab at that time).

Punjabi was made the medium of education for first to tenth classes under this formula. However, a concession was made to the extent that, should 10 students of one class and 40 of the entire school demanded Hindi, and not Punjabi as medium, then they will be permitted to do so by the school. Arrangement was made under this formula that the students will compulsorily study Hindi from 4<sup>th</sup> class onwards.

In Hindi areas also, parents were permitted to opt for Punjabi medium in place of Hindi. Arrangement was also made that the students of Hindi medium from 4<sup>th</sup> class onwards will Learn Punjabi compulsorily.

A major benefit which resulted from this formula was, that, this proposal was got approved from the Punjab government and that a big part of East Punjab being of the Punjabi-speakers, Punjabi language should be given the first place. Punjabi language was accepted legally. The Sikhs welcomed the 'Sachar Formula' and the Sikhs considered it as the first step towards the creation of a Punjabi Suba. However, the 'Arya Samaj', 'Jan Sangh', 'Hindu Mahasabha' etc institutions of the Hindus criticized it. In 1949 A.D, the principals of Hindu schools and colleges opposed the implementation of 'Sachar Formula'. On the other side, leaders of the Akali Dal preached in favor of adoption of Punjabi as mother-tongue in the Punjabi-speaking areas. The situation got disturbed due to this. Sectarian riots also took place in many cities. Such a movement started in February 1949 A.D which is remembered as the one of slogan shouting for the demand of Punjabi Suba. Instead of becoming strong, the position of 'Sachar Formula' started getting weaker. Jagat Narain, Partap Singh Kairon and many of the Congress parted ways with Sachar and Gopi Chand Bhargava again came to power. Sachar had to resign from the post of Chief Minister on 18 October, 1949 A.D.

'PEPSU formula' was better as compared to 'Sachar Formula'. It was made with the amalgamation of the sub-states of Punjab. The opposition to Punjabi was nominal in

PEPSU. That is why, a large part of speakers of Punjabi and a small segment of Hindi speakers was declared as PEPSU under the leadership of Sardar Gian Singh Rarewala. Though, the 'Sachar Formula' was unsuccessful, even so, two forms of reactions were shown by the anti-Sikh elements. The other reaction, which continued till the formation of Punjabi Suba, was of those who were neither willing to accept nor write Punjabi even in the Punjabi area. This included the scholarly group of the principals of DAV colleges and renowned personalities such as Dr. Gokal Chand Narang.

Bhargava and Sachar were considered to be choices of Patel and Nehru respectively. Due to dethronement of Bhargava, Sardar Patel had shown his displeasure through Sardar Baldev Singh that Dr. Bhargava was made the Chief minister once again by Giani Kartar Singh after implementation of the 'Sachar Formula'. However, Sachar Formula continued to remain in force. Sardar Patel died in 1950 A.D. President rule was enforced in 1950 A.D.<sup>25</sup>

*Maha Punjab Lehar* (Greater Punjab Movement), was originated by a section of Hindus, which desired that one area should be constituted by amalgamating entire Punjab, PEPSU, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and certain areas of Uttar Pradesh, which, they thought, will be the only area geographically, economically, culturally and morally. This left a deep impact on the Sikhs. It was a plan to finish off the nominal influence of the Sikhs in Punjab and PEPSU. This further divided the gulf in the political system of both the sects.<sup>26</sup>

On the same time, the Constitution was implemented on 26 January, 1950 A.D. The Sikhs tried to shape their destiny under the existing constitution. Here also, the Hindu communalists caused impediments in their way. Conspiracies started to hatch to finish off the Sikh culture. After the Constitution of India in 1950 A.D, Hukam Singh told the journalists in Bombay that the demand for a Punjabi speaking Suba was not sectarian but secular and democratic. The Working Committee of Akali Dal passed a resolution in May. By the end of 1950 A.D, under the chairmanship of Partap Singh Kairon, the Hindus of the Punjabi area of Punjab objected to the demand of Punjabi Suba being raised by the Punjabis, for denying them the Punjabi language. The Congress had been opposing the Punjabi Suba on some pretext or the other.<sup>27</sup>

The work on consensus of 1951 A.D had begun in full earnest. The Hindus of the Punjabi area in Punjab had also been motivated for adopting the Punjabi language. The animosity between Hindus and Sikhs had been increasing in Punjab on the issue of mother-tongue of the Hindus. Punjabi Suba had been stopped from becoming secular.

Mentioning of 'Hindi' as mother-tongue in the consensus was not a new issue. They had been continuing to write 'Hindi' as mother-tongue ever since the consensus of 1921 A.D. According to decision of the Congress, the demand for the formation of a *Suba* on the basis of Punjabi language was extremely important for sanctity of the language and protection of minorities. With this, the Sikhs will be satisfied, the scheduled castes will be strengthened, the Hindu-brotherhood will become superior, communalism will decrease, there will be no increase in expenditure, the national borders will become safer and the country will become strong. The Sikhs said that their demand was not communal but wanted to establish their independent identity.<sup>28</sup>

A record-breaking 8<sup>th</sup> conference was held by the Akali Dal at Ludhiana in 1951 A.D, followed by a *Gurmat-Maha Samaagam* (The grand get-together of Gurmat) at Patiala in September. Then, one after the other, forceful campaigning was done against the atrocities of the Congress and the Congress government by holding conferences and the '*Gurmat-Maha Samaagam*' by the Akalis. However, at no place did the Congress make a decisive confrontation against the Akalis.<sup>32</sup> On the same time, Master Tara Singh would say that, in case Pakistan was formed, then the Sikh state should also be formed. Pakistan was not getting formed as Lahore and Gujranwala was a part of Punjab. However, the Sikh parties of that time, Congress, Communist, Socialist and 'Baba Kharak Singh Party' sent a memorandum that they did not want a Sikh state. At the time of granting independence to India by the British, an assembly was elected which let the people of Pakistan and India go to their respective countries. It was got approved from this elected assembly with the cooperation of one person, that the language of Hindustan will be Hindi. Unfortunately, that one person from the majority happened to be Gurmukh Singh Musafir (a Sikh), who voted in favor of Hindi. Had Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir not done so, the national language of India would not have been Hindi but a composite language, about which, Mahatma Gandhi had said that such a language would be introduced which would be the languages of entire Hindustan.<sup>29</sup>

Elections to the Legislative Assembly were held in entire country in 1952 A.D. The elections of 1952 A.D were contested on the basis of Punjabi Suba.<sup>30</sup> On 4 January, 1952 A.D, when Nehru was speaking regarding Elections, he was interrupted with slogans of *La ke rahaangey Punjabi Suba* (we will stop at nothing for taking Punjabi Subs), he declared, " I will not permit the division of the country a second time." The Akalis won about 30 seats of the Punjab Assembly and, having won maximum seats in PEPSU, had formed its own Government, too. After the first General Elections in India



in 1952 A.D after independence, the non-Congress Government also was formed in PEPSU and Patiala was made its capital. Bhim Sen Sachar had become the Chief Minister of Punjab on 17 April after the elections. Though the Akalis suffered a big defeat in the elections, yet a *Sanyukt Morcha* (united front) Government got formed in PEPSU under command of the Akali Dal, in which Gian Singh Rarewala became the Chief Minister. But this government also did not last long and there were defections every day.<sup>31</sup>

After Sharomani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) getting under control of Akali Dal, the problem of stage-management of the Akali Dal had been solved. The demand for Punjabi Suba had since intensified. The president of Akali Dal repeated the demand for Punjabi Suba while speaking at the function of 'All-India Sikh Students Federation on 1 November, 1952 A.D.<sup>32</sup>

Two events of such a nature took place in the beginning of 1953 A.D which generated more speed of Akali dal for the demand of Punjabi Suba. One of it was related to the South and the second concerned the political crisis in PEPSU. Due to these events, the Presidential rule had to be imposed in March 1953 A.D. There was considerable upheaval in the country for constitution of *Subas* on the basis of language.

Other demands of the Sikhs, such as those by Tara Singh, wanted such a Suba where they were not under the Hindu domination in a slender Assembly. Master Tara Singh said that he wanted similar 'internal autonomy' for the Suba as had been give to Kashmir. The Suba can be considered to belong to three states of East Punjab, where there is considerable mix of religion, temperament, culture, language and the way of living. It could have been called a Sikh land. Which, in fact, was the Suba of Punjabi language. It were only the Sikhs among the minority class whose demands were not being considered at that time. PEPSU was also a unanimous area of the Sikhs. With the Sikhs gaining unanimous consent, there would have been no effect on the Sikhs of other states, nor would there be any impact if Punjabi Suba was formed. It was also the only demand of a Suba. If the Hindus cannot live in a unanimously formed Suba of the Sikhs, then how could the Sikhs live in a Hindu majority area ? Majority had not been able to protect the interests of the minorities.<sup>33</sup>

An all-party convention was held in February 1953 A.D at Amritsar under the leadership of Principal Teja Singh in which, the Sikh intellectuals gathered in large numbers, severally criticized the anti-Sikh attitude of the Indian rulers. The 'All India Akali Conference' passed a resolution in 1953 A.D in which they asked the Congress to

fulfill its promise and form the Punjabi Suba. The Indian government made a declaration for constituting a commission in 1953 A.D for reorganization of the states.<sup>34</sup>

Master Tara Singh had held a meeting, which had commenced at Delhi with Pt. Nehru on 7 January with the hope of a decision on the 'Three-Unit ' formula. According to this 'three-unit' plan, a unit of Punjabi language be created by amalgamation of Punjab and PEPSU. The second (Hindi) unit be formed by joining Mahindragarh and Haryana and the third unit be formed for the speakers of *Paharhi* language by joining Himachal and hilly sections. There should be one *Governor*, one Assembly and one University for these three units. The groups of Sardar Partap Singh Kairon, Giani Kartar Singh and Jagat Narain were ready for this plan but Pt. Nehru made no commitment about it. For obtaining equality of rights for the Sikh with those of the Hindu-scheduled castes, Master Tara Singh, after making a determined resolve, had commenced the journey from Anandpur Sahib with the *Shaheedi jatha* (group of followers ready for martyrdom). This group had carried out feverish campaign for a month and half in Punjab. Katju had a talk with Master Tara Singh that all the demands of the latter will be met and, had given assurance in writing that the government will pass a resolution to grant equal rights to Sikh scheduled castes, similar to those for Hindu scheduled castes. Announcement was also made for holding of early elections for PEPSU and the Gurudwaras. The ultimatum program of the Akalis had succeeded thus. Nehru objected to the formation of Punjabi Suba during the mid-term polls of PEPSU in early 1954 A.D. President's rule was enforced in PEPSU area. The candidates of Akali Dal lost and the Congress won these mid-term elections. Though the chief among the Congress was Colonel Raghbir Singh but the real power was in the hands of Brij Bhan.<sup>35</sup>

The Indian Government constituted the state reorganization commission on 22 December, 1953 A.D with three members in it. Its purpose was to reorganize the states on the basis of language. The demand of Punjabi Suba was placed before it by the Sikhs, especially the Akalis. The Chairman of this commission was N. Saiyad Fazal Alahi. Shri Panikar and Dr. Katju were also its members. This commission visited 104 places in the entire country and discussed with 8000 representatives. This commission had been presented a total of 1,52,250 memoranda in its report. The new Hindustan had been divided into states and union territories. The earlier system of demarcation of States was cancelled. The *Maha-Punjab* Congress Committee movement laid stress on the unification of three states-Punjab, PEPSU and Himachal Pradesh. The Commission

refuted the principle of one-language-one –state and recommended the division of 16 states and three union territories of India. The Sikhs of Punjab had welcomed the constitution of this committee because they got a chance to express their views in favor of Punjabi Suba. The Communist party and the 'Praja Socialist' Party had seconded the formation of state on the basis of Punjabi language at the time of reorganization of the states.

The Akali Dal argued further that the demand for Punjabi Suba was in line with other parts of India for the linguistic formation of states. It said further that Punjabi was a distinct language and had been so recognized in the Indian constitution. It is also endowed with special script known as *Gurmukhi*, which is not derived from the *Devnagri* script of Hindi but from *Brahmi*. The Akali Dal specifically characterized Punjabi Suba out of sinister communal motives :

“The Sikhs have been the greatest of patriots and they are Indians first and last.”

It arrested Master Tara Singh also, who said in a statement that,

“There Report has given its decree against the Sikhs. The circumstances for us have become more delicate than they were in 1947 A.D.”<sup>36</sup>

The elections of Shromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee had been held in January 1955 A.D. The Akali Dal had contested these elections on the issue of Punjabi Suba. Not only the Congress but the Communists, too, had taken part in these elections of 1955 A.D. Akali Dal won the elections of 1955 A.D and became dominant over the Shromani Committee. Master Tara Singh became president of the committee. Thus, the demand for Punjabi Suba became more forceful. Dr Katju said that the question does not arise of the formation of Punjabi Suba. *Gurudwara* elections can have no impact on the politics of Punjab, as these were of the religious nature. The *morcha* for Punjabi Suba had been held in 1955 A.D itself.<sup>37</sup>

After preparing draft by the commission, the demand for Suba of Punjabi language was removed completely and the recommendation made for the merger of PEPSU with Punjab. The report of the commission received a jolt. A convention of the Sikhs was held at Amritsar on 16 October, 1955 A.D in which, a resolution was passed in strict words against that recommendation of the commission where it was suggested to have a bi-lingual Punjab instead of the formation of a one-language Punjabi Suba. The Punjabi Suba could not be formed as the Hindu elements, including the Congress had

opposed the formation of Punjabi Suba after presenting themselves before the commission. The Akali Dal had presented a demand letter in favor of Punjabi Suba. The reorganization Act did merge PEPSU with Punjab on 1 November, 1956 A.D but not Himachal. The unification of Punjab and PEPSU had a special significance in History.<sup>38</sup>

The Akali leaders had held three meetings with Nehru in 1955 A.D-56A.D on 28 November, 1955 A.D, 23 December, 1955 A.D and 22 January, 1956 A.D. Those participated included the president of Sharomani Dal Master Tara Singh, Hukam Singh, Kartar Singh, Gian Singh Rarewala and principal Jodh Singh. These Sikh leaders made it clear that the Sikhs do not consider themselves to be safe unless Punjabi Suba was formed. The Sikhs do not want to live under domination of the majority. These meetings could not reach a conclusion. Similarly, Bhim Sen Sachar resigned in 1956A.D. and Sardar Partap Singh Kairon was unanimously elected leader of the Congress Legislative Assembly on 21 January 1956 A.D. As such, for the reason of assembly of the Sikhs at one place, the Government had abolished PEPSU and merged it with Punjab.<sup>39</sup>

**The Census of PEPSU**

Hindu -	48.8 %
Sikh -	49.3 %
Others -	1.9 %

As such, there was considerable change in 1956 A.D in the numbers of Sikhs with the merger of PEPSU with Punjab.

