The exclusively Hindi political thinking did not take birth from the seeds purely Punjabi in origin. The ideas were imported by semi-politicians from Maharashtra and Gujarat through the R.S.S., the Hindu Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj. Swami Dayanand similarly belonged to Gujarat but found Punjab quite amenable for the spread of his views.  

The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand on 10 April 1875 at Bombay. The first Samaj was established at Lahore on 24 June 1877. Arya Samaj was less popular then Sikhism in Punjab. Arya Samajis and Sikhs had worked together for throwing off the yoke of slavery from Punjab. Punjab was really an abode for the Swadeshi Movement, the Civil Disobedience and non-cooperation ideas, which took birth under the leadership of Arya Samajis and the Kooka Sikhs.  

Arya Samajists regarded themselves superior to the other communities. This sowed the seeds of the fear of absorption in the minds and hearts of the people of the Punjab. The real conflict between Arya Samaj and Sikhs developed came on the fore particularly on the question of language in 1941. Arya Samaj popularized Hindi in Devnagri script in Punjab and many Hindus began to use and patronise Hindi in preference to Punjabi in the field of education, business and administration.
The Sikh leadership had hoped that after independence, it would be possible for the Congress to help them for the protection of their identity through constitutional safeguards. In fact, the leadership of the Congress gave such assurances in the pre-independence period that the further constitution of India would not be formed without the consent of the Sikhs.\textsuperscript{4}

The division of the Punjab on communal lines spread a sense of indignation and frustration among the Sikhs because the hopes of creating a Sikh State (Azad Punjab)\textsuperscript{5} raised by the Sikh leaders and supported by the Congress and Hindu leaders, had not be fulfilled. Soon after independence, the Akali leaders started raising apprehensions that in an overwhelmingly Hindu dominated State, with no special political safeguard, the Sikhs as a separate entity would disappear in time to come. It was feared that in the changed secular atmosphere, the observance of outward physical symbols by the Sikhs, which was a visible symbol of Khalsa distinctness, might be affected.\textsuperscript{6}

Thus in the new religio-political context and on the pretext of retaining the distinct political identity of the Sikh community, the Akali leader Master Tara Singh demanded the creation of Punjabi speaking State.\textsuperscript{7}

The Akali demand was interpreted as a strategy designed to create a separate Sikh State. The Hindu press consistently condemned the move as if the Akali Dal was following the footsteps of the Muslim League.\textsuperscript{8}

The Hindu organisations advocated that the demand for Punjabi Suba was the demand of a communal minority anxious to achieve
political supremacy and that 70 percent of the people of Punjab were opposed to it.9

On 15 November 1948, Master Tara Singh and 23 Akali legislators, prepared a charter of statutory demands for the safeguards to the Sikhs. They unanimously resolved that if the demands were not conceded, the Sikhs should be allowed to form a new province of seven districts i.e. Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Guardaspur and Ambala.10 On 4 April 1949, a Conference of Sikh intellectuals was called in Amritsar where for the first time the resolution for Punjabi Suba was passed.11

In May 1949, the Advisory Committee disapproved the suggestion of the reservation of seats for religious minorities. So the demand for Punjabi Suba got impetus.12

In June 1948, Punjab was declared a bilingual province both Punjabi in Gurmukhi and Hindi and Devnagri script as its own languages. The Sikhs argued that the spoken language of the Punjab barring Haryana region, was Punjabi and that most of the literature of Punjab was in Gurmukhi script and therefore, Haryana should be separated from the Punjab. But the Hindus opposed these suggestions.13

On 9 June 1949 Punjab University at Solan rejected the proposal of Punjabi as medium of education.14 This was strongly resented by the Akali Dal. It appears that the seeds of Punjabi Suba were being simultaneously sown elsewhere with these decisions of the government.15
The language issue assumed political importance in 1949. The Sachar Formula came into existence on October 1st, 1949, when Shri Bhim Sen Sachar was the Chief Minister. It was signed by Shri Sachar and Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava (who was a Minister then) and Giani Kartar Singh, (leader of the Akali Party in the Assembly) and Sardar Ujjal Singh. It was duly approved by the Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhai Patel. According to the formula, the State was demarcated into Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas.  

The proposal, however met with severe criticism at the hands of the Hindu organisations like the Arya Samaj, the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha. The Hindu dominated vernacular press advanced every type of argument to prove that a Punjabi Suba was prejudicial to the defence and security of the country. It was pointed out that it was a demand for a Sikh State and Sikh dominated State, according to them it would undermine the interests of the Hindus and might result in communal bitterness.

The Sikhs demanded that they would not be dominated by any single community and they were being kicked for repeating the same demand which the Hindus supported before partition with which the Congress sympathised.

In November 1950, the Hindu parties met at Amritsar Convention, Rai Bahadur Lala Badri Dass, an Arya Samaji leader said, “that another and perhaps the most vociferous demand, is for a Punjabi – speaking province”. This pertained to his opposition to the Sachar Formula.
A Panthic Convention was held on 16 December 1950 at Amritsar which was addressed by Master Tara Singh who summed up the Sikh grievances. This Convention adopted the resolution that provincial boundaries be changed on linguistic and cultural basis to promote the natural development of different parties. It was never said anywhere in Panthic Convention that province would be a Sikh majority area or a Sikh Homeland created. The emphasis was only on the demarcation of the Punjabi-speaking area.21

A meeting of the Principals and Headmasters of Hindi denominational schools was convened to vehemently express their opposition against the introduction of Punjabi, a medium of instructions.22

