The Congress and Akalis had cooperated each other in 1937 elections, but wanted to fight elections independently. The Akali Dal fight the 1946 general elections to the Punjab Legislature on its own tickets, at many places opposing the Congress Party. In January 1946, election of Punjab Legislative Assembly were held. In these elections Muslim league won largest number of seats - 73 out of 175, the Congress came out second with 51 seats including 10 Sikh seats, the Akalis won the 21 seats and the Unionists won only 11 seats. The Akalis emerged as the sole representatives of the Sikhs on the issue of Pakistan and partition. The League however, needed the support of another party in 175 member assembly to form the government, but a compromise could not be effected with the Congress and Akali, so on Akali – Congress, Unionist coalition under Khizr – Hayat Khan took over the government in March 1946. Baldev Singh as Development Minister represented Akali Dal in the Punjab Ministry.

The Sikh delegation was united in its opposition to Pakistan. On 21 March 1946, the Shiromani Akali Dal held meeting in the Assembly Chamber, Lahore, Master Tara Singh and Baldev Singh were also present. Master Tara Singh said that he was for a united India; but if Pakistan demand was conceded, he was for a separate Sikh State with the right to federate either with India or Pakistan.
The objective of a Sikh State was officially adopted by the Shiromani Akali Dal in March 1946. The resolution said: "Whereas the Sikhs being attached to the Punjab by intimate bonds of holy shrines, property, language, traditions and history claim it as their homeland and holy land which the British took as a trust from the last Sikh ruler during his minority and whereas the entity of the Sikhs is being threatened on account of the persistent demand for Pakistan by the Muslims on the one hand and of the danger of absorption by the Hindus on the other, and Executive Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal demands for the preservation and protection of the religious cultural and economic and political rights of the Sikh population and their important sacred shrines and historical Gurdwaras with provision for the transfer and exchange of population and property".4

In a statement, Master Tara Singh had declared on 4 April 1946 that, "We want a Sikh State in a united India.... such a state will belong to the Sikh Panth, but it will be democratic and not monarchial".5 Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had himself made a statement on April 4, 1946 that "redistribution of provincial boundaries was essential and inevitable. I stand for semi-autonomous units as well...I should like them (the Sikhs) to have a semi-autonomous unit within the province so that they may experience the glow of the freedom".6

On 5th April 1946, Sardar Patel declared: "Sikhistan issue will be considered in the Constituent Assembly after the transfer of power in the hands of the Indians".7
On 6th April 1946, Master Tara Singh declared: “The Sikh will not tolerate the inclusion of Punjab in Pakistan. We shall be contented with a Sikh State in free India”.

The newspaper ‘The Tribune’ reports again on April 16, 1946 the declaration of a similar nature made by the Akalis at an Amritsar meet. In July 1946, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru himself told a press conference at Calcutta: The brave Sikhs of Punjab are entitled to special considerations. I see nothing wrong in an area and a set up on the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom.

Giani Kartar Singh, the Secretary of Akali Party had stated: “The Sikhs should be allowed to form an independent State of their own in North India”.

The Congress Party emerged as the strongest political force and assumed political power in the Punjab after partition. Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava was elected Chief Minister and Sir Chandu Lal Trivedi was appointed Governor. Gopi Chand Bhargava formed the new ministry on 11 June 1948 which included Swaran Singh and Isher Singh Majhail and Udham Singh Nagoke. Mohan Singh Nagoke, who was the President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee on 15 August 1947, was replaced by Udham Singh Nagoke on 28 June 1948.