**The Census After Merger of PEPSU with Punjab in 1956 A.D**

	Hindus	Sikhs	Others
Punjab-	63.5	33.4	3.1
PEPSU-	48.8	48.8	2.7
<i>PEPSU &amp; Punjab</i>	62.3	35.00	2.7

The Sikh leaders were thus of the view that, a Sikh *Raaj* be established by combining those districts of East Punjab which have Sikh majority with PEPSU.<sup>40</sup>

The Akalis held an 'Akali Conference' and conducted a procession which broke the world record (in intensity). Resultantly, the Congress government offered a 'Regional Formula', which the Sikhs accepted to win confidence of the government. 'Hindi' and 'Punjabi' 'Regional Committees' were formed for Punjab. The 'Sachar Formula' was to continue to remain in force in Punjab and the 'PEPSU Formula' in the areas of PEPSU.

The state of Punjab was to be bi-lingual and, as legal languages, both (Punjabi in *Gurmukhi* script and Hindi in *Devnagri*) would remain in force. The Punjab government was required to arrange for two separate departments for the development of Punjabi and Hindi languages. The facilities and protections planned for people of other minority languages will also be applied to Punjab state. The Akali Dal accepted the 'Regional Formula'. A general meeting of the Akali Dal was held in March 1956 AD. Sardar Ajit Singh Sarhadi opposed this formula. Master Tara Singh said, "This is not what Punjabi Suba is but I do not wish to argue with my colleagues."<sup>41</sup> Gian Kartar Singh fervently pleaded for accepting the formula. He said, "We are not giving up the demand for Punjabi Suba by accepting the 'Regional Formula'. Punjabi Suba will definitely be achieved."<sup>42</sup>

A large number of Akalis joined the Congress and they had fought the elections of 1957 A.D on the Congress ticket. However, Master Tara Singh and his colleagues remained away from the Congress. Elections were held for Punjab Constituent Assembly in 1957 A.D. The Punjab Congress had included three Akalis- Giani Kartar Singh, Hukam Singh and Sardar Ajit Singh Sarhadi as members in the board while selecting candidates for elections. The Congress won 120 of the 154 seats under the leadership of Sardar Partap Singh Kairon. Akali leader Hukam Singh was appointed deputy speaker of Lok Sabha. Two eminent Akalis- Gian Singh Rarewala and Giani Kartar Singh had been inducted into the Parliament. The demand for Punjabi Suba had wound up with the passing of 'Regional Formula'.<sup>43</sup>

'Regional Formula' was opposed by the leaders of *Maha-Punjab* and 'Arya Samaj'. Followers of *Maha-Punjab* were against the implementation of the formula. They started 'Save Hindu' campaign in the Punjabi and Hindi areas. 'Arya Samaj' politicians such as Lala Jagat Narain were part of its followers. Lala ji had resigned from the Government. *Hindi-Raksha* Samiti was formed with the efforts of Arya Samaj. The RSS and the Jan Sangh had supported this movement. Anti-Punjab sentiments of the people of Haryana area were roused and had started the demand for a separate state of Haryana. The 'Regional Formula' had not been successful. The leaders of Arya Samaj were also against Punjabi, in Gurmukhi script, to be the medium in the school education, which had been made mandatory under the 'Regional Formula', not only in PEPSU where it was already in practice.<sup>44</sup> Other than this, the leaders of 'Save -Hindi' movement, the possibility of gradual formation of the states (Punjabi Suba) was becoming evident. The 'Hindi-Language-Samiti' continued its movement for seven

months, during which, there were approximately 8000 apprehensions. Kairon was not in favor of granting further concessions. 'Save– Punjabi Samiti' was formed to oppose it, with Sardar Pritam Singh Gojran as its leader. The convention of *Punjabi-Rakhsha Dal* was held at Jalandhar on 16 June, 1957A.D, in which the demand was made for the implementation of 'PEPSU Formula' in Punjab and establishment of Punjabi University. Giani Kartar Singh made a statement that the *morcha* for Punjabi Suba would be re-launched in case the 'Regional Formula' failed. On the other side, there was discord among the leaders of Hindi agitation in the end of June. Mahatma Anand Swami had made an appeal for stopping the agitation. The Akali Dal held the 11<sup>th</sup> conference at Bathinda. Leadership of the first day's struggle-march was being provided by Master Tara Singh, Sampuran Singh Rama and Sant Fateh Singh. The conference demanded implementation of 'Regional Formula' in entirety. 'Hindi agitation also came to an end before the last days of 1957A.D.<sup>45</sup>

The issue of Punjabi Suba started getting re-kindled in 1958A.D. Master Tara Singh announced that the Congress is not taking action on 'Regional Formula', which had not been implemented satisfactorily. Punjabi Suba conference was held at Amritsar on 12 October in which, Sant Fateh Singh had, once again, repeated the demand for Punjabi Suba. The General elections of Sharomani Akali Dal were held in early 1959 A.D in which the Akalis won 132 seats. The Akali Dal had contested elections with the agenda of Punjabi Suba. The Sikhs had supported the Akali dal on the issue of Punjabi Suba. Declaration was made in 1960 A.D for the formation of Punjabi Suba. Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh had observed 'fasts unto death also' for the formation of Punjabi Suba. Master Tara Singh was released in 1961 A.D. Master Tara Singh had gotten the 'fast unto death' of Sant Fateh Singh broken, without getting the demand of Punjabi Suba accepted. Sant Fateh Singh had said that Punjabi Suba be formed on the basis of language only. There was disunity in Akali Dal with the 'morcha' of 1960 A.D.<sup>47</sup>

Punjabi Suba conference was held in January, in which, Dr. Kitchlu, Dr. Kali Charan, Mr. Mani Ram Bagri, Surinder Nath Khosla and others supported the demand for Punjabi Suba. All Communists, Independents, Socialists, Republicans had supported the Punjabi Suba.<sup>48</sup> 'Sant-Nehru' meeting took place on 8 February, 1961 A.D but no conclusion could be reached. Next meeting was held in March 1961 A.D. A *Yaad-Pattar* (reminder) of 15 pages was given against Kairon and demanded inquiry against him. The Akali Dal re-elected Master Tara Singh as its president in 1961 A.D. The Dal

repeated the demand for Punjabi Suba. Sant Fateh Singh demanded Punjabi Suba on the basis only of language. Kairon had started to create disunity in the Akali Dal at this time. The third 'Sant-Nahru' meeting, which failed, was held on 12 May, 1961 A.D. With it finished the journey of meetings. A three-member commission was constituted under the chairmanship of S.R. Das on 31 October, 1961 A.D. The commission had been asked to look into the grievances of the Sikhs of Punjab.. Neither the constitution of Commission, nor the issues given to it for consideration were according to the wishes of the Akalis. As such, it was thought of boycotting the commission. The commission submitted its report, which said that no discrimination had been done to the Sikhs of Punjab and, that the demand of Punjabi Suba was another form of a Sikh state.

Two groups of the Akali Dal had got formed by the end of 1962 A.D. Presidentship of one group was with Jathedar Achhar Singh and the other Dal was with Sant Fateh Singh. The disunity of 1962 A.D weakened the Akali Dal considerably and also reduced the hope and the will of the Sikhs. General elections for Punjab Assembly were held in 1962 A.D. These elections were contested on the agenda of Punjabi Suba, which the Hindus had been opposing. In spite of this, the Akalis got considerable majority and 70% of the Sikh voters supported the Akali candidates. The demand for Punjabi Suba had intensified further. Justice Gurnam Singh and Jathedar Achhar Singh started doing their best for unity of the Sikhs. Efforts for unification of both the Dals had commenced at the end of 1963 A.D and beginning of 1964A.D.<sup>50</sup> However, this effort could not succeed and Jathedar Achhar Singh resigned from the president ship of Akali Dal. Giani Bhupinder Singh had become the new president of Akali Dal.<sup>51</sup>

Pt. Nehru died on 27 May, 1964 A.D and Lal Bahadur Shashtri became the Prime Minister of India after Nehru. It was natural for the effectiveness of Kairon to finish in Punjab with the death of Nehru. Justice S.R. Das, who was investigating the allegations of corruption against Kairon submitted the report by declaring the allegations to be just. Kairon submitted his resignation one week before presentation of the report. He had provided administration to Punjab for eight years. He had taken successful action against Sikhs and the Akalis. No demands of the Akalis was conceded in spite of their sacrifices. An additional cause had been proved for Punjabi Suba with Partap Singh Kairon getting out of politics.<sup>52</sup>

To stir the emotions of courage among Sikhs against disrespect to Paonta Sahib, the two factions of Akalis had united temporarily. However, the rift soon re-appeared

between them. In the elections of 18 January, 1965 A.D, Sant Fateh Singh group won 90 seats, where as, the group of Master Tara Singh got only 45. Masster Tara Singh decided to go to Himachl Pradesh to live there for six months.The working committee of Congress passed a resolution of three-language formula on 2 June. The Akali Dal again raised the issue of Punjabi Suba.

The working committee of Akali Dal passed a resolution, according to which, non-formation of a language state in Punjab was a clear sign of partiality against its people. Sant Fateh Singh was entrusted with the task of meeting the new Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shashtri, so that pressure could be exerted on him regarding the need for creation of Punjabi Suba. However, the meeting of Sant Fateh Singh with Shashtri proved to be a disappointment. Sant Fateh Singh had made an announcement that he would go on strike on 10 September in favor of Punjabi Suba. He would commit self-immolation in case he remained alive after 15 days of fasting. Durirng these days only, Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh had met for the first time after a gap of 37 months and had intensified the demand for Punjabi Suba. The 'fast unto death', however, had to be postponed due to Indo-Pak war and appealed for national security. Soon after the Indo-Pak war ended, Gulzari Lal Nanda made an announcement in Parliament for the formation of a committee of legislators regarding the demand for Punjabi Suba. There were three members in this committee– Indira Gandhi, Mr. Y.B.Chavan and Smt. Mahavir Tyagi.<sup>53</sup> The working committee of Akali Dal was formed and Sant Fateh Singh made an announcement that,

"I love Punjabi Suba more than the country. Commission cannot be accepted for Punjabi Suba. The view of C.P.I. is principally wrong regarding acceptance of demand. 'The Fast unto Death' would be given up only after the demand for Punjabi Suba was met."<sup>54</sup>

The 16<sup>th</sup> All-India Akali Conference of Delhi welcomed the committees for Punjabi Suba and demanded the Punjabi region itself to be made the Punjabi Suba. The 17<sup>th</sup> Akali Conference was held at Jalandhar on 27 February, in which the following resolution was passed :

“The Sikhs have been forced to demand such a political position in free India where the Sikhs should have the right to self-determination, so that The Sikhs could feel themselves to be living in the conditions of freedom and prosperity.”<sup>55</sup>

The steps taken for 'fast unto death' by Sant Ji were appreciated throughout the country.



The President, Dr. Radha Krishnan, mentioned about the demand of Punjabi Suba in his address to the nation.

A Parliamentary Advisory committee was formed regarding Punjabi Suba. The Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha were told that Chairmanship for Parliament Committee will be done by the Lok Sabha. Sardar Hukam Singh was made the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Parliamentary committee formed on the subject of Punjabi Suba asked the general public for memorandum of 'for and against' the Punjabi Suba. It became clear with it that Punjab Suba and Haryana state be formed. The Punjabi region and the Hindi region should be their existing boundaries. Of the Hindi region, the district of Kangra and Shimla be amalgamated with Himachal Pradesh. 28 meetings had been held of this Committee which, at last, gave the final shape to its report on 15 March 1966 A.D. Hukam Singh had laid full stress on the formation of Punjabi Suba.<sup>56</sup>

Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri on 19 January, 1966 A.D. The reorganization Act of 1956 A.D. of Punjab was passed before Indira Gandhi had become the Prime Minister. The Parliamentary committee recommended the division of the state in three parts on 18 March 1966 A.D. Punjab and Punjabi and the Hindi sectors were recommended to be separated and Punjab and Haryana be formed. This division should be based on the census of 1951 A.D. and the boundaries of Tehsils should not be altered. Mr. Shaw, who was a judge of the Supreme Court, appointed a commission (which came to be known as 'Shah Commission') recommended the transfer of the Tehsils of Kharar, (which also had Chandigarh included in it) to Haryana. On the contrary, member of the S Dutt Commission had recommended for giving Kharar, including Chandigarh to Punjab.<sup>57</sup>

In spite of so much opposition and after various combined efforts, the All-India Congress Working Committee passed a resolution on 9 March, 1966 A.D. for formation of the Punjabi Suba. But, the Jan Sangh people opposed the formation of Punjabi Suba. The *Morcha* recommenced in 1966 A.D. The 'Republican Party' of *Dalits* had come to support the Akalis. The demand for Punjabi Suba got finally accepted in March 1966 A.D.<sup>58</sup>

Indira Gandhi appointed a three-member committee of the cabinet. 'Haryan Lok Samiti' had been demanding a separate state of Haryana. Under these conditions, the Cabinet Committee and Parliament Committee had recommended the re-alignment of boundaries of Punjab on the basis of language. The Prime Minister of India- Indira Gandhi wished to satisfy the Akalis to strengthen her position. Gulzari Lal Nanda, on

the other hand, was busy under-sizing the Punjabi Suba. On 15 April, 1961 A.D, the Central Government had accepted the census of 1960 A.D as base for the demarcation of Suba, though Nehru, too, had accepted it before the Parliament that the census of 1951 A.D. and 1951 A.D. regarding Languages was faulty. There had been regular reporting regarding it in 'Hind Samachar' and 'Partap' newspapers. Every Hindu had mentioned his language as 'Hindi'. In spite of this, the census of 1961 A.D. had been taken as base for the demarcation of Punjabi Suba. Sant Fateh Singh had opposed to accept the census as base on 13 April, 1961 A.D. Master Tara Singh said that they will boycott the commission which had been constituted for the demarcation of Punjabi Suba. They had demanded the 'Punjabi region' itself to be declared as 'Punjabi Suba'. A commission was instituted on 23 May, 1966 A.D, based on Justice Shah, M.M. Philip and S.Dutt. The working committee of Sant Akali Dal also opposed to accept 1961 A.D as the base for demarcation. The Communist Party also opposed as it was based not on language but on religion. The boundary commission submitted its report on 5 June, 1966 A.D. Two members of the boundary commission favored the handing over of Chandigarh to Haryana. Another member S.Dutt had favored the award of Chandigarh to Punjab. Sant Fateh Singh, too, had supported the handing over of Chandigarh to Punjab.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, the bill for reorganization of Punjab was presented in the Lok sabha on 3 September, 1966 A.D, which was passed by the rajya Sabha in August. Punjabi Suba came into being on 1 November, 1966 A.D. Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh were formed.