Arya Samaj connected Hindu organisations started a campaign to persuade Punjabi-speaking Hindu to adopt Hindi and disown Punjabi and Urdu in 1951 Census. A Hindu Convention was held at Amritsar on the eve of Census of 1951 to decide the question and give a lead to the people. The Speaker, Captain Keshav Chander, President of Punjab Jan Sangh denounced the Akali plan to further divide Punjab under the cover of language and script and suggested that Hindus should declare Hindi as their mother tongue in Census.23

Most of the Hindus in the Congress like Shri Virendra of Pratap, Lala Jagat Narain, Rai Bahadur Lala Badri Dass and others were in the forefront to oppose Punjabi Suba demand.24 The communal tension increased so much that the Prime Minister had to direct that recording of language column in the Census record be stopped. The
situation became so tense that it led to disorder at several places and communal attacks, resulting in a law and order situation.\(^{25}\)

The demand for the Punjabi Suba had taken a communal turn. The people of the Punjab had come to split into two distinct categories, one supporters of the Punjabi Sikhs with some Hindus and the other, entire Hindu population led by the Arya Samaj section opposition by Punjab Hindu leadership to the demand of the Sikhs. The Sikhs felt that the Hindus by denying the right of the Punjabi as their mother tongue wanted to gain a position of superiority over them.\(^{26}\)

In the heated communal atmosphere, the press carried on the campaign in the bitterness of language. The respective causes of Hindi and Punjabi were voliferously propagated and the dazed observes in the rest of the country saw that this war of wits was being carried on the Urdu.\(^{27}\) The Hindus opted for Hindi in the hope that it would be difficult for the government to carve a Punjabi Suba out of this bilingual region.\(^{28}\)

The Government appointed the States Reorganization Commission under the Chairmanship of Saiyid Fazl Ali, the then Governor of Orissa, to go into the problems of reorganisation of States in the country.\(^{29}\) At the time the most controversial issue was that of the Punjab, no Sikh was nominated to this Commission.\(^{30}\) In a memorandum submitted to the Commission, the Akali Dal strongly urged the formation of Punjabi Suba. The Maha Punjab demand was supported by the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh and the Arya Samaj. They criticised the demand for the Punjabi Suba as a purely communal demand, camouflaged as a demand for a linguistic State.
and advocated the formation of the Maha Punjab comprising the Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and a few districts of western U.P.\textsuperscript{31}. Representatives of traders and Arya Samajists demanded the formation of Maha Punjab. The Maha Punjab Samiti held that for various administrative purposes, Greater Punjab was already functioning and therefore in order to attain financial stability and solvency reamalgamation of Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh into Maha Punjab was an imperative necessity.\textsuperscript{32} On 27 March 1955, some communal-minded Hindus demanded the formation of Maha Punjab in a Convention at Amritsar.\textsuperscript{33}

The States Reorganisation Commission in its report issued on October, 1955, rejected the demand for Punjabi Suba and recommended the merger of Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh. The Sikhs alleged that it was conspiracy to destroy the Sikh nation and the Commission had delivered Sikh bound hand and foot to the slavery of an aggressively communal group.\textsuperscript{34} As the Akali Dal was dissatisfied and disgruntled against the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission, parleys were held between the government and the Akali Dal. Master Tara Singh alongwith Principal Jodh Singh, S. Gian Singh Rarewala, Sardar Hukam Singh, Giani Kartar Singh and Bawa Harikishan Singh met Pt. Nehru and on 22 January 1956, a compromise formula known as Regional Formula was evolved.\textsuperscript{35} Punjab and Pepsu merged were divided into two linguistic regions namely Punjabi region and Hindi region. The Regional Formula scheme placed on the table of Lok Sabha on 3 April 1956.\textsuperscript{36} For the above purpose, the State of the Punjab was divided into the ‘Punjabi’ and ‘Hindi’ region as under.\textsuperscript{37}
Punjabi regional districts: Hosiarur, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Amritsar and Guardaspur, Ropar and Kharar tehsils of Ambala district. Patiala, Barnala, Bhatinda, Kapurthala, Fatehgarh Sahib (now included in the districts of Patiala) and Sangrur and Sunam tehsils of Sangrur district.

Hindi regional districts: Simla, Kangra, Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Ambala, Jagadhri and Naraingarh tehsils of Ambala district, Mohindergarh, Kohistan (now included in the district of Patiala), Jind and Narwana tehsils of Sangrur district.

This division was subject to the following modifications:

i) Chandigarh capital project area will not form part of either of the two regions. So long, however, it does not become a full fledged constituency on population basis, it representative will sit in the Regional Committee for the Punjabi region.

ii) The following areas of Kharar Tehsils will be included in the Hindi region:

(a) Area covered by Kalka police station;

(b) Zail Chandi Mandir;

(c) Seventeen villages of Zail Mubarkpur which are included in the Nargaingarh constituency of the State Legislative Assembly as defined in the delimation of Parliamentary and Assembly constituency order, 1956 (corrected upto the 31 March 1957)\(^\text{38}\).
The Regional Committees were setup by an order made by the President of India, known as the Punjab Regional Committees order, 1957 in the exercise of the powers conferred on him by clause (i) of Article 371 of the constitution.39