Recalling the promises of the Congress particularly its resolution of 1929 and expressing their faith and trust in the Congress leaders, the Akalis resolved in March 1948 that all their legislatures should join the Congress Party. This was done on 18 March 1948. In June 1948,
Giani Kartar Singh joined the Congress Party and became a minister in the Punjab Cabinet.¹⁶

Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader saw in the Sikhs constituting a majority in a strategic province, the possibility of the Akali becoming the exclusive repository of power independently of the Congress. In his presidential address delivered at the Second Sikh Students Federation Conference at Ludhiana on 24-25 April 1948, he stressed the need to preserve the separate political integrity to the Sikhs and insisted that the Shiromani Akali Dal should retain its independent authority to take political decision on behalf of the Panth.¹⁷

The movement for redrawing State boundaries on the basis of linguistic and cultural homogeneity has had a long history. Congress Party had accepted the idea of the linguistic redistribution of provinces at its Nagpur Session in 1920.¹⁸ In 1927, Indian National Congress suggested regarding the need of linguistic States.¹⁹ After independence in August 1947, Mahatma Gandhi called upon the Congress government to fulfill the promise of reorganisation of provinces on linguistic basis.²⁰ The government appointed Dar Commission to examine the question of linguistic States on 17 June 1948.²¹

As a consequence of the independence, a new political State called Pepsu came into being in July 1948. It consisted of Patiala and other Princely States in the East Punjab.²² Sardar Patel while performing its inaugural ceremony characterised it as ‘Homeland of the Sikhs’ and it was utilised by the Akalis as an argument in favour of its merger into the Sikh majority areas of Punjab and formation of Punjabi speaking State.²³ The demand for Punjabi Suba became more
pronounced during the discussions on minority rights of the Sikhs in the Constituent Assembly. The Sikh members of the East Punjab States Assembly, except Partap Singh Kairon, president a 13 point charter of demands of the Constituent Assembly.  

The Linguistic Provinces Commission recommended that no new provinces should be formed for the time being and that the question could be taken up when India has been physically and emotionally integrated the national sentiment strengthened and other conditions were favourable on the ground that:  

(i) India was burdened with the problems more urgent than the problem of redistribution of provinces, such as those of defence, food, refugees, inflation and production;  

(ii) It could not afford to add to its anxieties the heat, controversy and bitterness which the demarcation of boundaries and the allotment of capital cities of Bombay and Madras would involve;  

(iii) The economic consequence of splitting up of existing provinces into several new provinces required a great deal of study, preparation and planning; and  

(iv) The administrative personnel available at the time was inadequate to bear the additional burden of running new governments.  

In 1948, a Committee was appointed by the Indian National Congress at its Jaipur Session to consider the question of linguistic province and to review the position in the light of the report of the Dar
Commission. This Committee known as J.V.P. Committee (consisted of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya) was the first Congress body to sound a note of warning against the linguistic principle.27

The Committee made a special reference to the problem of State reorganization of the northern area and categorically expressed itself against any such rectification of the boundaries in the immediate future.28 The Punjab was excluded from the purview of the Dar Commission followed by the J.V.P. Committee on account of various problems then facing the province as a result of the partition.29

Linking the change in the Congress attitude with partition, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Partition of the country has made undoubtedly many of us hesitant about changing the map of India". We must give the utmost to developing a sense of unity in India and anything that might come in the way of that unity might perhaps be delayed a little, and added, "That at a time when the world was hanging on the verge of crisis, it was extraordinary unwise to unsettle and uproot the whole of India on the basis of a theoretical approach on linguistic division".30

In February 1949, a Hindu dominated Municipal Committee of Jullundur resolved to introduce Hindi in Devnagri script in all schools. The Sikhs argued that Punjabi in Gurmukhi script should be declared the sole language of the Punjab. But the Hindus opposed this suggestion31. 'The Tribune' writes: Punjabi alongwith Hindi was recognised by the government as an official language of the East Punjab. Now both of them enjoy equal status in courts, schools and
offices. But Punjabi was far less developed than Hindi and was poorer in many respects than its sister language like Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati etc.\(^{32}\)

The Senate of the Punjab University at its meeting on 9 June 1949, rejected by a majority vote, the proposal of Punjabi being adopted as the medium of instruction, although the Sikh Senators were agreeable in difference to the sentiments of the Hindus, to let it be written in Devnagri scripts besides its own Gurmukhi script.\(^{33}\)

On 15 March 1949 a well knit group of the Akali legislators joined the Congress Sardar Partap Singh, Swaran Singh, Ranjit Singh joined Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava’s Ministry.\(^{34}\) The Akali Dal extended its support to Bhim Sen Sachar who became Chief Minister on 6 April 1949 and members such as Ujjal Singh, Sardar Joginder Singh Mann, Ch. Lahri Singh, Babu Bachan Singh joined the ministry.\(^{35}\)