The Akalis had conducted numerous *Morchas* (Entrenchments) and made many sacrifices for Punjabi Suba.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, the promises made to the Sikhs were not honored after the partition. The Sikhs started demanding a separate state. The `Sikh Homeland` had not been accepted as the Sikhs were in minority. After independence, the case for independence of the *Sikh Panth* had become very complicated under leadership of the class of Hindu majority. The Congress party had come to power. A new state of *PEPSU* was formed in India on 15 July, 1948 A.D by amalgamating eight provinces of East Punjab. This was a Sikh majority state. A demand was made regarding protection of constitutional rights of the Sikhs. Apprehending the danger to existence of the Sikhs, the president of Akali Dal- Master Tara Singh decided to present the demand for a new state (which subsequently came to be called 'Punjabi Suba') on the basis of Punjabi language. `Sachar Formula` was introduced to pacify the Hindus and the Sikhs on the issue of language. However,

the same was opposed by the Hindus. The Government of India appointed a commission on 22 December, 1953 A.D to consider the reorganization of states on linguistic basis. Communist Party and 'Praja Socialist Party' (PSP) had supported the reorganization of states on the basis of language and for creation of the state of speakers of Punjabi language. However, the commission did not concede to the demand of the Sikhs. The 'Regional Formula' was then presented to solve the issue of the languages. The Hindus again opposed it, due to which, the movement had re-commenced for the demand of 'Punjabi Suba'. The elections, too, were held during this time. The S.R. Das commission had been constituted to investigate complaints of the Sikhs. Discord took place among the Akali Dal during this time. A number of conferences and meetings had been held on the issue of demand of Punjabi Suba. PEPSU had been merged with Punjab in 1956 A.D. Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh observed 'fast unto death' also to get the demand for Punjabi Suba accepted. Nehru was strictly opposed to the demand of Punjabi Suba. Indira Gandhi was subsequently compelled to accept the demand of the Sikhs. The 'Haryana Lok Samiti' had vigorously started to demand a separate state in the Hindi speaking area. The Cabinet Committee and the Parliament Committee had recommended the re-demarcation of the boundaries of Punjab on the basis of language. The reorganization bill was passed in September 1966 A.D and Punjabi Suba was formed on 1 November 1966 A.D. However, the Sikhs had been cheated once again, as they did not get the Punjabi Suba that they had desired. Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were created in between and Punjab was disintegrated into fragments.

## ANNOTATIONS

- 1 Dr. Ajmer Singh, Veehveen sadhi di Rajniti, Narinder Singh, Chandigarh, 2003 p.139
- 2 'The Spokesman' Weekly, August 1994, pp.21,22
- 3 Ibid, Spokesman, p.46
- 4 Ibid, p.15
- 5 Ibid, p.15
- 6 Op. cit Spokesman, 1994, p.47
- 7 'The Spokesman' Weekly, August 1994, p.41
- 8 Dr.Jangpal Singh, Addhi sadi da Itihas, (Political Survey), Chetna Parkashan, Ludhiana, 2005, p.25
- 9 Gursharan Singh, History of PEPSU, Patiala and east Punjab State Union (1948-56), Konark Publication Pvt.Ltd., p.1
- 10 B. Alaxai, PEPSU da Mujara Lehar: Sangharsh Da Ethas, Sangam Publishers, Smana p.13, "The Sant Sipahi", Amritsar,1953, pp.34-39
- 11 'The Vartman', Amritsar, 9 July 1956, pp.2,7. Kapoor, Prithipal Singh, Punjab vich Sutantrta Sngam diya parmukh dhrava, Punjab Sarkar Publish, 2004, p.191
- 12 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Punjabi Sube di Gatha, Lokgeet Parkashan, Sarhand, 1992, p.166,  
A minority Committee was formed for reaching consensus on conditions and situations for protection of the rights of the minorities. Nehru, Patel, Ambedkar, Dr. Raajendra Prasad and K.K.M. Munshi of the previous government were members of this committee, Ajit singh sarhadi, op.cit., p.162
- 13 Sharomani Akali Dal, (Ik Itihas), Part-1, p.214,
- 14 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Op cit., p.168  
` Sub-Committee 10-member committee formed. Members were– Bhim Sen Sachar, Chodari Lehri Singh, B.N. Chanan, Suraj Mal, Chhanno Davi and the Sikh members were– Swaran Singh, Ujjal Singh, Ishar Singh Majhail and Bachan Singh, Ajit Singh Sarhadi, op.cit., p.168
- 15 Panj Dariya, January, 1957, pp.10-11,
- 16 Sant Sipahi, Amritsar, February, 1961, p.50

Secular Henceforth, no special concessions will be given to the followers of any particular religion. All natives will be Indians and not Hindu or Muslim or Sikh.

17 Panj Dariya, January, 1957, p.11

18 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Op.cit., p.188

19 Panj Dariya, Op.cit., p.11; J.S. Grewal, Indu Banga Khalsa (Itihaas ate Vichardhara), Publisher Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, pp.250-251

20 Gurudwara Gazette, July 2000, pp.26-27,

21 Sant- Sipahi, Amritsar, February, 1961, pp.50-51, Bhagwan Sing daanewalia, Retired Inspector General Punjab Police, Veehveen Sadi da Punjab, op.cit., p.209

22 ORL Dr. Smt Rajinder Kaur, Member of Parliament, Master Tara Singh, Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University Patiala, Amritsar, 1988. 'Punjabi Rattan', Ludhiana, 26 May 1956, p.3

23 Gurudwara Gazette, July 2000, pp.26-27,

There were signatures of 74 of the 80 members of Punjab Assembly of that time on the Sachar Formula. This proposal had been approved by the Home Minister of India –Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel and the Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Two Hindumembers of the Assembly- Chaudhry Sumer Singh and Mehta randhir Singh and, of the Sikh members- S. Partap Singh Kairon, Jathedar Udham Singh Nagke and Ishar Singh Majhail had not signed on it. 95 % of Punjab (except PEPSU) was imagined to be of Punjabi speakers. As per sachar formula, the population was imagined as under :

PUNJAB		PEPSU	
DISTRICT	% of Punjabi Speakers	DISTRICT	% of Punjabi Speakers
Amritsar	70.6 %	Patiala	47.1 %
Jalandhar	56.5 %	Bathnda	78.1 %
Gurdaspur	47.5 %	Kapurthala	63.6 %
Ferozepur	59 %	Sangrur	56.3 %
Ludhiana	61.7 %	(Less Narwana and Jind Tehsils)	
Hushiarpur	26.2 %		

24 'The Spokesman' August 1994, p.15

- 25 Gurudwara Gazette, July 2000, pp.26-27,z  
 PEPSU Formula- PEPSU was formed by amalgamating the provinces of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla and Kapurthala of Punjab and the opposition to Punjabi was negligible a small part of Hindu area had been declared in Punjab. Hindi was made compulsory from second class onwards in Punjabi area. Under this formula, the medium of Hindi from first class in Hindi area but Punjabi from second class had been made compulsory
- 26 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Op cit., p.196
- 27 'The Spokesman', June-july, 2006, p.29
- 28 J.S. Grewal, Indu Banga, Khalsa (Itihas te Vichardhaara), op.cit p.125-126
- 29 'Sant- Sipahi', Amritsar, February, 1961, p.51
- 30 'Sant- Sipahi', May 1961, p.41
- 31 Sharomani Akali Dal (Ik Itihas), Part-1, p.214
- 32 Daily Vartmaan, Amritsar, 8 August 1956, p.2
- 33 Gurudwara Gazette July 2000, p.26 There had been forceful discussions in the country for the formation of states on the basis of language . Romulu had earlier given sacrifice for Andhra Pradesh and the formation of Andhra Pradesh had been accepted. Encouraged from this, Shri Sankar Gauda Patel was on hunger strike for the state of Maharashtra on the basis of Marathi language. Bengal and Bihar were also demanding the states on the basis of language. Maharashtra state was thus formed on the basis of language.
- 34 'Panj Dariya' January 1957, p.11
- 35 'Vartmaan', Amritsar, 26 December 1954. p.8
- 36 Report of the State Reorganization Commission, Manager Govt of India Press, 1955, p.147, 148
- 37 'The Vartmaan', Amritsar, 9 October 1956, p.6
- 38 'Sant- Sipah'i, Amritsar, February 1961, p.63
- 39 Gurudwara Gazette, July 2000, pp.30-33
- 40 Khuswant Singh, Sikh ithas, part 2, Navyug Publishers, 2003, p.289
- 41 'The Vartmaan', Amritsar, 1956, p.4  
 According to the Regional Formula, the Punjabi region was to be of the districts of Amritsar, Jalandhar, Hushiarpur, Ludhiana and Ropar and Khara tehsils of Ambala District. PEPSU was to consist of Patiala, Bathinda, Kapurthala, and Barnala, Sunam and Sangrur tehsils of Fatehgarh Sahib district.

The areas included in the Hindi region were to be Shimla, Kangra, Rohtak, Gurgaon, and Karnal and the tehsils of Ambala, Jagadhari, and Naraingarh of Ambala district and, district Mahendragarh, Lohistan from Patiala and Narwana and Jind tehsils from PEPSU.

- 42 Gurudwara Gazette, July 2000, p.31
- 43 Bhagwan Singh Daanewalia, Retired Inspector-General Punjab Police, Veehveen Sadi da Punjab, Mess. Orian Publishers, Chandigarh. op.cit., pp.228-229
- 44 J.S. Grewal, Akalidaan de 75 Saal, Punjab Studies Publication, Chandigarh, 1996, pp.130-132
- 45 Gokal Chand Narang, Sikh matt da parivartan, Publishers Punjabi University Patiala, pp.256-258
- 46 'The Punjabi Rattan', Ludhiana, 23 August 1957, p.3
- 47 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Punjabi Sube di Gaatha, op.cit., p.319
- 48 'The Spokesman', 1996, pp.16-17. Succhitar 'Qaumi Ekta', New Delhi, March 1975, p.14
- 49 'The Punjabi Rattan', Ludhiana, 18 May 1961, pp.1-2
- 50 Tarlochan Singh Gill, Sikh Itihas, Vallish publishers, p.142, Sharomani Akali Dal (Ik Itihas), Part-1, p.265
- 51 Principal Sarwan Singh Aujla, Anehre Raah aty Panth, Uddan Publication, 2009, p.163
- 52 Gurudwara Gazette, March 1966, p.54. It was generally believed that, had Pt. Nehru been alive, then Justice Das would have relieved Kairon.
- 54 Punjabi Tribune, 4 Sep, 1965.
- 55 Sharomani Akali Dal (Ik Itihas), Part-1, p.271. The Tribune, 4.9.1965
- 55 Sharomani Akali Dal, ibid, p.273
- 56 'The Spokesman', August 1994, p.48. Reorganization of the present state of Punjab on the basis of single-language was based as per orders of the 1<sup>st</sup> schedule of 1957 of regional sub-committee for a Punjabi speaking state.
- 57 Sangat Singh, Itihas Wich Sikh, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1999 pp.360-362. The population of Punjab was 115.84 lacs, ie.60 % were Sikhs (and not 50 %, as had been mentioned in the fictitious census of 1961). 80 % of population of the Sikhs of entire country lived in the reorganized Punjab. Next came Delhi where the population of the Sikhs was maximum.

58 The Tribune, 1966, 'Khalsa Advocate', Amritsar, 20 June 1966, p.3

59 Punjab Boundary Commission. Report Manange Government of india press  
Dehli, 1966, p.60

60 'Ajit', 1 Nov, 1966



## MORCHAS RELATED TO PUNJABI SUBA

'Akali Dal' and *Morcha* (agitation) are intimately related to each other. It is often said that there is bound to be a new *Morcha* whenever two 'Akalis' meet. The *morchas* have been regularly held ever since the formation of Akali Dal. Various *Morchas* such as *Jaito da Morcha*, *Guru ka Baag morcha* etc have been organized to free the *Gurdwaras* from the *Mahants*. Many *morchas* had been held by the Akalis post independence too. Congress had taken charge of the government in the Centre and in Punjab. The Akalis had organized first *morcha* for the creation of 'Punjabi Suba' in 1955 A.D. It was called off under certain conditions of a formula. The second *morcha* for attaining 'Punjabi Suba' was organized by 'Akali Dal' in 1960 A.D.<sup>1</sup>

During the session of Congress at Lahore in 1930 A.D, the Sharomani Akali Dal had held their separate session at Lahore under the chairmanship of Baba Kharhak Singh to raise voice against the 'Pt. Moti Lal Nehru Report'. At that time, not tolerating the anguish of the Sikhs, Mahatma Gandhi invited the Sikhs to listen to their views. Baba Ji sent a delegation of five Sikhs, with Tara Singh as the *Jathedar*. The Congress Government affirmed that, at the time of Independence, the Constitution would be drawn by keeping in mind the wishes of the Sikhs, especially of the Sikh Akalis.<sup>2</sup> Its main principles were :

- The states would be made on the basis of language in independent India.
- *Basanti* (Saffron) color would be included in the Congress flag
- The above conditions were approved in the All- India session of 1931 A.D. of Congress.<sup>3</sup>

India got freedom in 1947 A.D. Master Tara Singh, who was president of Sharomani Akali Dal, asked for fulfillment of the conditions of 1930-31 A.D but Pt. Nehru disagreed for creation of states on the basis of languages, where as many new states, such as Maharashtra and Gujrat had been formed. Certain states had been formed on the basis of language too. Yet, Punjab did not get its right. The Sikhs were not given even their own rights which had been accorded to other classes. As such, the Akalis resorted to holding of *Morchas* to demand their rights. Efforts were also made to get the government to fulfill their promises.<sup>4</sup>

### **The 'Punjabi Suba *Morcha*' of 1955 A.D.**

In the elections of 1954A.D, hold of Congressmen had finished on the Sharomani

Gurudwara Prabandhak committee, which was under the influence of those inclined towards the Congress in the elections held in 1952 A.D. An atmosphere had started to emerge for Punjabi Suba after the thumping victory of Akali Dal in the elections of Gurudwaras in 1954A.D. Conferences, processions and meetings had started to be held everywhere. In their Patiala session on 5 March 1955A.D, the Hindu Conference had passed their proposal in favor of Punjabi Suba. It was followed by a *Bhashai Suba* (language-based states) conference in April at Ambala.<sup>5</sup>

On the other side, the fanatic Hindus opposed this lingual demand by shouting slogans of *Maha Punjab* (Greater Punjab). *Maha Punjab* conference was organized at Amritsar on 27 March, 1955A.D. In this manner, the communal atmosphere and tension kept increasing in Punjab.<sup>6</sup>

The Akalis organized a *Morcha* in 1955A.D. for the first time after independence for Punjabi Suba. The significance of this morcha was not only for Punjab but for entire North India. This *morcha* had played an important role in the creation of Punjabi Suba. In actual fact, the base for the *morcha* of Punjabi Suba had got under way soon after independence, when Master Tara Singh demanded Punjabi Suba in February 1948A.D. Though the demand for Punjabi Suba had been raised in 1948A.D, but, looking at its background, Sardar Ujjal Singh– member of the Sikh delegation had raised it before the round table conference. Subsequently, it was raised regularly before the 'Cripps Mission' in 1942 A.D, and was also projected before the 'Sapru Committee' in 1945 A.D by the Sikh leaders through a memorandum. The Sikhs had been demanding Punjabi Suba from time to time. It was a demand for the rights of the Sikhs and was not communal in nature. A sub-committee was formed in February 1948 A.D for minorities and fundamental rights, which had Mr. Nehru, Mr. Patel, Dr. BR Ambedkar, Dr. Rajendra Parasad and Mr. K.M. Munshi in it. A memorandum was given by the Akalis to the committee in which a separate representative for the Sikhs was requested. As per it, a demand was projected for reservation of 5 % seats each in the State and Center Assemblies. As the Sikhs were a minority in Punjab, the Sikh leaders had claimed for safety rights for the Sikhs. It was also reminded that, in 1946 A.D, the Congress leaders had agreed that the Sikhs would be given an autonomous state. However, the minority committee did not agree to these demands. Later on, Master Tara Singh decided to hold a conference in Gurudwara Rakab Ganj in Delhi on 20 February, 1948 A.D but the government had imposed a ban on it. Even then, the Akalis decided to hold the conference. Master Tara Singh and many Sikh leaders were arrested. 23 Akali

legislators said on 15 September, 1948 A.D that if their safety rights are not accepted then a new state of the districts of Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Ambala be made for the Sikhs. After rejection of these demands by the Sub-committee on rights, the working committee of Akalis passed the resolution on 20 May, 1950 A.D for initiation of the agitation for Punjabi Suba. All these factors had proved to be very significant for the *morcha* of 1955 A.D.<sup>7</sup>

The Sikhs had then begun to realize that their safety rights cannot be achieved without a Punjabi Suba, for which they had been becoming so eager. The demand for Punjabi Suba had received particular impetus from the example of Andhra Pradesh, which too had come in to being on the basis of language on the passing away of Mr Romulu in 1953 A.D. The anger of the Sikhs had increased further due to this factor also.<sup>8</sup>

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru said on 20 March 1955 A.D at the time of inauguration of Punjab High Court, *Punjabi Hindu Punjab wick firku mahoul paida karan da zimewar hai aty Punjab es Bimari da kendar ban ke reh giya.* (Punjabi Hindu is responsible for creating communal atmosphere in Punjab and Punjab has been made to become a centre of this disease.”