Regional plan was accepted by the Akalis at their meeting of 30 September 1956 by passing a detailed resolution.40 The Regional plan was not acceptable to the Hindu communalists and the people of Haryana. The Maha Punjabees were opposed to the suggestion of Hindi being made a second language in the proposed Punjabi region and accuse the government of yielding to Akali pressure. In a conference held at Karnal on 25 June 1960, the Hindu Maha Samiti resolved that the Regional Formula was no solution of the Punjab problem and also no solution of the peculiar backwardness of Haryana.41 The Regional Formula which seemed to satisfy both the Punjabi speaking Sikhs and the people of Haryana region was however, opposed by the Hindu elements of Punjab who wanted Hindi alone to be recognized as the official language of the State. The formula gave an opportunity to the Maha Punjab Samiti to turn the tables against the Akalis and get active support of the people of Haryana who uptill now had supported the demand of the Punjabi Suba. The Maha Punjabi Samiti opposed the government- Akali settlement for they had not been previously consulted. They suggested that a round table conference of Akalis and other parties should be called to recommend agreed changes.42

The government of India neither withdrew the Regional plan was suggested by the Maha Punjab Samiti, nor did they call a round table conference.43
The Hindus of Punjab formed a Hindi Raksha Samiti (Save Hindi Committee) under the leadership of Swami Atma Nand to oppose the Regional Formula which according to them contained the seeds of second partition of the Punjab.44

The Arya Samajists who had earlier refused to implement to Sachar Formula in their schools, now opposed the Regional Formula as something much worse. The Arya Samajies started 'Save Hindi' agitation in their opposition to Punjabi. This movement was supported by men like Suraj Bhan (Vice Chancellor of the Punjab University) and the Arya Samajists politicians such as Virendra, editor of the Pratap.45

In May 1957, the Punjab Hindi Raksha Samiti led by the Arya Samajies – Swami Atmanand, Mahatma Anand Swami and others put forward the following seven demands.46

i) There should be one formula for the whole State.

ii) The medium of instruction should be left entirely to the choice of parents.

iii) There should be no compulsion for the teaching of two languages and the second language at any particular stage.

iv) Hindi should replace English at all levels of administration.

v) All the government notification at the district level and below should be bilingual.

vi) Applications be allowed to the submitted in any language and the reply should also be in the same language.
vii) The office record up to the district level and below should be in both languages.

The demands clearly impinged upon the unilingual character of the Punjabi region even to the district level in all official, educational and administrative spheres. The State Government did everything possible to meet the demands of the Hindi lovers. This did not satisfy them. The demands Nos. 2, 5 & 6 were conceded straight away. Demand No. 7 was unnecessary. The State Government had decided that copies of the record could be obtained in any language and anybody could get his statement recorded in any language. About the Court record, the position of the government was that it would follow the decision of the High Court.

Jan Sangh was not be satisfied. Representatives of the Hindi Samiti met the Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and had a very detailed discussion with him in a very cordial atmosphere. The Prime Minister tried to convince them on every issue and got the impression that the deputations had left satisfied.

On 9 June 1957, an open letter of Swami Atmanand, leader of the Hindi Raksha Samiti, addressed to the Prime Minister appeared in the press. The Prime Minister left India on one month’s tour on 14 June 1957. He however, took note of the open letter and replied to it on 13 June 1957. In a letter addressed to Swami Atmanand, a leader of the Hindi Samiti, in June 1957, Nehru wrote: “Can you believe that any of us, who are devoted to Hindi, can do anything which in injurious to the growth and development of our national language. Can
you believe that this Regional Formula, in the slightest degree, comes in the way of growth of Hindi... I think, people living in the north should learn at least one south Indian language, and if possible more Indian languages. In Switzerland, three languages i.e. German, French and Italian are compulsory for every student. May I remind you of the present state of the country and the world. We face a grave economic crisis.... In the world, the shadow of the hydrogen bomb hangs over us and from time to time test explosions take place poisoning the air and condemning untold numbers of the people to death and grievous injury in the future. What is our duty.... I would beg of you and your colleagues to consider all these matters.51

Pt. Nehru was an apostle of peace, but his appeal failed to achieve the desired result. The whole of the national press, deprecated the rejection of this appeal by Swami Atmanand. The Tribune writes, “That Swami Atmanand seems to have been prevailed upon against his own judgement summarily to reject Pt. Nehru’s appeal. The cause of Satyagraha the methods employed in its conduct and the argument advanced in favour of the cause of Hindi show clear evidence of narrow political motivation.”52

The Hindustan Times’ on 26 June 1957 writes under the caption, ‘Uncalled for Agitation’.

“It is evident that Punjabi, Hindi Raksha Samiti is bent upon creating trouble. The Punjab campaign with its sectarian approach is hardly in keeping with Samaji’s history and background. He sooner the agitation stops, the better it will for the State of Punjab”.53
Sh. Mohan Lal, the Finance Minister wrote to Swami Atma Nand on 6 June 1957 concealing that even in that part of the State where Punjabi is speaking predominantly, free use of Hindi has been accepted and begging therein that Satyagraha should be given up.54

The agitation of the Arya Samajists widened the gulf between Hindus and Sikhs because during the agitation must abusive and offensive slogans against the Sikhs were raised. At Jagadhri, Sohan Lal Tiwari, a Hindu leader said at a meeting,55 "If the Sikhs wish to live here, they should have to shave off and take Hindu appearance". At Patiala Swami Rameshwarnand, Arya Samaji gave the slogan to Hindu communalists56:

"Kainchi Ustra Karo Tiar"

Master Tara Singh, the President of Shiromani Akali Dal criticised the situation arising out of Hindi agitation at its meeting held on 8 September 1957. He observed: "The Hindi agitation is not only most unreasonable and vulgar but is being also carried on by violent, abusive and insulting methods. Cigarette boxes were thrown in the sacred tanks of Amritsar. Leaves of sacred books were scattered in the bazars. Gurdwaras were attacked and desecrated. But the government did nothing till the Sikhs giving up hopes of protection by the police and the government began to move and organise themselves for self-protection."57

Partap Singh Kairon was elected as the leader of the Congress Assembly on 3 April 1957. The Hindi agitation suited the Chief Minister who himself was not over enthusiastic about implanting the Regional Formula which, for all its inadequacies, constituted a serious
derogation from his powers. It provided him with a pretext for delaying implementation. The Hindi agitation was withdrawn on 23 December 1957.