In May 1949, the Advisory Committee of the constituent assembly disapproved the suggestion of the reservation of seats for religious minorities.\(^{36}\)

In October 1949, Sachar Formula was evolved by Giani Kartar Singh and the Chief Minister Bhim Sen Sahcar to accommodate the Sikh concern for Punjabi. It was announced on 2 October 1949. The proposals were signed by the other members Ujjal Singh and Gopi Chand Bhargava.\(^{37}\) The Punjab Government announced its decision to adopt a language formula, known as Sachar Formula which provided for a notional division of the province into two Zones, a Punjabi Zone and Hindi Zone.
The Punjabi Zone of the carving of Sachar Formula consisted of the districts of Amritsar, Jullundur, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur, all the portions of Hissar district, lying to the east of Ferozepur, Patiala side of the Ghaggar river and Ropar, and Kharar tehsil of Ambala district, to the Hindi Zone were assigned the districts of Gurgaon, Rohtak, Karnal, all portions of Hissar district lying to the south of Ghaggar river and Jagadhari and Naraingarh Tehsils of Ambala district and Kangra. The remaining areas Simla, Ambala, Chandigarh and Sirsa were declared bilingual.

Bhim Sen Sachar’s Ministry lasted for a bare six months, as the Akali group decided to switch its support to Bhargava. Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava returned to power on 18 October 1949, he resigned as Chief Minister on 20 January 1951.

The year 1950 was followed by the conventions, conferences, rallies and statements by different leaders relating to the issue of Punjabi Suba. The Sikh Conference at Ludhiana on 26 March 1950 marked an important step towards mobilizing the Sikhs behind the demand for a Punjabi speaking State. It turned out to be a massive rally. The President Sardar Hukam Singh gave a long persuasive address. He said that Sikh demanded the creation of a Punjabi speaking State on the basis of language and that its denial for the reason that it would otherwise benefit them was arbitrary and unjust. Master Tara Singh in an article in daily ‘Ajit’ during this period concluded that it should be obvious that harmonious India will not be possible unless we have a contented and loyal community.
In a meeting of the Working Committee of the Akali Dal on 30 July 1950, the merger was revoked on the grounds that the hopes of constructive sympathy and support from the great leaders had been belied. However, only one Akali member Jaswant Singh Duggal resigned from the Congress Party. The Akali members who continued to stay in the Congress Party justified their position by maintaining that it was more beneficial to the Panth, if they stayed in the Congress Party. Giani Kartar Singh, the Revenue Minister, Punjab, remarked that Akali legislators had served the Panth and that they hoped to serve it better.

In a speech at Amritsar, Isher Singh Majhail who was a Cabinet Minister in the Gopi Chand Bhargava’s ministry, said that even if the situation was viewed from selfish angle, the Sikhs should continue in the Congress Party for they now enjoyed 50 percent representation in the Cabinet.

The Punjab Congress decided to oppose the Akali demand of an autonomous status for Punjabi speaking State. On 15 December 1950, Partap Singh Kairon called an All India Congress Sikh Convention in which all the leading Congress Sikh made attack on Akali Dal’s demand of Punjabi Suba. Among those who attended the Convention were Giani Zail Singh, Surjit Singh Majithia, Gurdial Singh Dhillon, Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, Sarmukh Singh Chamak and Jathedar Sohan Singh Jallalusman. While addressing the Convention President Sardar Singh Caveesher advised the Akali leaders that their slogan of Punjabi Suba was synonymous with the slogan raised by Jinnah while demanding Pakistan. During the Census of 1951, the Hindus by and large declared Hindi as their mother tongue, thus
disowning Punjabi. The Hindu press argued that by declaring Gurmukhi as the only script for Punjab, the government had denied them their right to name Punjabi, as their mother tongue.47