Publicity for and against Punjabi Suba and *Maha Punjab* had been going on vigorously in such an atmosphere. Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar issued a notice on 6 April, 1955 A.D :

“There appears to be danger to the public atmosphere from slogans such as: *Punjabi Suba laey ke rahaange, Maha Punjab ya Punjabi Suba amar rahey, ya Zindabad ya murdabad, Seeney wick goli khawaangey-Punjabi Suba ya Maha Punjab Banawaangey.*

Consequently, restrictions had been imposed under Section 144 Cr.P.C. The demand for Punjabi Suba gained momentum in 1955 A.D when Akali Dal had won elections of 'Sharomani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee'.on the basis of Punjabi Suba. The power of Akali Dal had increased immensely with it having gained control over the entire committee. The Akali Dal had now decided to hold *morchas* against restrictions imposed on the slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*.<sup>9</sup> Keeping foremost in mind the situation, the Akali Dal had called for a meeting on 24 April, 1955 A.D. The Akali Dal had given a notice of up to 10 May, 1955 A.D. for removal of restrictions on the slogans. When they were not removed, Master Tara Singh, along with 10 more supporters volunteered to court arrest by breaking the restrictions and by shouting slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. Master Tara Singh issued a statement before his

arrest, “This *morcha* in the form of raising slogans is for the achievement of rights for a peaceful movement for the states of Punjabi language and other linguistic states. My minimum and maximum demand is for a Punjabi- speaking state. Those areas of the country will be included in this state where majority of the people speak Punjabi. No effort should be made artificially to increase or decrease this concept. There will be further increase in the complications already existing in the country with such efforts. In any case, this Punjabi- speaking state will exist within the Indian Union and under the framework of Indian Constitution.”<sup>10</sup>

Due to the arrest of Master Tara Singh, the burden of struggle for Punjabi Suba had fallen on shoulders of the working committee of Akali Dal. The Dal had continued the campaign of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. A group of 21 to 51 had been offering to be arrested every day. This group would court arrest by shouting slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*, *Hindu-Sikh Ekta Zindabad* and *Sat Sri Akal*. Bhim Sen Sachar was the Chief Minister of Punjab at this time. The *morchas* were being held here, while, on the other hand, Hukam Singh, president of the Dal had moved out on visit to Russia and other countries of Europe. Iqbal Singh had been appointed president of Akali Dal in place of Hukam Singh at this time. The Congress Minister of Punjab- Partap Singh Kairon and Ujjal Singh had criticised the *morcha*. The Chief Minister of Punjab had ordered for suppression of efforts of the *morcha*. After the conduct of *Morcha* on 10 May 1955 A.D, Giani Kartar Singh, Ajit Singh Sarhadi along with popular Sikh leaders had been arrested. 25 May 1955 A.D, the day of martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji had been observed as Punjabi Suba *Divas*. Samma Singh Layalpuri had also courted arrest on this day. For the first time, a group of 13 women had also volunteered to escort arrest and, that way, the *Singhs* continued the system of arrests. Parkash Singh Badal and his younger brother-Gurdas Singh Badal were already imprisoned in the jails.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, when the *morcha* was at its peak, the Congress leaders had proposed for a Round Table conference on this subject between the government and the Akalis. Iqbal Singh had rejected this proposal. *Sarb-Hind Bhashai* (All-India Language) state conference was held in the first week of June 1955 A.D. Along with, a convention was held in Delhi on 9 June, 1955 A.D, where in a demand was projected to the Punjab Government (whose Chief Minister was Bhim Sen Sachar at that time) for removal of restrictions of Section 144 of the IPC, which had been imposed following the Slogan of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. In this convention, the members who participated were 'Janta Congress', 'Communists', *Zamindara* League and members of the P.S.P. There, in

Delhi, the *jatha* (group) of Harbans Singh 'Frontier' too had also escorted arrest. Principal Iqbal Singh had been arrested in 1955 A.D. All leaders of the *morcha*, including Bhupinder Singh, too, had been arrested.<sup>14</sup>

The Akali Dal *Morcha* of 1955 A.D, which had been held at Amritsar was at the highest point and hundreds of volunteers had been reaching Amritsar. The D I G of Police, along with the Police party carried out a raid at four in the morning of 14 July, 1955 A.D at Harmandir Sahib. The raid was also conducted at the offices of Akali Dal and Sharomani Parbandhak Committee and at hostels, and all the Akali workers and the devotees were arrested. The police had taken over the control of Darbar Sahib, the inns of Gurudwara Committee, Manji Sahib and *Langar* (Community Kitchen).<sup>15</sup> The Sikh shop- keepers all over Punjab resorted to strike in retaliation to this. The police moved forward to take possession of Darbar Sahib but the entire path had been blocked by the *Singhs* and *Singhnees* (Sikh men and women of the congregation). Moving ahead, the police resorted to *lathee* (Cane) charge and using tear gas. Firing was also carried out, resulting in utter chaos among the congregation of devotees sitting peacefully.<sup>16</sup>

The police closed the main gate and started arresting the Sikhs. The police had pounced upon the *jatha* of Sant Fateh Singh inside the premises of Darbar Sahib. They started arresting not only the *jatha* of Sant Fateh Singh but had also arrested cooks of the *langar* and the head *Granthis* (readers of the holy book– The Granth Sahib). The young devotees started courting arrest voluntarily by shouting the slogan *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. Even so, the police were attacking these young protesters with heavy sticks. Thus, the sanctity of the sacred Darbar Sahib had been violated mercilessly.<sup>17</sup>

This action of the Congress had been equated by many Akali leaders to the British government of pre-independence era. Ishar Singh Majhail, Joginder Singh 'Sikh' and Sant Singh had demanded a judicial probe about this incident.<sup>18</sup>

Feelings of displeasure and anger had crept in the minds of the Sikhs for the actions of Police on their entering the Darbar Sahib with shoes on. Devotees had started arriving in the Darbar Sahib in large numbers. The *jathas* of four each (keeping in view the curfew section 144 Cr.P.C.) kept shouting slogans of Punjabi Suba but no one had been arrested. The *morcha* had come to such a boiling point that 12-13 thousand 'Singhs' had got arrested in two months. The Punjab government had removed the ban on 12 July, 1955 A.D. on the slogan of 'Punjabi Suba'. The *Panth* had started to shout *jaikaraa* (ovation) as a mark of victory, as the government had withdrawn its aggressive step. A large number of Akalis had been unconditionally released from Gurgaon jail on 8

September 1955 A.D. The Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee had re-elected Master Ji as president on 20 September, 1955 A.D. The same day, Master ji had announced that, “The Sikh mind will not rest until the Punjab Government regrets its shameful action of 4 July 1955 A.D.”<sup>19</sup>

On this issue, Bhim Sen Sachar, the Chief Minister of Punjab having come to the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar on 10 November, 1955 A.D, had apologized in front of a brimful audience for the actions of 4 July, 1955 A.D. As such, the 64 day *morcha* of 1955 A.D, which had lasted till 12 July, 1955 A.D, terminated at last with the victory of the Akali Dal. This victory had infused a new enthusiasm in the Sikhs. They had come to believe with this victory that they can achieve the 'Punjabi Suba'. As such, all the Sikhs had collectively contributed to the *morcha* of 1955 A.D. The 64-day *morcha* had significantly affected the Punjab politics too. Bhim Sen Sachar had to resign in 1956 A.D and Partap Singh Kairon was made the Chief Minister. Pt. Nehru had said in 1952 A.D that there would be no more divisions. However, success of the *morcha* of 1955 A.D had compelled the government to alter its thinking. Nehru thought that something or the other will have to be given to the Sikhs to pacify them. Nehru himself had come to Punjab in 1956 A.D. Nehru had discussions with Master Tara Singh, which had resulted in the emergence of 'Regional Formula'. It was a major achievement for the Akali Dal.<sup>21</sup> A new direction had been found by the Sikh nation with the victory of Akali Dal in the *morcha* of 1955 A.D, due to which the beginning of struggle in a new form had commenced for Punjabi Suba, Sikh culture and the Sikh identity etc.<sup>22</sup>

The roots of confrontation in Punjab are found in the creation of Punjabi speaking state: the language, which is mother-tongue of both, the Hindus and the Sikhs. This creation had been done in spite of the caution given by the 'States Re-organizational Commission' of 1955 A.D :

“The proposed state will neither be able to solve the issue of language, nor the communal issue. Instead of removing the internal tension, which is not found in the linguistic or regional groups but is available in the communal groups, will further escalate the existing sentiment.”<sup>23</sup>

When other linguistic states were being formed elsewhere, the demand of the Akalis for Punjabi Suba could not have been denied. When their agitation reached its climax, Lal Bahadur Shastri (the then home minister) was interested for a compromise with the Akalis.

This way, the *morcha* of 1955 A.D had ended under a formula, by which, the PEPSU

had been merged with Punjab.<sup>24</sup> Master Tara Singh used to say that “we have won the *morcha* but the tragedy continues to baffle that our demand for a separate *suba* has, once again, had only got struck by entangling in the 'Regional formula'. Once again, the Sikh leadership had got defeated by the Congress Government, which had accepted the Regional formula by discarding the demand of a Punjabi Suba.<sup>25</sup>

This *morcha* had received good response. It was the first *morcha* for the purpose of a Punjabi Suba. The Sikhs had been enthused with it. The Government had to bow down to this *morcha*. The 'Reorganizational Act' of 1955 A.D. was also based on it. PEPSU was amalgamated into Punjab in 1956 A.D. From labor to industrialists, principal and students, lawyers, doctors, members of Punjab Assembly and members of PEPSU had contributed to it. While 12000 'Singhs' went to jail in this *morcha* of 64 days, 427 sisters (women) had also been arrested, along with their infant children. The entire Sikh nation enthusiastically took part in this *morcha* and the Akali Dal received much boost. A *morcha* was again organized by Akali Dal in 1960 A.D for the attainment of Punjabi Suba.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Punjabi Suba *Morcha* Of 1960 A.D-61A.D.**

The Sharomani Akali Dal took no step for the agitation of Punjabi Suba because the Government was involved in the Hindi agitation. The Akali Dal had repeated its demand on 22-23 March, 1958 A.D. in a two-day conference at Moga. For Master Tara Singh, Punjabi Suba was the only antidote for the emerging Hindu radicalism. Master Tara Singh clarified that the purpose of demanding a Punjabi Suba was to protect the Sikh religion and improvement in condition of the Sikhs. The first Punjabi Suba conference was organized at Amritsar on 12 October 1958 A.D. in which, the president of Sharomani Akali Dal– Master Tara Singh and senior Vice President– Sant Fateh Singh had announced a plan for the achievement of Punjabi Suba. They said that they had abandoned the demand for Punjabi Suba, having been compelled by the circumstances. They had agreed to the proposal of 'Regional Formula'. However, the attitude of the Government compels for according priority to Punjabi Suba vis-à-vis 'Regional Formula'. The government of Kairon got against Master Tara Singh, who lost in the elections of Sharomani Gurduwara Parbandhak Committee in November 1958 A.D. Hukam Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and Gian Singh Rarewala type of Akali leaders had already joined the Congress. As such, the Punjabi Suba had not gained momentum in 1958 A.D-59 A.D.<sup>27</sup>

The Akali Dal of Master Tara Singh had received 132 seats out of 139 in the elections

of Sharomani Gurduwara Prabandhak Committee on 17 January, 1960 A.D. Punjabi Suba received boost with the victory of Master Ji. A tragic incident had occurred on 30 March 1960 A.D, in which the areas of 20,000 Sikhs settled in the *Tarai* region of UP were burnt down and their crops had been destroyed.

On the other hand, the 'Regional Formula' had remained confined to paper-work only. Punjabi had been placed at a much lower status. A *Sadbhawna*'committee, too, had been formed which had demanded for abolition of Punjabi language. Many such cases had encouraged the Akali Dal for struggle for Punjabi Suba.<sup>28</sup> In his address on 10 May 1960 AD at Manji Sahib in Amritsar that “We have made full resolve for achievement of Punjabi Suba. We will either win or die. We will not lose.”<sup>29</sup>

The Gurudwara elections held in the beginning of 1960 A.D. by the Sharomani Akali Dal had been contested with the slogan of Punjabi Suba. Master Ji had been elected president of the new Sharomani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee soon after winning the elctions. He had resigned from this post in April 1960 A.D. so that he could concentrate his attention on the struggle for Punjabi Suba. It was decided on 22 May in the working committee for 'Punjabi Suba Convention' at Amritsar. Chairman of this convention was Pt. Sundar Lal. The Convention had asked for immediate creation of Punjabi Suba. It was announced in this regard that, by taking a *Jatha* along, Master Tara Singh would go to Delhi on 29 May. This group would take out a procession on 12 June. The conference had also demanded for 'Greater Himachal' and establishment of the Haryana state. The proposal of demand for Punjabi Suba was approved in this convention. Master Tara Singh had been selected to have this demand approved. Master Ji had listed the demand for Punjabi Suba as number one item, which was to be presented before Mr Nehru in the form of a memorandum. Master Ji was to commence his journey by taking the *Shaheedi Jatha* from ' Akal Takht' on 28 May. This group was to reach Delhi on 12 June after passing through various towns and cities. Master Ji was to present this memorandum to Mr Nehru at Delhi by leading a peaceful procession. It had been decided that the party or jatha will not raise any agitating slogans, but will march slowly by chanting the sacred words *Satnam, Waheguru*. However, Master Ji had prepared neither any memorandum nor had any other program been presented as yet. But, the Punjab Government had already launched an offensive without waiting for this day. Two days after the convention, during the intervening night of 24- 25 May, between 10 and 11 o'clock in the evening, a large party of police had surrounded the residence of Master Tara Singh at Amritsar, arrested him and had put him in custody.