On 14 June 1958, Master Tara Singh said that compelled by circumstances, he had agreed to the Regional Formula, but he had found that the attitude of the government was forcing him again to give preference to the Punjabi Suba over the Regional Formula. He said, I have never wanted a Sikh State, nor am I in favour of it, and added, 'I donot want to usurp the rights of another community. 'I want the freedom of Sikhs'.

The First Punjabi Suba Conference was held on 12 October 1958 at Amritsar. Addressing the conference, Sant Fateh Singh said that their demand was only for a Punjabi Suba wherein they should be able to develop the Punjabi language and culture and protect their religion. Master Tara Singh complained that the government had taken the life from the Regional Formula. He deplored the inordinate delay in the implementation of the formula whereby the Sikhs had been completely disillusioned.

Hukam Singh in one of his recorded interviews has stated that the first blow had been given to Regional Formula by Master Tara Singh himself when he sponsored his own candidates to fight against the Congress in 1957 elections and this he did in defiance or his decision of the general body of the Akali Dal taken almost unanimously in meeting presided over by him.

Alleging discrimination toward the Haryana province by the Punjab Government, Arya Samaji leader Sher Singh also came out in
support of Punjabi Suba so that Haryana could emerge on the map of India as a separate province.63

In May 1960, Punjabi Suba Convention was held in Amritsar under the Chairmanship of Pandit Sunderlal (Congress leader). Leaders of Hindus, Muslims, Praja Socialists, Samyakta Socialists and Swatantra Party took part in the Convention and called for early setting of Punjabi Suba. The Convention also demanded the establishment of Vishal Himachal and Haryana State. In this way two fronts were opened to campaign for Punjabi Suba.64 The Arya Samaji leader Prof. Ram Singh, Sardar Partap Singh Kairon, Jan Sangh leader Balraj Madhok opposed Punjabi Suba demand.65 The Akali Dal issued posters in which Sikhs were warned that Hindus wanted to destroy them. The movement gained momentum as the time lapsed. On July 25th 1960, 17, 821 Akalis had been arrested at Amritsar alone.66

Another resolution of the Hindi Regional Committee was passed on 4 May 1960, recommending stoppage of compulsory teaching of Punjabi in the Hindi region.67 The momentum of the movement evoked opposition from the Arya Samaj section, who apprehended that the government might not enter into negotiations with the Sikhs again. A deputation comprising Virendra, a Congressite and Arya Samaji, Narain Das and Hari Krishan Das, General Secretary and Vice President of Sanatan Dharam Pritindhi Sabha and Jagat Narain, the then M.L.A., waited on the Prime Minister on 16 June 1960 and assured him that the Hindus would give full cooperation in the maintenance of law and order, conveying thereby in the suppression of the Sikhs and that the Punjabi Suba demand was actually a step to the Sikh independent State and must be resisted.68 Pt. Jawaharlal
Nehru in his independence day speech said, “Every Punjabi should himself consider to learn Hindi and Punjabi, but there could be no bifurcation of the Punjab.” Similarly Mr. Ranbir, Chief editor of a Urdu daily ‘Milap’ on 21 August 1960, speaking at a Punjabi convention at Delhi exhorted Hindus not to disown Punjabi as their mother tongue as it provided an excuse to the Akalis to demand Punjabi Suba. He said, “one who, in reality speaks Punjabi and yet disown his mother tongue is infact a traitor to this mother.” Punjab Ekta Samiti, an organisation of Hindu communalists of Punjab, observed 23 September 1960 as ‘Protest Day’ against the decision of the Punjab Government to establish Punjabi University and adoption of Punjabi in Gurmukhi script in administration upto district level. To encourage these communalists Shri Sanjiva Reddy, Congress President earlier remarked publically that every village in Punjab was bilingual, his remarks were totally strongly resented by Sikh organisations, including Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and Chief Khalsa Dewan. The two institutions described these remarks as ‘nothing but ‘traversity of facts’.  

On 1 March 1961, Pt. Nehru told Sant Fateh Singh, at the meeting that Hindus in Punjabi Suba would become a minority and as they were not agreeable to this demand, they would create constant opposition and difficulties in running of the new State. The talks between the Prime Minister and Sant Fateh Singh failed, as a result of which Master Tara Singh started his fast unto death on 10 August 1961. 

Swami Rameshwarnand, leader of the Hindi Raksha Samiti and Yog Raj Surya Dev also started counter fasts at Arya Samaj Mandir
Delhi and Arya Samaj Mandir, Amritsar respectively to oppose any scheme of Punjabi Suba. Yog Raj Surya Dev said that he should discontinue his fast only if the Prime Minister gave him an assurance that there would not be any further division of the Punajb.75

The Hindi Raksha Sammelan, representing various organisation of Hindus passed a resolution on 12 June 1961 that “the Hindi Raksha Samiti is most anxious that an early and satisfactory solution of the language controversy should be found out. It is however, most essential that the solution of this problem should be based on a recognition of the fact that Punjab is a bilingual State, where both languages Hindi and Punjabi have to flourish side by side without any restriction or compulsion”.76