The Shiromani Akali Dal issued a manifesto stated that they are in favour of formation of provinces on a linguistic and cultural basis throughout India but it holds, it is the question of life and death for the Sikhs for a new Punjab to be crated immediately. The Shiromani Akali Dal believes that a Punjabi speaking province may give Sikhs the needed security. It believes in a Punjabi speaking province as an autonomous unit of India.48

Giani Kartar Singh continued in the Congress Party but resigned later in 1951 when his group was unable to get a sufficient number of tickets for the forthcoming general elections in 1951-52. He again joined the Akali Dal and became its General Secretary.49

The first general elections in the country held under the new constitution in 1952 gave Akali Dal the opportunity to take the issue to the voters. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in his electioneering tour strongly opposed the creation of Punjabi Suba, and named it to be a division of the country. Speaking at Patiala on 4 January 1952 when some activists of Punjabi Suba demand interrupted him during his speech by shouting out the slogans, ‘Le Ke Rahenge Punjabi Suba,’ Nehru declared, “I will not allow India to be divided again. I will not allow any further trouble. If there is any trouble in any part of India, I would put it down with all my strength.”50 The Akali Dal fought the elections in the Punjab as well as in Pepsu. In Pepsu Akalis succeeded in forming a United Front Ministry headed by their Chief Minister Sardar Gian
The Shiromani Akali Dal now got extremely keen on demanding the amalgamation of the Punjab-speaking regions of the Pepsu and the Punjab. In December 1952, Potti Sriramula, one of the oldest Congress leader of Andra queered the pitch by starting a fast unto death. Four days after his death, the Prime Minister announced the government's decision to form a State of Andhra by the partition of Madras and it came into being in October 1953. The problem of reorganisation of the provinces in India became emergent because with the programme of large scale planning, it was essential to have ending political units. On 29 December 1953, the Parliament appointed the States Reorganisation Commission to examine 'objectively and dispassionately' the question of reorganisation of the States of the Indian Union so that the welfare of the people of each constitution unit as well as the nation as a whole be promoted. The Commission appointed Saiyed Fazl Ali (the Governor of Orissa) as Chairman,
Hariday Nath Kunzru (then member of Council of States) and Kavalam Madhava Pannikar (then Ambassador of India in Egypt) as members.

The appointment of the Commission was welcomed by the Sikhs as it is an opportunity of them to place their case of Punjabi Suba and get an adjudication thereon. The Akali Dal further argued that the demand for Punjabi Suba was in line with demands in other parts of India for the linguistic reorganisation of States. It further said that the Punjabi was a distinct language and had been so recognised in the Indian constitution. It is also endowed with a special script known as Gurmukhi which is not derived from Devnagri script of Hindi but from Brahmi. The areas claimed to be included in the proposed Punjabi speaking State would be the districts of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Jullundur, Hosiarpur, Ambala, Karnal (except Panipat tehsil) and tehsils of Sirsa and Fatehabad and sub-tehsil Tohana of Hissar district, Patiala, Barnala, Bhatinda, Kapurthala, Fatehgarh Sahib and Sangrur (except Jind, Nirwana tehsils) and Ganganagar district in Rajasthan.

The economically backward people of Haryana demanded a separate State for they alleged that they had been discriminated by the more advanced Punjabis in all fields of education, administration, politics, trade and commerce. 19 members of Punjab legislature and two members of Parliament representing the Ambala division in a memorandum submitted to the States Reorganisation Commission, urged the formation of new State, comprising the Hindi-speaking areas of Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Meerut and Agra division of U.P. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly, M.L.A from Haryana, Sri Chand, Sri Ram Sharma, Prof. Sher Singh and others
reiterated their demand for Haryana Prant. Prof. Sher Singh asserted that nearly 90 percent people of Haryana Prant were of the opinion that they should be “linked with an area with the people of which they have everything in common language, dress, habits and customs (and) with whom they were united before the great revolt of 1857 to form a separate State.

The memorandum submitted by the Congress Government pleaded for Greater Punjab, comprising the Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and few districts of U.P.