Thousands of other Akalis too had been arrested.<sup>30</sup> This first arrest was beginning of the *morcha* and the Akalis were compelled to launch the agitation. The action of arresting the public blindly by the police had begun.

The first *jatha* had been arrested under the leadership of Principal Iqbal Singh on 20 May 1960 A.D. The police resorted to *lathi-chargs* on jathas accompanying the procession on the same day. After that, one *jatha* would march daily and be arrested. The Akali Dal had decided to take out this procession in Delhi on 12 June, 1960 A.D but the Congress was bent upon failing it. The government wanted the Akalis to stop from taking out such procession and had started arresting people. In this manner, more than 2500 arrests had been made.<sup>31</sup> The Government had imposed restriction on the holding of procession. Prior to it, the Akali Dal had twice taken out protest march at Delhi. The Akalis had started sending jathas from Gurudwara Sis Ganj on 12 June at 4 pm but the police had carried out reckless atrocities on Sikhs by orders of the Government. The jathas of Sikhs marching peacefully were cane –charged and tear-gas shell were used on them. The Government had wished to fail the agitation but the atmosphere had gotten charged further.<sup>33</sup>

Sant Fateh Singh had taken over the command after the arrest of Master Tara Singh. Sant Fateh Singh had quickly emerged as an accomplished leader in Akali politics. On the other hand, the Government had been cane-charging and arresting the jathas. Partial strike was observed in Patiala, Amritsar and Ludhiana on 8 June. The strikers had been arrested. After the strike, the Punjab Government had put all efforts to stop the processions of Delhi. This way, there would be arrests every day of the people going to Delhi. Where ever an Akali leader or worker was seen by the police, he would be put behind the bars. However, the police could not arrest Jathedar Sardar Rachhpal Singh, Secretary Bedi Jagtar Singh and their colleagues of the Akali Dal Suba of Delhi. They had settled down in Gurudwara Sis Ganj and had announced that, “Whether this government permits or not, the procession march will go on at any cost.”<sup>33</sup>

The Akali Dal had decided to conduct a march in Delhi on 12 June 1960 A.D. Mr Bannerjee, the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi had refused permission for the conduct of this procession and the boundaries of Delhi had been closed for the Sikhs to organize the march. Indiscriminate arrests had begun of the Sikhs coming to Delhi by train or buses. Though the time of the march was 4 pm but, by 12 noon itself, 10 to 12 thousand persons had reached Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib. A *diwan* (religious congregation) was being held in the Gandhi Ground, where the police had removed the loud speaker and

had also carried out some arrests. The head count of the Sikhs had started to swell in front of *Gurudwara Sis Ganj* by 2 pm. The officials of Delhi had got perplexed to see such a large gathering. Along with this, the record of tyranny on the people from *Ghanta Ghar* up to Red fort was shattered by the Government. Indiscriminate use of tear gas shells and canes of the police had started to rain.. Abnormal oppression had taken place in front of *Gurudwara Sis Ganj*. Example of the intensity of cane charge on defenseless people will not be found in the history of any country. Malik writes that,

“The procession started at 2 pm. The cane-weilding police could not control the procession, which had broken the second cordon also. 20 shells of tear gas had been thrown but the third cordon, too, broke down. That way, the cane-charge continued but the procession continued to move. Smaller- sized processions also kept appearing at many places.”

34

The police had sealed the Gurudwara by encircling : the news of which was also broadcast by the All India Radio. New York Times (USA) writes that, “The innocent Sikhs were mercilessly killed before my eyes.”<sup>35</sup>

Every Congressmen and Hindu was busy putting in his bit and doing his respective job. On 21 June, 1960 A.D, the *Gurudwara* Judicial Commission issued a notice to the leaders of Sharomani Committee to vacate the premises of the *Gurudwara* and to stop its use for political purposes. A Memorandum was given by the Sikhs of Delhi to the Prime Minister, in which, condemning the brutal Activities of the Government, a demand had been made for investigation of the incident of 12 June. Censuring of the actions of 12 June was also done by all the Sikh institutions, Nationalist Sikhs and Chief Khalsa Diwan. Resolutions for condemning the actions of 12 June were also passed by other parties such as 'Communist Party and 'Praja Socialist Party'.<sup>36</sup>

The Akalis had been conducting the affairs of Punjabi Suba in élan. The number of arrests was become countless. The *jathas* coming from Amritsar, Delhi, Ludhiana, Patiala, Jalandhar etc. were getting arrested voluntarily. Not only that, 120 members of Sharomani Committee had been arrested up till 24 July 1960 A.D. in violation of Section 144 Cr.P.C.(Curfew section). There was immeasurable enthusiasm among the students for jumping into the fray for Punjabi Suba. A massive convention of the students was held at the place of *Manji Sahib Diwan*, in which a resolution was passed that the students will not rest till the Punjabi Suba is not achieved. The police had stepped up the action of arrests. It was passed in the convention of 27 July that the

demand for Punjabi Suba was rightful and constitutional and that the Government should permit the establishment of Punjabi Suba. It was mentioned in the convention that Punjab, too, should be divided on the basis of language, as had been done in the cases of other states.<sup>37</sup> It was mentioned in the second resolution that the Akali Dal will not permit disrespect to sanctity of the *Gurudwaras*. The Governor— Mr. M.V. Gadgil issued an ordinance on 19 July, 1960 A.D. to the effect that any Akali, on whom a case under section 107-51 has been registered, and anyone who obstructs the arrest will be sentenced to three years in jail and be fined. Also, any one providing false particulars was to be imprisoned for three years and fined. To oppose this ordinance, the Akalis had announced that the name of father be mentioned as 'Guru Gobind Singh' and the place of residence as 'Anandpur Sahib'. The Sikhs had gone to jails and paid fines so that the Punjabi Suba could be formed. 57129 *Singhs, Singhnees* (The Sikhs and women folk) and the young children had escorted arrests during the agitation for Punjabi Suba. 43 *Singhs* had achieved martyrdom. The *Akali Morcha* was at its peak in spite of Section 144 Cr.P.C. and the cruelty on it.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, the Government had imposed the ban twice on 'Akali Patrika' on the publication of news about Punjabi Suba. Not only the restrictions had been imposed on the 'Panthak' newspapers— 'Akali', 'Parbhat', 'Punjab Guardian' and the weekly 'Sacha Sewak', the kairon Government had taken away all the resources of publicity of the Akalis at the time of launching of this *morcha* to ensure that the news does not reach the Public. A newspaper was required to pay attention to the news of the *morcha*. A short periodical in the form *Morcha Gazette* had started daily publication to meet this requirement. This work had begun in the last week of July. The Akalis had made up their loss of publicity to a large extent with this.<sup>39</sup>

The prisoners had been cane-charged in the Bathinda jail. Approximately half a dozen deaths of the unarmed Sikhs had occurred in firing by the police at *Gurduwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib* at Patiala. A strike had been observed in Amritsar in protest against this incident. The Akalis had expressed anguish on this happening at places such as Amritsar, Bathinda, Ludhiana etc. by violating Section 144 Cr.P.C. and by taking out protest marches.

*Marn Vratt* (Fast unto Death) was the last stage of *Akali Morcha*. Harcharan Singh Hudiara had offered himself for this. This was not accepted. However, the meeting of 17 November, 1960 A.D. had permitted the observance of *Maran Vratt* by Sant Fateh Singh on 18 December. The Akalis had demanded it by shouldering full support to the

Sant. Sant Fateh Singh said that he will not break his fast until the government accepted the legitimate demand for establishment of a Punjabi speaking state. During a press conference from Darbar sahib on 28 October, 1960 A.D, Sant Fateh Singh said emphatically that:

“We do not want a Sikh majority area. We are not worried about percentages. We want such a Punjabi Suba which should include the area where Punjabi language is spoken. There should be no cause for concern whether there is minority or majority of people.”<sup>40</sup>

At last, more gloom prevailed in the country when *Maran vratt* had been initiated. The fast of Sant Ji gave further impetus to the demand of Punjabi Suba. It included 'Praja Socialist Party', head of the 'Sutanttar Party', head of the 'Rashtriya Sangh'— Guru Gwalkar, representatives from 'Linguistic Provinces Conference', Dr.M.S.Aney of Visarva front and the staunch antagonist of Punjabi Suba— Dr. Kali Charan Sharma of Ludhiana.<sup>41</sup> The 'Panth Ratan'— Master Tasra Singh had been released unconditionally. On the other hand, Sant Fateh Singh said to the Prime Minister that :

“I cannot further tolerate the sufferings of my people and will be compelled to go on fast unto death.”<sup>42</sup>

The enthusiasm of morcha had got a boost with the Santt joining the struggle and the speed of arrests had stepped up. The Singhs were in high spirits in all the jails. Every day, they would hold *Diwan*, debates and shout slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. A few Sikhs had shouted slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad* when Jawahar Lal Nehru gave a lecture on 17 November. Nehru used certain derogatory words against the Sikhs, due to which, 24 November, 1960 A.D. was declared as a day of displeasure. It had been decided to carry out a protest march that day from *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj*, Delhi. The protest march would go from *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj* to the Parliament House, where it would present a memorandum to the Prime Minister Nehru and members of the Parliament regarding the demand for Punjabi Suba. The police of Delhi and New Delhi had got alerted on this. All roads leading to Rakab Ganj had been blocked. The police had been posted on the road from Parliament House to the Radio Station. Even then, thousands of Sikhs had gathered in *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj* by shouting slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. Tear gas shells were used when the *Jatha* had started from Rakab Ganj. The Sikhs had picked up the shells and thrown them back. Kartar Singh Tokar had surrendered to the police by going in *Do Darwaja*

(Double door) of the Parliament. The tear gas had also entered the Parliament. In spite of all this, the Sikhs distributed memorandum of demand for Punjabi Suba among members of Parliament and voluntarily got arrested by shouting slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad*. The Singhs had called off their march from the Parliament House after 5 pm. Sant Fateh Singh had constituted a *morcha* committee before observing the fast. Baldev Singh said in a statement on 18 December 1960 A.D :

“Punjab Government is responsible for creating the present. situation Punjab Government did not fully implement the 'Regional Formula'. Partap Singh Kairon is responsible for it.”<sup>43</sup>

On the other hand, it was the 18<sup>th</sup> day of 'Maran Vratt' of Sant Fateh Singh. This side, M.L.A Sarup Singh had been sent to Nehru who, on 31 December made the following announcement :

“Entire Punjab is Punjabi Suba because its main language is Punjabi.”<sup>44</sup>

The *morcha* committee had called for a general meeting of the Akali Dal at *Akal Takht* on 2 January, 1961 A.D. However, no one agreed for calling- off the fast. Only Rachhpal Singh Bedi was in favor of it. Nehru said in a speech on that :

"What ever I have said, the Sant should be made to understand to redress his grievances and call-off his fast." <sup>45</sup>

Information of this speech had been given to Master Tara Singh at Delhi. Sant fateh Singh had clearly told the Akali leaders that he will not abandon his fast until Master Tara Singh tells him to do the same. Master Tara Singh had been released on the night of January 1961 A.D. After that, Master Tara Singh sent a telegram to Sant Fateh Singh :

“I am satisfied with Nehru on his speech of Sardar Nagar. I request you to call-off the fast. This speech satisfies your terms of resolve.”<sup>46</sup>

Soon after receiving the message of Master Ji, Sant Fateh Singh had called off his 22 day fast at 8.30 in the morning of 9 January, 1961 A.D. This *morcha* had gone on for a long time but the fast of Sant Fateh Singh Ji had gotten called off without conceding to the demand of Punjabi Suba. Pt. Nehru, too, was perplexed on the issue of Punjabi Suba.

Section 144 of the IPC had been cancelled by the Punjab Government and the

ordinances withdrawn no sooner had the fast ended. The Akali prisoners were released. However, Pt. Nehru rejected the demand and said that under no circumstances will the Punjabi Suba be formed. This time, the working committee had decided to provide opportunity to Master Tara Singh in place of Sant Fateh Singh. Master Ji had commenced his 'fast unto death' on 15 August on the 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence of India. Master Tara Singh said in speech that :

“He will not step back from his resolve till the demand of Punjabi Suba was met.”<sup>47</sup>

This way, Master Tara Singh had accelerated the demand for Punjabi Suba. Giani Kartar Singh thus warned the Akali Dal:

“The Government will sternly face the situation which may emerge from the announcement of 'fast unto death' by Master Tara Singh.”<sup>48</sup>

However, Nehru was not willing to accept the demand for Punjabi Suba. Master Tara Singh had called off his fast after 48 days on the insistence of Maharaja Yadwindra Singh and Malik Hardit Singh. Same day, the government had decided to appoint a commission to investigate the discrimination against the Sikhs, as they had demanded such an investigation. The Akali Dal had boycotted this commission.<sup>49</sup>

There was increase in the demand for Punjabi Suba among the Sikhs with the *morchas* of 1955 A.D. and 1960 A.D. As such, the morcha which had begun on 28 May 1960 A.D. had gone on till 1 October, 1961 A.D. Sant Fateh Singh had undertaken the fast for 78 days from 18 December 1960 A.D to 7 March, 1961 A.D.