On 24 August 1961, fifty prominent Hindu leaders belonging to various political and religious organisations of Punjab and Delhi, warned the government that any proposal leading to formation of Punjabi Suba would not be acceptable to the Hindus of the State. The Hindu attitude was represented by Virender, editor of the ‘Pratap’ a prominent Arya Samajist and Congressite, Jagat Narain, M.L.A., Ram Gopal ‘Shalwala’ (President of Punjab Hindi Raksha Samiti), Kedar Nath Sahni (Jan Sangh leader) and Parkash Vir Shastri, M.P., similarly members of Parliament from Punjab, in a letter to Prime Minister said, “The language formula evolved by the Centre in Punjab has been working satisfactorily and added that any change brought about at this stage would upset the fine balance which has been achieved.”77

On Nehru’s statement in Parliament that Punjabi Suba would not be formed, then Swami Rameshwarand broke his fast.78 Master Tara
Singh broke his fast on 1 October 1961 at 7 p.m. On the 48th day of this fast on the assurance of the favourable scope of reference and personnel of the High Power Commission to study the alleged discrimination against the Sikhs.79 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.80

Virender, editor of the Pratap appearing on behalf of Hindu organisations joined as Hindi Raksha Samiti, submitted before the Commission that Punjabi is not the mother tongue of Hindus living in Punjab.81 Mr. Balraj Madhok, M.P., appearing on behalf of Jan Sangh submitted that Gurmukhi script was unsuited to Punjabi and it should not be imposed on the Hindus of Punjab. He wanted the Regional Formula to be scrapped.82 Professor Sher Singh, a Jat leader from Haryana region submitted that there was no discrimination against the Sikhs and Punjabi was being enforced on the people of Haryana against their wishes.83

The Commission submitted its report on 9 February 1962 and traced back the demand for Punjabi Suba to demand for a Sikh State at the time of partition. The genesis of the demand according to the Commission lay in the Sikh feeling that Hindus have got a State and therefore, the Sikhs must have a State for themselves. This is a question which is beyond the scope of the Commission's terms of reference.84 It further reported that the Commission had found no evidence of any discrimination against the Sikhs.
On 9 August 1965, the Working Committee of the Sant Akali Dal adopted a resolution stating that a number of other States had already been formed on linguistic basis including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala and Nagaland. The failure to form a Punjabi Suba on the same principle is a clear discrimination against the people of Punjab. Yog Raj Surya Dev, Ram Gopal Shalwala’ and several others leaders of Hindu organisations registered their names for the offer of sacrificing themselves if the government of India yielded to Sant Fateh Singh’s Punjabi Suba demand. The Working Committee of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha in its meeting on 3 September 1965 warned that it would be dangerous to disturb the present set-up and any change in the Regional Formula would be resisted in as much as this would further disintegrate and weaken the border State. Ram Gopal Shalwala’, Secretary of the Sabha, appealed to Arya Samaj and other Hindu institutions all over the country to observe 5 September as “Punjab Anti-Division Day”. The Arya Samaji leaders warned the government that they would never accept further division of Punjab on any basis. Several meetings were held by Arya Samajists throughout the State in observance of the ‘Ekta Day’. On 7 October 1965, Shri Ram Gopal Shalwala, Capt. Keshav Chandra, Mahashya Rattan Chand and Giani Pindi Dass, Arya leaders in a joint statement to the press, declared that if the Central Government conceded the demand for establishment of a Punjabi Suba then 101 Arya leaders would start a fast unto death and immolate themselves after fifteen days. Pratap, an Urdu Arya Samaj daily sprinkled salt over the wounded feelings of the Sikhs by referring to Guru Nanak in abusive language but the government failed to arrest or punish the evil doers. The Hindu press
and leaders said that any proposal leading to formation of Punjabi Suba would not be acceptable to them.90

Sant Fateh Singh appealed to the Sikhs to unite with Hindus and help in the defence of the country.91 The All Party Haryana Action Committee joined hands with Sant Fath Singh's Akali Dal and demanded the division of Punjab into two separate linguistic States – Punjabi Suba and Haryana Prant, for this purpose its representatives Shri Mool Chand Jain, General Secretary of the Haryana Action Committee and Partap Singh Daulta, M.P. met Sant Fateh Singh in Akal Takht at Amritsar on 31 January 1966.92

After the war, a Cabinet Committee consisting of Y.B. Chavan, Indira Gandhi and Mahavir Tyagi and assisted by a 22 member Parliamentary Committee headed by Lok Sabha Speaker Hukam Singh was appointed on 23 September 1965 to consider the question of forming a Punjabi-speaking State.93

On 28 February 1966, Swami Satya Nand, an Arya Samaj leader announced at a press conference held at Jullundur, his decision to go on fast unto death from 16 March until the Union Government gave positive and satisfactory assurance to preserve both the bilingual setup and geographical and political unity of Punjab.94

A large number of memoranda were submitted to the Consultative Committee by the various parties and groups. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister got the following resolution passed in a meeting of the Congress Working Committee that, “Out of the existing State of Punjab, a State with Punjabi as the State language be formed.
The Government is requested to take necessary steps for the purpose."95

The resolution was vehemently opposed by the Jan Sangh and it started an agitation under Yagya Dutt Sharma, the General Secretary of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh Jan Sangh began a fast unto death to preserve the unity of the State and tranquility in the face of the Akali threat of violent agitation or direct action.96 The agitation spread to various parts of the State particularly in urban areas. The agitation led to loss of 200 causalities, 2528 arrests and a number of violent incidents.97

There were large scale demonstrations and strikes in several towns of Punjab including Ludhiana, Jullundur, Hissar, Panipat, Amritsar followed by violence at many places.98 At Ludhiana and some other places it took a communal turn and there were clashes between the Hindu and Sikhs.