The States Reorganisation Commission issued its report in October 1955. The States Reorganisation Commission did not accept the Akali Dal’s demand for a Punjabi-speaking State, as they did not exist among the people of Punjab a ‘Minimum measure of agreement necessary for making the change in the present setup’. The proposal Punjabi-speaking State in the view of the Commission, “will solve neither the language problem nor the communal problem and far from removing internal tension, which exists between communal and not linguistic and regional groups, it might further aggravate the existing feelings”. The Commission recommended the merger of Punjab, Papsu and Himachal Pradesh. The Executive Committee of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee welcomed the report. The main argument advanced in favour of the continuance of the State, the Commission said, that the Pepsu was a homeland for the Sikhs and should therefore, be allowed to continue as such and secondly that the alternative to this would be concede either the demand for a Punjabi-speaking State or the demand for a Maha Punjab. But the government viewed both of these demands as communal in character in that they
were intended to tilt the balance in favour of one or the other of the two main communities. 66

Giani Kartar Singh said that out of fourteen languages provided for in the constitution, 13 States had been reorganised on the basis of languages, only the Punjabi Suba had not been formed because the loyalty of the Sikhs was suspected.67 Master Tara Singh summoned a representative convention of the Sikhs at Amritsar on 16 October 1955. The convention rejected the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission and castigated it for treating the Sikh claims with "undisguised bias". 68 At this time Master Tara Singh and his associates including Hukam Singh and Giani Kartar Singh were bitterly opposed to the Akalis joining the Congress Party. In June 1956, the Akali Dal had reiterated that religion and politics were inseparable in Sikhism and that it would maintain its separate political existence.69

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru invited Master Tara Singh for talks on Punjab problem in the light of this demand for reorganization of the State on linguistic basis. Master Trara Singh along with Principal Jodh Singh, S. Gian Singh Rarewala, S. Hukam Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and Bawa Harkishan Singh met Nehru and on 22 January 1956, a compromise formula known as Regional Formula was evolved.70

The Regional Formula divided the Punjab State on linguistic basis with a view to safeguards the interests of the language groups.71 The Regional plan was accepted by Master Tara Singh and the Akalis after long deliberations. In a press statement on 15 March 1956, explaining the reasons for the acceptance of the plan, Master Tara
Singh said that the scheme fulfilled the aspirations of the Sikhs to an extent but at the same time did not give them any opportunity to dominate others as a power, if given might make them ‘undemocratic and narrow minded’.72

Under the Regional Formula, the State was divided into two regions called Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking regions. The Punjab Pradesh Congress was sharply divided on the issue of regional scheme. One group was against sort of compulsion and maintained that Punjabi should not be imposed on unwilling people who do not have to enter into the trade and administration. A majority of Congress M.L.As from Haryana was opposed to the scheme73. The other group led by Giani Kartar Singh stressed that any alternation in the Regional Formula would mean inviting agitation from the other side. Fifty Congress members took a deputation to the Prime Minister and submitted a memorandum. Fourteen members of the Congress Legislative Party resigned from the Congress, they were: Jagat Narain, Shrimati Sita Devi, Ralla Ram, Suraj Bhan, Vaid Ram Dyal and Sher Singh. It strengthen the communal trends in the organisation, it sharply divided the Hindu and Sikh Congressmen. 74

Giani Kartar Singh conceded that what had been offered by the government was not the Punjabi Suba yet he condemned its acceptance as a promise of the Punjabi Suba.75 Partap Singh Kairon, the then President of Punjab State Congress was opposed to the division of the State on linguistic basis. Pt. Nehru felt that Kairon was indispensable for Punjab and got him (Kairon) elected in place of Bhim Sen Sachar. Partap Singh Kairon became Chief Minister of Punjab on 23 January 1956.76
The General Conference of Akali Dal (November 1956) decided by 350-353 votes to merge the Akali Party into the Congress. After the assembly election of 1957, Partap Singh Kairon was elected as the leader of the Congress Assembly Party on 3 April 1957. He formed the Congress Ministry and inducted two erstwhile Akalis – Gian Singh Rarewala and Giani Kartar Singh in his Cabinet. The largest group in the Congress Party at this time was that of Partap Singh Kairon with a following of about 55 members. The government leadership believed that the Akali Dal was the main political party of the Sikhs and Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee was the mini Parliament and representative body like the Sikhs. Before independence, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee raised its voice on issues like the Akali cooperation with the Indian National Congress, for the freedom of the country, constitution reforms. After independence, it aired its opinion on issues like the formation of Punjabi Suba and reorganization of the Punjab. Besides it also appealed to the Sikh voters to 'Chastise' the Congress Party in the constitutional manner (defeating at the polls). The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak committee also was main source of power of the Dal.