Tara Singh has said in a statement that the struggle for Punjabi Suba would continue. We shall be traitors if we abandon this demand. The pointer of Master Tara Singh Ji was towards his own 'fast unto death'. Master Ji said that either he or Sant Ji or both will observe fast unto death. The Working committee of Akali Dal rejected the offer of both of them on 17 May. However, after detailed deliberations on the demand for Punjabi Suba, permission was accorded to Master Tara Singh to go on fast. On 15 August, 1961 A.D, after taking oath at Shri *Akal Takht* and paying obeisance at *Darbar Sahib*, Master Tara Singh commenced his fast unto death in Manji Sahib in front of a vast gathering of the Sikhs. The Government did not concede. Gian Singh Rarewala- the Sikh minister, suggested for the establishment of *Maha Punjab* (Greater Punjab), including Himachal Pradesh, as an alternative to the fast of Master Tara Singh. Baldev

Singh— the retired defense minister died on 29 June, 1961 A.D and Sant Fateh Singh and other colleagues again got settled in *Darbar Sahib* and the Akal Takht. Hudiara announced on 1 July that a Sikh state will be demanded in case the Punjabi Suba was not formed. Master Ji said that asking for a Sikh state was insanity.<sup>50</sup>

Jawahar Lal Nehru wrote a letter on 17 August 1961 A.D. to Master Tara Singh. The working committee deliberated upon the letter but no conclusion could be reached. During these days, Maharaja Patiala presented a proposal that Punjabi language be made language of entire Punjab. But the Akali Dal rejected this formula too. Nehru invited Sant for a meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Sant and Gurnam Singh met Nehru between 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> but no decision could be made. However, Kairon appealed to all the leaders on the 26<sup>th</sup> for calling-off the fast by Master Ji. The same day, Mauli Chander Sharma, K.M. Munshi and Mohindra Vijay Nath went to meet the Master Ji. He gave a statement that he would call-off the fast in case the principle of Punjabi Suba was agreed to. Sant Fateh Singh, Malik, Mukhbains Singh, Harchand Singh Janjji and others participated in the working committee of Akali dal. At last, the working committee decided to break the fast of Tara Singh. Master Tara Singh called-off his fast unto death on the 48<sup>th</sup> day in the evening of October 1961 A.D. at 7 pm. The fast had been ended on the insistence of Maharaja Yadwindra Singh and Giani Gurdit Singh.<sup>51</sup>

The coming into being of the Punjabi Suba had been accomplished. The Sikh nation had woken up with these two *morchas*. The issue of reservation of rights, which had been begun by the Punjabis since 1947 A.D. was about to be achieved, as the pressure on the Punjab Government was increasing. This was the time when only one voice was being used by every one, that the Punjabi Suba was indeed required on the basis of language. The Government had made all possible efforts to suppress this voice, but this struggle was getting further heated up. Due to these reasons, the Government had to yield and the Punjabi Suba had to be given to the Punjabis.

So, the Akalis had started to organize *morchas* (field fortifications) when demands for their rights were not met. Efforts were made to get the (previously agreed) demands accepted by the Government. The atmosphere started getting charged for Punjabi Suba after thumping victory of the Akali Dal in the *Gurudwara* elections of 1954 A.D. Meetings and conferences started getting organized and processions held. The communal Hindus opposed the demand for the formation of single-language state by shouting slogans of *Maha Punajb* (Greater Punjab). Accordingly, the Akalis held *morchas* at Amritsar in 1955 A.D and at Delhi in 1960 A.D-61 A.D. The Government

made efforts to suppress these agitations. Restrictions were also imposed on slogans by enforcing section 144 of the IPC. The police carried out indiscriminate arrests, used tear- gas shells and cane-charged the Sikhs but this did not deter the Sikhs and their *jathas* (groups) kept going. Command of the *morchas* was in the hands of Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh. The existence of Punjabi Suba came into being after sacrifices and efforts of the Sikhs. The Sikh nation got awakened with these two *morchas* and the Government, too, had to bow down.



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## FORMATION OF PUNJABI SUBA

Thus, during the period from 1947A.D till 1966A.D, the Congress enjoyed monopoly of Power in the Punjab state. The Congress was able to win all the three elections of 1952 A.D, 1957A.D and 1962A.D with a thumping majority. Its main rival has been the Akali Dal. However, the Akali Dal merged with the Congress during 1948A.D, and again in 1966 A.D but separated from them when its political goals were not fulfilled. One issue- the creation of Punjabi Suba, dominated the political scene of Punjab in the era which was a period of turbulent agitations.<sup>1</sup>

On 10 January, 1966 A.D, Lachhman Singh Gill- General Secretary of the S.G.P.C and Rawal Singh, member of its executive met the committee and presented the case of Punjabi Speaking case.<sup>2</sup>

Lal Bahadur Shashtri died suddenly on 11 January, 1966A.D. and Sm. Mahavir Tyagi submitted his resignation from the cabinet on 14 July, 1966 A.D. Indira Gandhi became president of the party on 20 January, 1966 A.D. Master Tara Singh had Sant Fateh Singh had announced to go on 'fast unto death' by accelerating the demand for Punjabi Suba.<sup>3</sup>

Lal Bahadur Shashtri appointed Sardar Hukam Singh, Speaker of the lower house, as Chairman of the Parliament Committee related to Punjabi Suba. who was already fully committed to the cause of Punjabi Suba. Certain members of the committee had great apprehensions when the demand for Punjab Suba had been going on. Hukam Singh was ready to announce in favor of the formation of Punjabi Suba. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Y.B. Chavan and Gulzari Lal Nanda tried all the methods to stop submission of the report by Hukam Singh. It was not up to Indira Gandhi to stop the report. To take credit before the report was submitted by Hukam Singh, she got the resolution passed on 9 March 1966 AD from the Congress Committee for formation of the Punjabi Suba, even though, the report had been submitted on 15 March, 1966 A.D. She writes about approval of the demand for Punjabi Suba.

“I had to make another unpopular decision. It concerned a tricky problem which I inherited from my predecessor –The Punjab Problem. My father had been strongly opposed to the idea but, by 1966 A.D, the demand had grown so strong that the centre was in no position to resist it.”<sup>4</sup>

As such, the resolution was got passed in Punjab by the Congress Working Committee,

according to which, support was provided where a Punjabi-language state was to be created in the state of Punjab. The government was requested to take necessary steps. This resolution was opposed vehemently but Indira Gandhi- the Prime Minister had to concede. The decision of the Indian National Congress had been accepted by all the political parties except Jan Sangh. Gulzari Lal Nanda and Lala jagat Natrain, who were against the Punjabi Suba from beginning, opposed the proposal of Punjabi Suba.<sup>4</sup>

The Government of India formed a commission based on Mr. J.C. Shah— a retired judge of the Supreme Court for demarcation of Punjabi Suba. There was no need of a commission because the boundaries had already been made clear through the 'Regional Formula'. Instead of language, population was made the base for demarcation, due to which, Gulzari Lal Nanda had launched the first attack on the interest of the Punjabis. The Parliament Committee made the recommendation on 18 March, 1966 A.D for dividing the state into three parts. The commission recommended the handing over of Kharar tehsil, which included Chandigarh also, to Haryana.<sup>5</sup> Recommendations of The Parliament Committee were :

- The existing Punjab should be reorganized on the basis of language
- As mentioned in the first schedule of the Punjab Regional Committee 1957 A.D, one- Language Suba be made in the Punjab region.
- In case there arises any discrepancy of any type, then a committee of the experts be instituted forthwith who should give recommendations about the necessary changes.
- Chandigarh is part of Punjabi region.

The 'Shah commission' had given grievous instructions against Punjab. The census of 1961 A.D was made the base for reorganization, where as these figures of the census were the product of Communal conditions. Nehru, too, had ignored these figures.

- The people of Haryana were incited to raise false claims over the land and waters of Punjab.
- Indira Gandhi created false claims of Haryana over Chandigarh, the areas of Punjab and waters of Punjab and, while doing so, the National and International laws were also lost sight of. The decisions taken earlier were also ignored.<sup>6</sup>

On the contrary, Subimal Dutt a member of the S. Dutt Commission recommended for

Kharar, including Chandigarh to be given to Punjab because:

1. Though, undoubtedly, the number of Hindi speakers in Kharar, according to the census of 1961 A.D. for basing division was 52.2 %, but the number of speakers of Punjabi in the rural areas was 56.2 %.
2. Kharar tehsil had been placed in Punjab according to 'Sachar Formula'.
3. The Hindu population of the Chandigarh Capital are, in fact, of the migrants from UP and Rajsthan. As such, the tehsil of Kharar and Chandigarh can not be said to be of the speakers of Hindi language.

The Government accepted the minority report about Kharar but declared Chandigarh to be a Union territory. A delimitation Commission was instituted on 23 April 1966 A.D, based on Justice Shah, M.M. Philip and S. Dutt,<sup>7</sup>

The Commission submitted its report on the division of Punjab to the Government in May 1966 A.D. As per this Commission, the recommendations were :-

#### **Punjabi-Speaking Sreas to Punjab.**

- (I) Punjabi Suba would be formed of District Gurdaspur,(less Dalhousie, Balun and Bakloh), Amrritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Ferozepur, Bathinda, Patiala, Ludhiana. The tehsils of Sangrur district- Barnala, Malerkotla and Sangrur, Ropar tehsil of Ambala district, Tehsil Dasuha, Hushiarpur and Garhshankar, Anandpur and the development blocks of Nurpur Bedi, villages Kharabagh, Samipur and Kalseh of Una Block and village Kasauri of Una tehsil of Hushiarpur district.

#### **Hindi-Speaking Areas to Haryana**

- (II) The districts of Hissar, Mohindergarh, Gurgaon, Rohtak and Karnal and tehsils Narwana and Jind (District Sangrur) and Tehsil Kharar (Including Hadigarh Capital Project), Naraingarh, Ambala, Jagadhari (of Ambala district) were to form the Hindi-speaking state. The hilly areas, such as Shimla district, Kulu, Kangra, Lahaul Spiti were given to Himachal Pradesh.

The development blocks Gagrath, and Una (excluding the villages of Kharabagh, Samipur, Bhabhour and Kalseh), and village Kasri from tehsil Una (District Hushiarpur).

Tehsil Nalagarh (District Ambala)

Enclaves Dalhousie, Balun and Bukloh in Chamba district, the hilly areas having cultural affinity with the people of Himachal Pradesh were merged with Himachal Pradesh.

Punjabi Suba Parliament Committee sent its recommendations to the Home Minister- Gulzari Lal Nanda. By granting approval on 18 April to it, the Home Minister announced the names of members of new demarcation of Punjab. Presented a proposal to keep common system in 42 Government and non-Government institutions in Punjab and Haryana. Indira Gandhi implemented the report of minorities. Following common points were presented in the Reorganization Bill :

- Common High Court
- Common State Electricity Board
- Chandigarh was retained as Union territory, with both-Haryana and Punjab were equal partners.
- Common Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana and Punjab University, Chandigarh.
- Common Governor

The Central Government retained the control of following :

- Bhakhra Dam, Water-Reservoirs and other controls related to it- Nangal Dam and Nangal Hydrel Channel, Kotla Power House, Irrigation, Ropar headworks, Harike and Ferozepur, Bhakhra Power House, Power Houses of Ganguwal and Kotla, Bhakhra Management Board, Beas Project, Cooperative Union Chandigarh.

By taking away the following from Punjab, it stank of disbelief on its loyalty citizenship as Indian citizens :

- Pong dam Project, Punjab State Cooperative Civil Supply and Marketing Federation Chandigarh, State Finance corporation, Punjab Games and Sports Corporation, Punjab Dairy Development Corporation, Punjab State Handloom Works Cooperative Society, Chandigarh, Punjab State Mortgage Bank Ltd. Chandigarh, Punjab State Labor Uplift Federation, Chandigarh, the Sources of Water and Electricity. Now where else was so done at the time of creation of state of Hindu domination. The Reorganization Bill was over-flowing with partiality.

By chaining Punjab with common systems,, it was made into a 'limping ' Punjab. Of the whole area of Punjab, 41.2 % was given to Punjab, 35. 8 % to Haryana and 23 % given to Himachal Pradesh, free of any cost. The distribution of sources between Punjab and Haryana had been done in the ratio of 60:40 but this ratio was ignored at the time of

division of river waters.<sup>10</sup>

- The Legislative Assemblies of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were to have 87, 62 and 56 members respectively. 22 seats were allotted to Punjab and four to Himachal Pradesh in the Lok Sabha.

Allocation of seats in the Lok Sabha were to be :

- Punjab– 13 (3 reserved for scheduled castes)
- Haryana– 9 (2 reserved for scheduled castes)
- Himachal Pradesh– 6 (1 reserved for scheduled castes) and
- Chandigarh– 1

In the Rajya Sabha, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh had 11 and 2 seats respectively. After the reorganization, Punjab was allowed 7 seats, Haryana 5 and Himachal Pradesh one seat respectively.<sup>11</sup>

The bill for reorganization of Punjab was presented in the Lok Sabha on 3 September 1966 A.D. It was objected to by the Akali Dal. Demand was made for inclusion of Chandigarh with Punjab. The Master Akali Dal refused to accept it in entirety<sup>12</sup>. Sardar Kapur Singh said in the Parliament that the Shromani Akali was not willing to accept it due to following three reasons :

“Firstly, its conception is based on deceit. Secondly, It has been prepared by an incapable and illiterate official. Thirdly, It is against the interests of the nation. It will certainly weaken the National integration and lessen the faith of unity in those who use political power.”<sup>13</sup>

After the publication of 'Boundary Commission' on 8-6- 1966 A.D, following telegrams had been sent by the Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee to:- The President of India- Dr. S. Radha Krishnan, Prime Minister- Indira Gandhi, Home Minister- Gulzari Lal Nanda, Foreign Minister– S. Swaran Singh, Speaker– S. Hukam Singh<sup>13</sup>, The President of All-India Congress Committee– Kamraj, Narain Siha, Patil and Sanjiva Reddy :

“The Sikh public has felt sad and grieved by looking at the report of the Boundary Commission, which has been constituted for demarcation of Punjabi Suba and is recommended by the majority for Chandigarh to be given to Haryana. By ignoring the memorandum given by the Shromani Committee to the Boundary Commission, an awkward effort has been made to take Chandigarh and the Punjabi- speaking tehsils (since ancient times) of Kharar and Sirsa out of Punjab. It was a move of

the Central government to weaken the Punjabi Suba. The report of the Commission was in total contrast to the assurance given by the President and the Prime Minister at the time of demarcation of Punjabi Suba to pacify the Sant Ji. Report of the Demarcation Commission is against the proposals of the Congress Working Committee and the Parliament Committee. The Central Government and concerned officials should include Chandigarh and other Punjabi-speaking areas in Punjabi Suba.”<sup>14</sup>

In spite of opposition, the bill was passed on 7 September, 1966 A.D. and became law with the approval of the President on 18 September 1966 A.D. President rule was imposed in Punjab during this time.

While debating on the bill, Akali members (S. Kapur Singh, S. Buta Singh) had presented 32 amendments on the common links between Punjab and Haryana where Punjabi speaking areas had been kept out of Punjab. Instead of Nangal, the amendment of making Anandpur Sahib a tehsil, due to its historical significance, had been accepted. The Congress members rejected other amendments on the strength of majority. Chandigarh was retained under the Central rule. Punjab was behaved unfairly with this bill. The Akali members proposed to reject this bill. The discussion had thus continued on this bill.<sup>14</sup>

The bill had been passed on 7 September 1966 A.D and approved by the President on 18 September 1966 A.D, due to which, New Punjab came into being on 1 November 1966 A.D. 13 districts came as share of Punjab in 1947 A.D, which remained in the same form till 1957 A.D. Kangra was the largest of these districts. By amalgamating the eight states East Punjab, there were eight districts of PEPSU in August 1948 A.D. The districts of Barnala, Fatehgarh Sahib and Nalagarh had been disbanded. PEPSU had been amalgamated with Punjab on 1 November 1956 A.D. The number of districts had become 18 due to amalgamated with Punjab. This number of 18 continued till 1966 A.D.