The Punjab Jan Sangh Working Committee formed a five men Action Committee to carry on the agitation against the demand of Punjabi Suba. It denounced the Congress decision as a surrender of national interest and national integrity before Akali separation and communalism.99

The Parliamentary Committee submitted its report on 18 March 1966 in which it suggested that the State of Punjab should be reorganised on linguistic basis in the manner as the other States in the country had been formed. No sooner was the report published then a deputation of leading Hindus of Punjab belonging to all parties and groups, the Jan Sangh, Arya Samaj, Ekta Samiti and even the Congres
met Gulazari Lal Nanda and discussed the report and placed their doubts and apprehensions before him. The Jan Sangh leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee said in his note of dissent to the report that all these major organised groups in Punjab having refused to cooperate to the Committee, this Committee as findings have been robbed of the sanction that the Parliamentary Committee would normally have.

Yagya Dutt Sharma gave up his fast on 21 after receiving assurance which were announced by the Home Minister. The Punjab Reorganisation Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 3 September 1966.

The Punjabi Suba came into being inspite of all the opposition of the Hindu dominated political parties. The Arya Samajists did not support the demand for Punjabi Suba but Hindus of Haryana and Himachal indirectly supported the demand.

The Jan Sangh

The elements contributed toward the formation of Jan Sangh in 1951: an organisation called the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS) and a personality named Syama Prasad Mookherjee. Both the RSS and mookherjee had withdrawn from the Hindu Mahasabha, both broke independently, at different times and under different circumstances. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee joined Hindu Mahasabha in 1939 under the influence of Veer Savarkar Mookherjee resigned from the Mahasabha. For a short time he continued in Nehru’s Cabinet. Mookherjee was very much impressed with the work
of the RSS. As previously mentioned, even while he was in the Cabinet, he was led to understand by RSS leaders that they would be prepared to support him in the formation of a new party which would stand for ‘Bhartiya Culture’ but which would be open to members of all communities.104

With the general beginning in the latter part of December 1951 and extending through the early part of 1952, there was considerable haste to start the new party. Between May and October intense efforts were made to start Jan Sangh organisations in several provinces and during the later part of October. It is officially established on the national level at a convention in New Delhi. Three hundred delegates selected Syama Prasad Mookherjee as President and agreed upon an election manifesto which amplified the points in Mookherjee’s Presidential address.105 After independence, the Akali Party championed the cause of Punjabi language and its natural script Gurmukhi. Hindu communalists disowned Punjabi even while speaking Punjabi in their homes.106 Hindu communalists argued that Punjabi was only a dialect of Hindi and was not at all a separate language with this argument, they justified their call to Hindus to record Hindi and not Punjabi as their mother tongue during the Census. So Jan Sangh was in the forefront at this campaign to oppose Punjabi Suba demand.107

The proposal of Sachar Formula met with severe criticism at the hands of the Hindu organisations like the Arya Samaj and Jan Sangh. The Jan Sangh and other Hindu Congress in the Punjab and Hindu press launched a vigorous campaign and from door to door, urging the Hindus to get Hindi recorded as their mother tongue.108
The Jan Sangh leader, Shyama Prasad Mookherjee on his trip to Kashmir stopped at Amritsar on 10 May 1953 and talked on Punjabi Suba when the Shiromani Akali Dal led by Master Tara Singh pressed its demand for a separate State for Punjabi-speaking areas of Punjab, the Jan Sangh countered it with a demand for unilingual State of Maha Punjab. The Jan Sangh criticised the demand for Punjabi Suba as a purely communal demand camouflaged as demand for a linguistic State.

On 27 December 1953, the government of India appointed the States Reorganisation Commission to go into the problems of re-demarcating the State boundaries in the country. In a memorandum submitted to the Commission, The Akali Dal strongly urged the formation of Punjabi Suba.

Diwan Alakh Dhari, leader of the Punjab Jan Sangh stated, 'the country between Jamuna and Ravi constitutes a single geographically, culturally, socially and ethnologically. The Maha Punjab demand was supported by the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh and the Arya Samaj. They criticised the demand for Punjabi Suba and their advocacy for Hindi became a subject of bitter controversy. The Jan Sangh did not insist on the formation of unilingual States and also did object to bilingual States though for different reasons, it demanded the disintegration of Hyderabad. In its memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission, the party proposed the creation of a bigger bilingual Bombay State which would bring together all the Marathi and Gujarati - speaking people scattered indifferent States. It however, supported the merger of Bombay city with Maharashtra in case, this experiment proved a flop. Hence, it felt happy when the
intense lobbying in the Parliament in the first week of August 1956, led to the establishment of the bigger bilingual Bombay State.\textsuperscript{113}

The Jan Sangh advocated the formation of the Maha Punjab comprising the Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and a few districts of western U.P., which was more suitable in the changed political situation of the State after the partition.\textsuperscript{114} The Commission made its report two years later, rejected the case for a Punjabi-speaking State.