Giani Kartar Singh raised the question of Jats and non-Jats openly again in 1959 and he was criticised by some leaders. The critics were largely non-Jat Sikhs. The non-Jats in Akali Dal, did not feel secure after Master Tara Singh. Many of them have preferred to continue in the Congress Party.

In 1960 Punjab Government appointed a 20 Member Language Committee under the Chairmanship of the State Governor, Mr. Gadgil
to suggest a solution to the language tangle. As this Committee was also appointed under threats from 'Save Hindi' agitatiors, the Sikhs gained the impression that this Committee too was constituted to recommend two scripts for the Punjabi language and thereby torpedo the Sachar Formula and Regional Formula which allowed Punjabi to be written only in Gurmukhi script.83

The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee adopted a resolution in March 1960, to boycott this 20 Member Language Committee. It said that only solution of the linguistic trouble of Punjab is to bifurcate Punjab on the basis Punjabi and Hindi.

Master Tara Singh won a resounding victory at the elections in March 1960. Partap Singh Kairon, Gian Singh Rarewala and Kartar Singh fought the election against the Akali Dal. In the meantime the decision of the Congress High Command on 23 December 1956 to bifurcate the State of Bombay into two States, Maharashtra and Gujarat had an impact on the Sikh masses on the eve of election Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. This gave teeth to the demand by Sikhs for their own Punjabi-speaking people.85

The election results were declared on 19 January 1960. The Akali Dal secured a tremendous victory. Soon after the Akali Dal began telling the Sikh masses that a morcha for Punjabi Suba would be launched immediately.86 The Congress Government of Punjab accepted the challenge of Akali Dal. Master Tara Singh along with other Akalis were arrested at Amritsar on 24 May 1960.87 On 24 May 1960 on 15August 1960, pt. Nehru criticized the demand of Akalis. On 18th December 1960, Sant Fateh Singh went on fast unto death to move the
Prime Minister to concede the legitimate demand for a Punjabi province purely on the linguistic basis.88

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was now prepared to concede the claims for Punjabi language. At a speech in Chandigarh on 20 December 1960, Nehru said that Punjabi was the dominant language of the Punjab and it must be promoted in every way.89 On 23 January 1961, Sant Fateh Singh got a personal letter from Prime Minister inviting him to meet him at Delhi on 8 February 1961.90 The Working Committee of the Akali Dal discussed the draft for the bifurcation of the States on linguistic basis.91 Sant Fateh Singh had series of meetings with Nehru. The leaders who were opposed to the creation of Punjabi suba endeavoured to ensure the failure of parleys. When Sant Fateh Singh met Pt. Nehru on 12 May 1961, the Prime Minister told him that the formation of the Punjabi suba was neither in the interest of Punjab nor in the interest of the country.92 In the meantime Master Tara Singh felt that there had been a setback to his leadership and Sant Fateh Singh had emerged as his rival. He decided to go on a fast unto death himself from 15 August 1961 for the creation of Punjabi suba.93

The Enquiry Commission comprising S.K. Das, Former Chief Justice of India, M.C. Chagla and C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyer were appointed to hear the grievances of the Sikhs of the Punjab.94 The Commission submitted its report in February 1962. It reported that no discrimination could be established against the Sikhs as they were over represented in the public services and in the Punjab Cabinet.95

The Prime Minister Nehru remained opposed to the creation of Punjabi Suba until the end of his life. Partap Singh Kairon had
dominated Punjab politics from 1956 till 1964, period in which he had the backing of Pt. Nehru. He opposed to the creation of a Punjabi speaking State on political consideration as he feared that the Congress would go out of office in Punjab and that his political career would suffer a set back if Punjabi speaking State was created.96