Reorganization of Punjab took place on 1 November 1966 A.D on the basis of language. Kangra and Shimla districts of Punjab went away to Himachal Pradesh. Dalhousie tehsil of Gurdaspur district and Una tehsil of Hoshiarpur also went away to Himachal Pradesh. On the other side, the Jind tehsil of Sangrur district was amalgamated with Haryana. On the same time, Kharar and Ropar tehsils of Ambala district were grouped with Punjab. Ropar was given the status of a district on 1



September 1966 A.D. Including it, 11 districts were formed of Punjab, which included :- Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, Bathinda, Sangrur, Patiala and Ropar. On the other side in Haryana, Jind also got the status of a district on 1 November 1966 A.D. thus making the number of districts as six- Ambala, Karnal, Rohtak, Hissar, Gurgaon and Jind. Districts in Punjab remained 11 only in 1972A.D. The sabotaging of the districts on political bases started from 1972A.D. onwards. Lachhman Singh Gill kept trying to make Moga a district but could not succeed.<sup>16</sup>

The reorganized state of Punjab has an area of 50,376 sq.km, which constitutes 1.6 % of the total area of India. On the eve of bifurcation of the state, the population was estimated to be 1,11,47,054, including 2,563,306 urban and 8,578,748 rural.

Haryana received 16,835 sq mile area and Himachal laid hands on 10,215 sq miles of the earlier Punjab. Though all the Punjabi-speaking areas could not join in the new demarcation, but 85 % of the Sikh population got together in Punjabi Suba.<sup>17</sup>

New council of ministers was born under the leadership of Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir on 1 November in which a total of 22 ministers were elected- 11 as cabinet ministers, 4 as ministers of state, 4 as deputy ministers and one parliament secretary.

In Haryana, under the leadership of Pandit Bhagwat Dyal Sharma, a council of 17 ministers was formed which included 10 as cabinet ministers, 3 as ministers of state and 4 as deputy ministers.<sup>18</sup>

Haryana welcomed the reorganization of Punjab. The majority population got together at one place. It was opposed by the Akalis. Threat was given by Sant Fateh Singh to go on fast and immolate himself on the issue of Chandigarh. The issue of Chandigarh took the precious life of S.Darshan Singh Feruman but solution could not be found for the satisfaction of Punjab or Haryana.

Sant Fateh Singh had gone abroad at the time of publication of the report. He opposed the Reorganization Act on his return from foreign tour. Sant Fateh Singh said, "Punjabi Suba is our last demand." Master Tara Singh also opposed the deceit meted out regarding the Punjabi Suba.<sup>19</sup>

Sant Fateh Singh called for a conference on 10 November 1966 A.D. in which representatives of the Communist parties, Independent parties, republican party and United Socialist party favored the cancellation of common links. A *Jatha* (group) of 75 was sent from Amritsar on 16 November 1966 A.D. This jatha was divided into three groups. These *Jathas* were taken into custody much before they reached Chandigarh.<sup>20</sup>

Sant Fateh Singh announced to commence the observance of 'fast unto death' at a *Diwan*, which was being held at *Manji Sahib*, Amritsar, on 5 December. He commenced his fast on 17 December at the third storey of *Manji Sahib*, which was considered to be the initial stage for self-immolation on 27 December 1966 A.D. Sant Fateh Singh said, I want to make it clear that this program of mine for self-immolation can be averted only if the Government agrees to our following demands :

- Termination of mutual arrangement
- The return of Dams, Projects and Chandigarh being retained by the Central Government.

The demands for inclusion of the Punjabi –speaking areas in Punjab were a part of it.<sup>21</sup>

Master Tara Singh supported Sant Fateh Singh and demanded “An Autonomous status” to acquire a real type of "Homeland for the Sikhs". As such, the struggle by the Sikhs and the Akalis recommenced regarding the Reorganization Bill.<sup>22</sup>

In the background of the fast of Sant Fateh Singh, Sharomani Akali Dal also took part in the General Elections of 1967A.D. The conditions of those times were not favorable to the Akalis. Congress was the ruling party and could take advantage due to the demand for Punjabi Suba. This Punjabi Suba was not as per demands of the Akali Dal. Certain leaders of that time suggested that the Punjabi area be converted into Punjabi Suba. The attitude of Congress changed due to the 'fast unto death' of Sant Ji. Showing satisfaction on this attitude, he cancelled the program of his fast and self-immolation. Akali Dal had got 26 seats and the Congress 48 of the 120 seats in this election.<sup>23</sup>

Justice Gurnam Singh became the Chief Minister of the first Akali Government in Punjabi Suba. He was sworn in on 8 March 1967 A.D. The 'Gurnam Singh' government fell on 22 November, 1967 A.D and Lachhman Singh Gill became the Chief Minister with help of the Congress.

Sant fateh, who had found himself in embarrassing situations announced that he would go on a fast-unto-death on 26 January, 1970 A.D. and commit self- immolation on 1 February, 1970 A.D. Sant Fateh Singh went on fast as planned on 26 January, 1970 A.D. Indira Gandhi met the Chief ministers of Punjab and Haryana on 7 January. She announced her eagerly-awaited award on 29 January. According to the terms of award:

- Fazilka and Abohar with 114 villages in the two tehsils would be transferred to Haryana.

- The Chandigarh Capital Project area was to be transferred to Punjab in five years.
- Punjab was also to get Punjabi- speaking areas adjacent to Chandigarh.
- The Government of India would make a grant of Rs 10 crores and loan of Rs 10 crores to the Government of Haryana to construct its new capital.
- A commission would be appointed in consultation with the Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh to recommend territorial adjustments on the basis of contiguity of linguistic regions.<sup>25</sup>

The Sant and the Akali Dal welcomed the award and the Akalis requested the Sant to break his fast as his demands had been met. He did so and broke his fast on 30 January 1970 A.D. The Punjab Government ordered two state holidays on 1 and 2 February to celebrate the events.

The Haryana Government condemned the award on Chandigarh but welcomed that on Fazilka area.<sup>26</sup>

Various people and organizations tried to take credit for the acquisition of Punjabi Suba. The collective honor of the establishment of Punjabi Suba should go to the Sikh public, Akali workers, Punjabi farmers, to those who thronged the prisons for Punjabi Suba, Master Tara Singh, the bravery of the Sikh soldiers in the 1965A.D. war (with Pakistan), changed situation in the country and Fateh Singh. As a matter of fact, the Akali Dal was now moving even beyond Punjabi Suba. The talks of principle of self-determination, Sikh Homeland, Sikh state, Khalistan etc were on the increase. The Government, too had a scheme (which failed ultimately) to stop the formation of Punjabi Suba.<sup>27</sup>

The Akali Dal had won a number of seats, as is evident from the elections of 1967A.D, 1969A.D and 1977A.D. The organization of Punjabi Suba affected the politics of the state. The organization of Punjabi Suba was a significant event in the politics of Punjab. It created a deep impact on the economics, social-structure and politics of Punjab.

With formation of Punjabi Suba, the territorial area and population got considerably reduced than before. The Present Punjab, which has an area of 50,362 sq KM is only 7<sup>th</sup> part of what it was before the partition and only 49.9 % of the time before reorganization. As far as area is concerned. It is one of the smallest among the states. Its area is only 1.54 % of the total area of India. As regards population, only 55%

population has remained in new Punjab as compared to the pre-reorganization situation is concerned. These changes have affected the economy of the state. The hilly areas were also given to Himachal Pradesh along with forest capital. Punjab has been left with no natural resources which could become the base for economic development. The powerful centre of industries of Punjab (Faridabad) went away to Haryana.<sup>28</sup> The mutual control of Bhakra Dam Complex has made the new state depend on Central Administrative Board and for water supply. Punjab became primarily a farming Suba with no major industries. Revolution took place in agriculture after new Punjab came into being. Punjab made a contribution of 60 % and 30-35 % of wheat and rice respectively towards the central pool. Ironically, the policies of the centre have made devastating impact on it. Base of agriculture is water. The united- Punjab had got two rivers at the time of partition. By clearly trespassing Indian Constitution, the Centre had no right to form any law over the rivers of Punjab and hydle power, because these issues were in the jurisdictions of the states. By ignoring the national and international laws, the riparian rights of Punjab had been taken away under these provisions. By main- taining the riparian laws of Yamuna waters, Haryana Government and Haryana Assembly were given freedom to take every decision regarding them, while the Centre held control over the rivers flowing in Punjab and maintenance of Hydle Power projects. Rajsthan had no right over the waters of Narmada river because these waters do not touch the borders or pass through Rajsthan. As such, Rajsthan came to be considered a non-riparian state. Haryana, Rajsthan and Delhi were called the non-riparian and Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir as riparian states. The Satluj-Yamuna Link canal delivered a death blow to the rights of lacs of farmers and crippled the industrial economy of Punjab. Water is the only biggest capital with Punjab because, it does not have any sea, natural resource, coal, oil or water. The economy of Punjab suffered grievously due to looting of its waters. The economy of Punjab became weak due to the Re-organization Act 1966 A.D. and formation of the Punjabi Suba.<sup>29</sup>

The social-structure of Punjab has become completely different after the formation of Punjabi Suba. Before reorganization of Punjab, the Hindus were 63.3% and the Sikhs 33.4% of the total population. However, The Sikhs have become majority from the minority status. Punjab has become the only state of India which is a Sikh majority area. According to the census of 1991A.D, the Sikhs are 62.95 %, Hindus 34.46 %, Muslims 10.8 percent and the Christians 10.1 % respectively. Except the districts of Gurdaspur, jalandhar and Hushiarpur, the Sikhs are in majority in all the other districts

of Punjab. Not only this, Punjab has become that state of India after re organization where the number of scheduled castes (% wise) is greater than other states of India. As per the census of 1991A.D, their population is 23.3 % of the total population of Punjab. Education was considerably affected in Punjab. The numbers kept going down in schools and colleges. The business and employment of the people were affected.

The policy of Punjab has also been deeply affected by the formation of Punjabi Suba. This effect can be felt in various political areas of the state. Firstly, there has been considerable effect of reorganization on the future of various political parties. The Akali Dal benefitted most from it. The Akali Dal could not even think of coming to power before reorganization. However, due to increase in numbers of the Sikhs and rural seats, the chances of victory of the Akalis have considerably increased. There had been constant increase in the number of seats won by the Akalis since the elections of 1967A.D till now. There has not been much damage to the Jan Sangh / B.J.P. due to reorganization of the state because, even earlier, they would get the support from Punjabi speaking areas but was limited to the Hindu votes only. The Communist Parties initially benefitted immensely due to reorganization, because the traditional base of these parties is also the Punjabi speaking areas. The Congress party has suffered maximum loss due to reorganization. There was strong hold of this party on politics before reorganization but lost power due to reorganization.

The other impact of the reorganization noticed on Punjab politics was that the disputes arose with the neighboring states on the issues of areas and water. The tension between the Centre and the Akali Dal also increased due to these disputes.

Thirdly, the demand of Akali Dal for greater rights to Punjab is also the result of reorganization. The Akali Dal started feeling after formation of Punjabi Suba that their problems will not get solved with the formation of the Suba, until they are given more rights by the Centre. As such, they started demanding more rights in due course of time. They have also passed two proposals in this regard which are called 'The Batala and Anandpur Sahib Resolutions' after their names.

Fourthly, due to impact of reorganization on the future of political parties, the ' Coalition' system of politics was born in the state. The Akali Dal came up as a dominant party to the fore after the reorganization, which coerced the power of the Congress. By breaking the hold of the Congress, it cleared the way for the formation of coalition Governments.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, the Punjabi Suba got formed due to various sacrifices and struggles. The Indian

government appointed `Shah Commission` to demarcate the boundaries of Punjab and Haryana. The reorganization bill was passed on the basis of recommendations of this committee only. Punjab was divided into two states- Punjabi Suba and Haryana under Punjab Reorganization Act, passed in 1966 A.D. Certain areas of undivided Punjab were given to Himachal Pradesh. However, Haryana was raised as a rival to the state of Punjabi language (which was to be made for Punjab). Common links had been made for Punjab and Haryana. Haryana was the area of Hindi-speakers. It could have been easily amalgamated with neighboring Hindi states of Rajasthan and U.P. But, the state of Punjab, which was demanding the areas of Punjabi –speakers, was crippled and made lame as well. Such seeds were sown for its future of economic growth that would not let it move forward. Haryana welcomed the Act of reorganization but it was opposed by the Akalis. Sant Fateh Singh threatened to go on `fast unto death` and resort to self-immolation as a protest to it. As a result, the common forms were removed for Haryana and Punjab and Sant Fateh Singh and the Akali Dal welcomed this decision. There was considerable impact on the political, economic and social conditions of Punjab with the formation of Punjabi Suba. Punjab became a Sikh-majority area. If at all the Punjabi language has been implemented then its entire credit goes to the speakers of Punjabi for the first time.

## ANNOTATIONS

- 1 Dalip Singh, Dynamics of Punjab Politics, Macmillan, New Delhi, 1981, p.21
- 2 Report of the Parliamentary Committee on the demand for Punjabi Suba, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 1966, Appendix 11, p.56
- 3 'The Spokesman', January 1996, p.2
- 4 Principal Sarwan Singh Aujla, 'Anehre Raah aty Panth', Uddan Publication, 2009, pp.166, 167
- 3 Jamshid Ali Khan, 'Punjab di Rajniti', Lokgeet parkashan, 2005, p.20
- 4 'The Spokesman' November 1994, p.23
- 5 Report of Punjab Boundary Commission, Para 125, manager G of I Press, New Delhi, 1966.
- 8 Ibid, pp.49,53
- 9 Dhanna Singh Gulshan, 'Ajj da Punjab te Sikh Rajniti,(1947-77),Dhaliwal Publishing House, Bathida p.163. Members of the Commission- Justice J.C,Shaw,Chairman, members- S.Dutt, Mr. M.M. Philip.
- 10 Government of India, The Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 A.D, of India Press, Delhi, 1967A.D, pp.1, 2. Master Akali Dal presented the grievances of the Sikhs as a resolution in which the inflexible determination of the Sikhs had been mentioned, and the announcement made that "They are determined to face all the legalities, which are being employed to reduce status of the Sikhs in Independent India." New Punjab should be given the same status of constitutional Autonomy as has been given to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as had been visualized in the Act of Constitution of India in 1947 A.D. (Sangat Singh, 'Itihas wich Sikh', Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1999 p.365)
- 11 The Tribune, 10 September, 1966.
- 12 Sardar Kapur Singh, MP, (In his speech in the Lok Sabha on 6 September 1966, Termed as "Betrayal of the Sikhs", some documents on the demand for a Sikh Homeland, published by the Sikh Students Federation, pp.25,26
- 13 Gurudwara Act, June 1966, p.84
- 14 Akali Patrika, Qaumi Dard Samachar, 31 May, 1966, By inserting sections 78 to 80 in the Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966, Irrigation, Hydel power and their development were handed over to the Centre, whereas, these were rightfully the subjects of the states as per the Constitution. 80 % water of Punjab was given to

other states, absolutely free of cost.