The Jan Sangh opposed the Regional Formula. The Punjab Jan Sangh demonstrated on 24 April 1956 in Amritsar, Jullundur and Ludhiana and protest against the Regional Formula and shouted slogans like ‘Maha Punjab Zindabad’ and ‘Regional Formula Murdabad’. Many workers were arrested.\textsuperscript{115} Over 150 workers of Jan Sangh from all over the districts of Karnal, Rohtak, Hissar, Mohindergarh, Gurgaon, Narnaual and Narwana held a one day conference at Rohtak to oppose the Regional Formula. A resolution was passed in the conference, which said, “The conference rejects outright the Regional Standing Committee scheme as being opposed to the larger interest of national unity and integrity and being detrimental to the economic, social and political interests of the region”,\textsuperscript{116}

The Hindi communalists and the people of Haryana were opposed to the suggestion of Hindi being made a second language in the proposed Punjabi region.\textsuperscript{117} On 21 October 1956, Captain Kesav Chander, President of Punjab Jan Sangh and Secretary of the Maha Punjab opposed the Regional Formula.\textsuperscript{118}
The Punjab Jan Sangh extended full cooperation to the Hindi Raksha Samiti in support of its demands that there should be one language formula in the whole State of Punjab, the medium of instruction in education institutions should be left entirely to parents and Hindi should replace English at all levels of administrations.119

In November 1960 when the R.S.S. Chief M.S. Golwalker advised the Hindus in Punjab to accept Punjabi as their mother tongue. The Punjab Jan Sangh publically repudiated him.120

Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader while commenting on the Bhavanagar declaration of the Prime Minister said, ‘the battle for the attainment of Punjabi Suba would continue. The suspension of the struggle is only a truce or cease fire to create a good atmosphere for talks”.121

The Punjab Jan Sangh observed as ‘United Punjab Day’ on 27 August 1961. It adopted a resolution, declared that any attempt to make Punjabi unilingual State would be resisted with all the strength. Among those who attended the meeting were Jagat Narain, Virendra of Pratap, Ram Gopal Shalwala’ (President of Punjab Hindi Raksha Samiti), Kedar Nath Sahni; Jan Sangh leader and Parkash Vir Shastri; M.P., said, ‘the language formula evolved by the Centre in Punjab has been working satisfactorily and added that any change brought about at this stage would upset the fine balance which has been achieved’.122

Sant Fateh Singh announced from the Akal Takht on 15 August 1965 that he would go on 15 days fast from 10 September 1965 inside the Golden Temple in support of Punjabi Suba demand and warned that in case the demand was not conceded till then, he would
immolate himself on 25 September. Yog Raj and several other Jan Sangh workers registered their names for the offer to sacrificing themselves if the government of India yielded to Sant Fateh Singh's Punjabi Suba demand. Sant Fateh Singh suspended his vow in view of the Indo-Pak war.

The government of India appointed a three member Cabinet Committee on 23 September 1965 to consider the question of forming a Punjabi-speaking State. The Congress Working Committee's resolution for Punjab State was opposed by the Jan Sangh and it started an agitation for continuation of the status quo in Punjab. Its General Secretary Yagya Dutt Sharma, began a fast unto death and the agitation spread to various parts of the State particularly in the urban areas. The Jan Sangh leaders convened a hurried meeting in New Delhi with Balraj Madhok (President of the All India Jan Sangh) and its General Secretary Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, its Rajya Sabha leader Atal Bihar Vajpayee and Dr. Baldev Prakash (President of Punjab Jan Sangh) and passed resolution. In their resolution, they denounced the decision of the Congress Working Committee as 'a blow to the forces of unity and integration of the country'. There were large scale demonstrations and strikes in several towns of Punjab including Ludhiana, Jullundur, Panipat followed by violence at many places. The communal riots took place at Panipat where on 19 February 1966, a mob of about 300 people burnt alive, three vatern Congressmen in the shop owned by one of them on the G.T. Road.

The decision of the Congress Working Committee was followed by large scale disturbances in the main cities of Punjab. They were organised by the Jan Sangh and RSS elements. They erupted
simultaneously in all parts of Punjab on 12 March 1966. At Ludhiana and some other places it took communal turn and there were clashes between Hindus and Sikhs. There were police firing in Amritswar.

The Parliamentary Committee submitted its report on 18 March 1966. It recommended that the Punjabi-speaking region be reconstituted into unilingual Punjabi Suba. The Jan Sangh leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee said in his note of dissent to the Parliamentary Committee report that all these major or gained group (Jan Sangh, Arya Samaj, Ekta Samiti) in Punjab having refused to cooperate with the Committee, this Committee's findings have been robbed of the sanction that Parliamentary Committee would normally have.

Yagya Dutt Sharma gave up his fast on 21 after receiving assurance which were announced in the Parliamentary by the Home Minister. The Home Minister gave them to understand.

1. That the proposed reorganisation of the Punjab will follow on the linguistic basis, without any communal or religious factors being allowed to come into consideration.

2. Such common links between the units resulting from the proposed reorganisation, as are found feasible will be provided in consultation with the concerned interests.

3. The legitimate right and interests of the minorities, linguistic and others, will naturally be fully safeguarded in these units.
It may be said that Punjab Jan Sangh opposed the demand as they considered it to be an attempt on the part of the Akali Dal to establish Sikh hegemony. The Jan Sangh members from Haryana region were in favour of the formation of Haryana and Punjabi Suba.133

**The Hindu Mahasabha**

The Hindu Mahasabha arose in the Punjab, a Muslim-majority province, where the minority community of Hindus held the virtual monopoly of talent as well as economic and political power. The Punjab situation in fact broadly represented a clash between the economic interests of the two communities. The establishment of a Hindu Sabha in the Punjab in 1907 was naturally significant, for it came soon after the land legislations of 1906 that put the dominant minority community in a disadvantageous position, a position that further worsened under the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 which extended to the Muslims a statutory majority in the province.134