After the war, the Central Government took initiative to resolve the Punjab problem. A Cabinet Committee consisting of Y.B. Chavan, Indira Gandhi and Mahavir Tyagi and assisted by a 22 member Parliamentary Consultative Committee, headed by Lok Sabha Speaker Hukam Singh was appointed to tackle the long-standing issue of reorganisation of Punjab.97

At a press conference on 14 July 1965, Master Tara Singh after scathing criticism of the Congress and Sant Fateh Singh, declared that he had decided to re-enter politics to ensure the dignity, honour and freedom of the Panth. He said that the Sikhs should be given right to determine their political status in a State where they should feel their religion and culture to be safe.98

The Punjab Congress had mix reaction about the Cabinet Committee and Consultative Committee of Parliament. Punjab Pradesh Congress held its meeting on 1 October 1965, it was decided that the demand of Punjabi Suba be opposed.99

The Congress Legislative Party of the State too could not put a united point of view100. It appeared that the Punjab Congressmen were divided into several groups. These were:

a) those who opposed the partition of Punjab;
b) those who supported the demand for Punjabi Suba;

c) those who were in favour of a separate Haryana Prant; and

d) those who wanted the hilly areas of Punjab to merge with Himachal Pradesh.

Sikh members of the Congress Party in Punjab Assembly submitted a memorandum under Giani Kartar Singh. It was emphasized that:

a) Punjabi Suba demand, i.e. a State demarcated on the basis of continuous areas where the spoken language of the majority of the People is Punjabi, be conceded immediately and statutory provisions may be made providing Punjabi as the sole official language of the state.

b) The non-Punjabi speaking areas of Punjab may be accommodated according to their wishes as we cannot deny to our those brethren what we demand for ourselves.

c) After creating two or three States out of the present Punjab Himachal Pradesh, a Commission may be appointed to go through the question of the adjustment of boundaries or rational basis after consulting the areas concerned.

As regard the Punjab Chief Minister, Comrade Ram Kishan, the Home Minister Darbara Singh and the Transport Minister Gurdial Singh Dhillion declared firmly on a number of occasion that the Punjab Government had decided that Punjab should remain united.
A large number of memoranda were submitted to the Consultative Committee by the various political parties and groups whose views were well known by this time. The Congress was sharply divided on the issue. Punjab Congress had mixed reaction about the Cabinet Committee and Consultative Committee of Parliament. Punjab Pradesh Congress held its meeting on 1 October 1965, it was decided that the demand of Punjabi Suba be opposed. The Congress Legislative Party of the state too could not put a united point of view. The Sikh members of the Congress Party in Punjab Assembly submitted a memorandum under Giani Kartar Singh. The Sikh members were Giani Kartar Singh, Narain Singh, Lakhi Singh, Prem Singh Lalpura and others. By this time Mrs. Indira Gandhi had become the Prime Minister after the sad demise of Lal Bahadur Shastri at Tashkent. The factional fight in the Congress was also reflected on the attitude to the organization towards the Punjab problem. In the arising circumstances Mahavir Tyagi, an important member in the Committee resigned from the Cabinet. Although Indira Gandhi was against the idea of Punjabi Suba but by 1966 the demand had grown so strong that she was in no position to resist it. However, the Congress Working Committee under the Presidentship of Kamraj in a meeting on 9 March 1966 adopted a resolution favouring a Punjabi-speaking State. Y.B. Chavan observed, “a decision on the demand for a Punjabi State would not be delayed because of the geographical position of the Punjab”. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi was firm in her decision said, “The Working Committee has passed a resolution and now we (the Government) have to implement.
The government of India approved in principle the report of the Parliamentary Committee recommending that Punjab should be reorganized on linguistic basis and setup a Commission known as a Punjab Boundary Commission on 23 April 1966.\textsuperscript{110} The Commission was required to apply the linguistic principle with due regard to the Census figures of 1961 and other relevant consideration and may also take into consideration other factors such as (a) administrative convenience (b) economic well-being (c) geo-graphical contiguity d) facility of communication\textsuperscript{111}.