- 15 Ajit Singh Sarhadi, 'Punjabi Sube di Gaatha', Op.cit., p.470
- 16 Jangpal Singh, 'Addhi Sadi da Itihas', (Siaasat da Sarwekhan), pp.101, 102
- 17 Khushwant Singh, 'Sikh Itihas', part 2, Op.cit., p.302
- 18 Dhana Singh Gulshan, 'Ajj da Punjab te Sikh Rajniti', Op.cit., pp.167-168
- 19 The Tribune, 10 September 1966.
- 20 Sangat Singh, 'Itihas wich Sikh', Op.cit. p.367  
The Punjab government decided to make two parts of Electricity Board and  
Cancel all the common, Ibid, p.367
- 21 The Tribune, 10 September 1966.
- 22 The Hindu, 22 September 1966, The Tribune, 25 September 1966.
- 23 The Tribune, 16 August 1969, Pt Mohan Lal, 'Punjab di Wandd' , p.273
- 24 The Akalis won 44 seats in the elections of 1969 and they had the support of  
five Communists and Marxists. Once again, by instilling confidence in the  
Hindu-minority, the Akalis Formed a coalition government under the leadership  
of Gurnam Singh, by joining with nine members of the Jan Sangh group, (Sangt  
singh, Itihas vich sikh), Op.cit., p.373,  
'The Spokesman' January 1966, p.20
- 25 The Times of India, 25 November 1969
- 26 The Tribune, 1 February 1970.
- 27 'Sharomani Akali Dal- Ik Itihas', Part-1, Op.cit. p.276
- 28 Jamshid Ali Khan, Op.cit., pp.21-22
- 29 'The Spokesman' September 1994, p.31, Spokesman, pp.3,4
- 30 Jamshid Ali Khan, op.cit., pp.22-24



## CONCLUSION

The demand and struggle for Punjabi Suba had commenced after the partition of 1947. The Akali leaders had started demanding Punjabi Suba for different identity and state for the Sikhs. It was a long struggle planned by the Akalis, Sikhs and the general public.

'Punjab' got divided with the division of the country. 'Punjab' no longer remained Punjab with its division. The division of Punjab was a unique event in the world History. It had deeply affected the social, economic structure and political development of the East and West Punjab. Reins of India came in the hands of the aristocracy. Brahmanical elements having gained control over the Congress party, the promises made to the Sikhs in the constitution were not honored, due to which, two Sikh members of the Legislative assembly- Sardar Hukam Singh and Bhupinder Singh had refused to endorse their signatures on the draft of the constitution. The identity of the Sikhs had started eroding under the Hindu domination, resulting in exertion of pressure by Akali leaders for the creation of Punjabi Suba.

The Sikh religion originated in Punjab at the time of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. It had reached the pinnacle by the time of Guru Gobind Singh. The development of *Gurmukhi* script had also taken place during times of the Gurus. The *Sikh Raaj* (empire) got created in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The British had annexed it to their empire in 1849 A.D and the administration of Punjab had been managed by the British Government.

The *Sikh Raaj* had come to cease with the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and considerable downfall had befallen the Sikh religion. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a number of social and religious movements such as 'Nirankaari' movement, Naamdhaari movement, 'Akali ' movement, 'Singh Sabha' movement and 'Gurudwara' reformatory movements had been launched. The 'Akali Dal' came into being when the energized elements, *Panthic* power and ideology were manifested through the system of organized unionism. Under the leadership of this 'Dal', the servers of *Panth* guarded the interests of *Panth* at that time in a democratic and peaceful manner. 'Punjabi Suba' had been created on the basis of language after giving numerable sacrifices. Followed by the formation of 'Akali Dal', the Sharomani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C) came into existence, which encouraged the Sikhs.

The demand for Punjabi Suba by the Akalis was projected on the basis of language being spoken in the Punjab area. The Akali Dal leadership did not define any object in their demand. Different splinter groups of various leaders had come into being and considerable misunderstandings had crept among them. Master Tara Singh demanded the Punjabi-speaking areas and made efforts to establish the identity of the Sikhs. Master Tara Singh said that the Punjabi Suba had been demanded to protect the Sikh Panth from Hindu religion, strengthen the position of Sikhs and protect their interests. On the other hand, Sant Fateh Singh had different ideas regarding Punjabi Suba. He said that,

“We do not want a Sikh majority area. We are not concerned about percentages.”

He made it clear that he wanted the creation of Punjabi Suba purely on linguistic base. As such, different ideologies began to emerge regarding the demand for Punjabi Suba. It may thus be seen that the provision of a Punjabi Suba could not fulfill the political aspirations of the Sikhs. As became evident from various sources, the demand of Akalis for Punjabi Suba was purely for meeting their political interests. Although Ambala and Karnal also had Punjabi speaking areas but the demand for their inclusion in the state of Punjabi Speakers was not taken up seriously : they being the Hindu majority areas. Due to certain political exigencies, the Government of India did not allow Chandigarh to be a part of Punjabi –speaking area which, in turn, embittered the relationship between the Akalis and the Congress-led government. Last, but not the least, it may be said that, with formation of the Punjabi-Speaking state, the political aims of Akalis remained unfulfilled and the situation led to a turmoil in Punjab.

A commission was constituted regarding re-organisation of the state. The Government of India appointed a three member commission on 22 December 1953 A.D to consider the issue of re-organisation of states on the basis of languages. The commission had visited various parts of the country and held discussions with the leaders of political parties. The report was submitted in 1955 A.D. The commission had set aside the principle of 'one language- one state' and recommended grouping of the country into 16 states and three *Sangh khetras* (union territories). The Sikhs of Punjab had welcomed the constitution of this commission because they had got an opportunity to express their views in favor of Punjabi Suba. The Hindus had projected the demand for a *Maha Punjab* (Greater Punjab).

On 15 July 1948 A.D, Sardar Patel referred to the 'Patiala and East Punjab State Union'

(PEPSU) as a 'Sikh Homeland' while he inaugurated the new state. Former chief of Patiala- Maharaja Yadvendra Singh was made the Governor and former chief of kapurthala was made deputy chief respectively for life. The Government was installed in August 1948 A.D, with a Sikh aristocrat- Gian Singh Rarhewala as the Chief Minister. All that was required was to attach the Sikh majority districts of East Punjab to PEPSU and declare it as the Sikh state.

Bhim Sen became the Chief Minister of Punjab in place of Gopi Chand Bhargava. By installing Bhim Sen Sachar as the Chief Minister on 13 April 1948A.D, Giani Kartar Singh got a 'Sachar Formula' prepared, in which Punjab was declared a bi-lingual state. Subsequently, 'Regional Formula' came to be constituted with the efforts of Hukam Singh and Giani Kartar Singh, by which, demarcation of the Punjabi language areas was re-done. Partap Singh Kairon did not let the ' Regional Formula' succeed.

The Akalis had further intensified demand for Punjabi Suba. Many *morchas* were organized by the Akalis so that their demands could be met by the Government. Akali leaders- Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh whole-heartedly took part in these *morchas*. A number of conferences and meetings were held. The first *morcha* was organized at Amritsar in 1955A.D, in which slogans of *Punjabi Suba Zindabad* were shouted. Restrictions were imposed on these slogans under section 144 of the IPC. Master Tara Singh violated this restriction by shouting the slogan of Punjabi Suba *Zindabad* and volunteered to be imprisoned. The *morcha* continued to be held. Many *jathas* would go every day and offer themselves to be imprisoned. Sachar Government showed disrespect to the *Darbar Sahib*, which agitated the Sikhs. At last, Sachar apologized and had to resign. PEPSU was included in Punjab. The 64-day *morcha* of 1955A.D thus ended into victory of the Akali Dal.

The victory provided renewed inspirations to the Sikh nation, resulting in the commencement of struggle for 'Punjabi Suba', Sikh culture and Sikh identity in a revised form. A sense of unity originated among the Sikhs. The second largest *morcha* took place in 1960A.D. The vigor among the Akali leaders had also enhanced and the demand for Punjabi Suba had intensified. The *morcha* of 1960A.D was held at Delhi. Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh resorted to 'fasts unto death'. 'Regional Formula' was also not implemented fully and the Akalis had gotten agitated. Many ups and downs were experienced during this period. On certain occasions, many Akalis joined the Congress so that the demand for a Punjabi Suba could be got approved. General elections were also held during this period and new Government formed. Hindi

*Raksha Smiti* had launched agitation against the 'Regional Formula'.

The conference of *Punjabi Rakheya Dal* was held at Jalandhar in which the demand had been forwarded for implementing the *PEPSU* formula in Punjab and for creation of Punjabi University. Election for the 'Delhi Suba Akali Dal' had been held in 1958A.D. Speaking at a function in Amritsar, Master Tara Singh said that the 'Regional Formula' was not being followed and, as such, Punjabi Suba will have to be demanded. Pritam Singh Gojraan demanded a 'Sikh State'. Sant Fateh Singh repeated the demand for Punjabi Suba. The Akali conference at Baba Bakala projected the demand for the creation of Punjabi Suba in Maharashtra and Gujarat. As such, the demand for Punjabi Suba re-surfaced in a new form. The demand for Punjabi Suba had started getting encouragement from everywhere.

Many states had been formed on the basis of language eg. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka. The demand for Punjabi Suba had intensified with encouragement from such developments. Master Tara Singh declared that, *Aseen Punjabi Suba prapt karan laee drirh haan ! Aseen ja jittan ge ja mraan ge, parr haraan ge naheen!* Punjabi Suba convention of 1960 A.D. was held at Amritsar. It was presided over by Sundar Das. Before launching of the *morcha*, restrictions had been imposed on the Akali newspapers and press so that the news about *morcha* did not reach the public. Thus commenced the *morcha* of 1960A.D. The *jathas* of Akali Dal would get arrested and police would *lathi charge* (cane charge) the processions. After this, one *jatha* would march every day and get arrested. The Akali Dal had commenced the *morcha* without any memorandum. Nehru was against the creation of Punjabi Suba.

The *jathas* began to be dispatched from *Sis Ganj* and the police had resorted to extreme brutalities. Master Tara Singh had been arrested, following which, the command was taken over by Sant Fateh Singh. Sant Ji demanded Punjabi Suba on the basis of language. In a letter written to the Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1960A.D, Sant Ji said that he would go on *Marn- wratt* (fast unto death) in case his democratic and constitutional demand for the creation of a state of Punjabi speakers was not conceded to. Sant Ji commenced his 'fast unto death'. Nehru appealed to the Sant Fateh Singh to break his fast but the latter did not agree. After his release, Master Tara Singh met Sant Ji, the fast was broken and the *morcha* removed. However, Master Tara Singh had himself gone on fast in 1961A.D. The Government had announced its decision for the constitution of a commission to investigate discriminations against the Sikhs. 'S.R.Das' commission was constituted in which the discriminations and complaints against the

Sikhs were investigated. The commission submitted its report to the effect that no discrimination had taken place. Punjabi University had come into existence in 1962 A.D. Moving out of Partap Singh Kairon from the state's political sphere was a significant event in the Punjab politics, because he ruthlessly crushed the 'Punjabi Suba' movement and, despite the sacrifices of Akalis, did not concede to their demands. Sant Fateh Singh had discussions with Lal Bahadur Shastri- the new Prime Minister of India, and offered logical arguments in support of Punjabi Suba, but did not succeed. Sant Ji said that he would resort to *Marn vratt* (Fast unto death) inside the Golden temple in 1965A.D. Should he remain alive on the 15<sup>th</sup> day, he will immolate himself on the 16<sup>th</sup> day in self-sacrifice. However, the fast-unto-death had to be withheld due to war with Pakistan. The Home Minister- Gulzari Lal Nanda made a statement in the Lok Sabha that the subject of structuring of a state of speakers of Punjabi will be considered after the war. After cease-fire, the Indian Government appointed a three-member Cabinet Committee under the Chairmanship of Indira Gandhi for considering the demand of Punjabi Suba. A Parliament committee was also appointed under the chairmanship of Hukam Singh- the speaker of Lok Sabha, to assist the cabinet committee (of Indira Gandhi). It was evident that there was considerable change in the dealings of Central Government towards the demand of Akalis for Punjabi Suba. The leaders of center and of the Congress of Punjab had started to support the demand of Sant Fateh Singh for formation of Punjabi Suba, being demanded on the basis of language. On the other side, in the Hindi speaking area, 'Haryana Lok Smiti' was vigorously demanding a separate state of Haryana. Under such circumstances, the Parliament committee and the cabinet committee recommended for re-determination of the boundaries of Punjab on linguistic basis. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India wanted to pacify the Akalis for strengthening her own position. Under her influence, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution, wherein, it was stated that:

*Punjab de vartmaan raaj wichon ik Punjabi raaj-bhasha waley raaj da  
nirmaan kita jawey ! Sarkar nu iss manttav laee zaruri qadam chukka di  
benti kiti jaandi hai !*

For fixing the boundaries of Punjab and Haryana, a committee of three members was constituted under the chairmanship of Justice J C Shah. The *Punnar Gathan* (re-organisation) bill regarding Punjab had been passed on the basis of this only. Under the 'Re-organisation' Act, which was passed on 1 November, 1966, Punjab was divided into two states - 'Punjabi Suba' and 'Haryana'. A few areas of undivided Punjab were

given to Himachal Pradesh. Himachal and Haryana were raised as *Shreek* (rivals). Sharomani Akali Dal managed to get Punjabi Suba formed after a long and difficult struggle. Thousands of people (Sikhs) faced imprisonment and many gave their sacrifices too under the Akali leadership. Many more linguistic states came into being after independence of the country. None had to struggle so much to get their one-language *Raaj*, as had to be done by the ones who had demanded Punjabi Suba. Despite a lapse of 28 years, no other state is as *Adhoora* and *na-mukammal* (inconclusive and incomplete) as Punjab is. 80 % natural resources of no other state have been distributed for free among the neighboring states. Except Punjab, the centre has not held control of water resources of any state. Common yard-sticks were applied to Punjab and Haryana. It is a historical fact that the Congress and Bhartiya Janta Party (Jan Sangh) etc had been opposing the Akali Dal for its struggle for Punjabi Suba. Only after realising the dashingly vigorous struggle by leaders of Punjab under the Akali Dal had these parties accepted the demand of Punjabi Suba. However, the Punjabis had been cheated and Chandigarh was made the new capital of Punjab.

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