Master Tara Singh said at Jullundur that "to make the 1961 Census, the basis of division would mean sabotaging the Suba by reducing its size and making it economically weak".\textsuperscript{112}

The Commission held its meeting from 9 May 1966 till 23 May 1966. The Punjab Reorganisation Act was approved by both the houses. It received the President's assent on 18 Sept. 1966. The new Punjab was reduced to just 20,254 square miles and 11.58 million population out of when 56 percent were Sikhs. It came into existence on 1 November 1966.\textsuperscript{113}

Akalis were not satisfied with the reorganisation. They started second phase of agitation for inclusion of the Punjabi speaking areas which were not included earlier.\textsuperscript{114} On 20 November. 1966, a jatha of 75 Akalis, headed by Jathedar Mohan Singh Tur, set out for Chandigarh.\textsuperscript{115} Sant Fateh Singh also announced that this would be the first and last jatha to march to Chandigarh and he would declare his next step on 5 Dec. 1966.\textsuperscript{116} The march plan however did not have any impact.
FOOTNOTES


13. Mohan Singh Nagoke was born at the village Nagoke, Amritsar in 1898. He was son of Tehil Singh and Ganga Devi. He was appointed Deputy Jathedar of the Akal Takht in 1931. In 1944 he was elected President of S.G.P.C. played an important role in the formation of the Panthic Pritinidhi Board in 1946, a member of the Punjab Subordinate Service Commission in 1958, elected


22. The eight Princely States were: Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Malkerkotla, Kalsia, Kapurthala, Nalagarh. For details see Chapter-V.


27. *The Tribune*, 23 December 1948


34. *The Tribune*, 10 April 1949.


40. Hukam Singh born in 1895 in Motogomeiy in West Punjab. In 1946, he was elected on the Akali ticket to the Constituent Assembly, where he vigorously pressed for special rights for Sikh community. In 1950, he was elected President of the Akali Dal and served in that office for three years. For the achievement of Punjabi Suba, he was actively involved in the agitation of 1955, and was arrested for his activities. In 1956, he became a member of the Congress Party and he was elevated to the position of Speaker. Nayar, Baldev Raj, op. cit., p. 137.


42. Ajit, 25 May 1950.

43. The Tribune, 26 August 1950.

44. Akali Patrika, 8 February 1951.

45. The Tribune, 8 February 1951.

46. Pratap, 16 December 1950.

47. Akali Patrika, 22 October 1951.


49. Akali Patrika, 24 October 1951.


52. See infra, Chapter V.


54. Ajit, 22 July 1953.

55. The Tribune, 20 December 1952.

56. Resolution of Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs No. 53/69/53-Public, 29 December 1953, (available at National Archives of India, New Delhi); see Appendix V.


59. Pratap, 29 April 1954.


61. Ibid.


64. Ibid., para 540, p. 146.
52. *See infra*, Chapter V.


55. *The Tribune*, 20 December 1952.

56. Resolution of Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs No. 53/69/53-Public, 29 December 1953, (available at National Archives of India, New Delhi); see Appendix V.


61. *Ibid*.


78. Shiromani Akali Dal means premier organisation of the Akalis. It was formed on 14 December 1920. The Akali Dal led by middle class professionals, emerged as an institutionalized religious – political group of Sikhs. Sardul Singh Caveesher was the first President of Shiromani Akali Dal. Singh, Mohinder, *The Akali*
79. On 16 November 1920, a committee of 175 members known as Shrimani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee had been setup for the management of all Sikhs Shrines. After independence, the Congress tried to capture the SGPC and succeeded when Udham Singh Nagoke was elected President (1948 to 1950), *ibid.*, p.12.


87. *Pratap*, 25 May 1960


96. Akali Patrika, 10 March 1962.


98. Master Tara Singh Di Thamki, 'Sikh Manga Da Faisla Maiden – a jung vich Hubayga' in Ajit 2 August 1965, p.2


100. Gian Singh Rarewala Papers, File No.28 (available at National Archives of India, New Delhi).

101. Ibid., File No. 387.

102. Ibid.


106. Ibid., File No. 387.

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