The Punjab Hindu Sabha held a series of annual conferences from 1909 onwards.135 Its leadership took the initiative and finally organized an All-India Hindu Mahasabha in 1915 at Hardwar and attended by men like M.K. Gandhi, Munshi Ram, Tatlel Swami Sharadhanand and Pandit Ram-Bhuj Dutt, while the All-India Committee of the Mahasabha consisted of such persons are Bhagwan Das, Bishan Narain Das, Lala Hans Raj, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Ashutosh Mukherjee and Motilal Ghose.136
The sharpening division between Hindus and Muslims on communal basis soon followed in 1926, when Muslim candidates stood for elections in province as ‘Muhammadans first and foremost’. This led to Hindu communal candidates standing for elections under such names as Hindu Mahasabhaite or independent Congress Party men.\footnote{137}

The Sikh Hindus had starting demanding a separate east Punjab comprising non-Muslim majority districts, the Muslim League insisted on having no less than all sub-Muslim majority province in India. There was a similar intensification of interest in the proposal for separate west Bengal. The Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference held its meeting at Lyallpur on 30 April 1943 under President Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee opposed Pakistan demand.\footnote{138} The Hindu Mahasabha had been the main protagonist. After the general elections of 1946, the Mahasabha gained its popularity. The local Congress Committee and Hindu Mahasabha supported the movement for the demand of west Punjab.\footnote{139}

The present Punjab is, in part, the result of the partition in 1947. As in the case of Bengal, the partition resulted in the division of the province of Punjab, splitting into two parts this 'Land of the Five Rivers', which had often been referred to as 'the shield, spear and sword – hand of India'.\footnote{140} The advent of independence had its impact on the position and role of Hindu communal parties in India,\footnote{141} like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh.\footnote{142} Mahatma Gandhi was a member of the Mahasabha and a former member of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and his assassinated on 30 January 1948 turned the tide against the communal parties.\footnote{143}
The Hindu communal parties were discredited by the people. On 4 February 1948, the government placed R.S.S. under a ban and arrested thousands of its members. Some of the Mahasabha leaders also were arrested and the very existence of the Mahasabha as a political organisation came to be threatened. On 15 February 1948, the Mahasabha Working Committee decided to suspend its political activities and concentrates on social and cultural works.\textsuperscript{144}

The Sachar Formula came into existence on 1 October 1949\textsuperscript{145} when Shri Bhim Sen Sachar was the Chief Minister. According to the formula, the State was demarcated into Punjabi and Hindi-speaking areas. The formula met with severe criticism at the hands of the Hindu organisations like the Arya Samaj, the Jan Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha. These organisations and Hindu press started a campaign that the Hindus of this area, should declare Hindi as their mother tongue.\textsuperscript{146} Whereas the D.A.V. educational institutions asked the Hindus to oppose the introduction of Punjabi.\textsuperscript{147}

The Akali press and leaders started a counter-propaganda which was intensified during the Census. The situation, thus took a bitter turn. This led during the last Census operations to a situation in which the separate tabulation of Hindi and Punjabi-speaking people had to be abandoned.\textsuperscript{148}

In August 1949, the Mahasabha resolved to rescind its earlier decision and resumed political activities much against the wishes of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee, its vice President and a member of the Nehru Cabinet at that time. Dr. Mookherjee could not reconcile himself
to this decision and so he resigned from the Mahasabha Executive. His resignation from the Mahasabha left him without a party.\textsuperscript{149}

The R.S.S. leaders felt that they should actively enter the political arena. At the same time, they felt that their political work should be independent of the work of the Mahasabha which they considered to be a hopelessly discredited and ineffective organisation. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee resigned from the Nehru Cabinet in April 1950. After lengthy negotiations, a convention of some three hundred citizens of Punjab, Pepsu, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi was called at Jullundur on 23 May 1951 to form Jan Sangh for these four States.\textsuperscript{150} A convention of the representatives of the provincial units together with some others was held at New Delhi on 21 October 1951. Bhartiya Jan Sangh as an All India Party with Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee as its President, was ushered into political arena of the country.\textsuperscript{151}

The Shiromani Akali Dal chose to fight the election held between November 1951 and January 1952 both in the Punjab and Pepsu on Punjabi Suba demand. In June 1952, Udham Singh Nagoke was elected President. But within four months, he was replaced by a nominee of Master Tara Singh.\textsuperscript{152}

The Akali leaders began demanding the amalgamation of the Punjabi region of the existing Punjab with Pepsu in December 1952. Master Tara Singh demanded the creation of a Punjabi-speaking State by taking certain portion of Punjab and Pepsu informing them into one administrative unit.\textsuperscript{153} A large number of communal and regional parties existed between 1947 and 1964. Among the communal parties, Hindu Mahasabha was an old political scene after 1952, when it had
won four seats in the Lok Sabha, as it gradually lost its support base to Jan Sangh.\textsuperscript{154}

The appointment of the Commission was welcomed by the Sikhs as it was opportunity for them to place their case of the Punjabi Suba. The Maha Punjab demand was supported by the Arya Samaj, Jan Sangh and Maha Punjab. The Mahasabha had adopted in the twenties, the idea of linguistic provinces as a part of its programme. Though it vehemently opposed the partition of India, it was willing to accept the formation of provinces on linguistic basis. The Hindu Mahasabha opposed the Sikh demand even for a linguistic reorganisation of Punjab.\textsuperscript{155} The States Reorganisation Commission rejected the demand for Punjabi Suba and recommended the merger of Punjab, Pepsu and Himachal pradesh.\textsuperscript{156}

The Regional Formula divided the Punjab State on linguistic basis, but it was not acceptable to the Hindu communalists and the people of Haryana. The Maha Punjab Samiti launched a movement known as Hindi Satyagraha. On the language issue, it brought the Arya Samaj to the forefront to fight the cause of Hindi both in the Punjabi and Hindi-speaking areas. So the Hindu Mahasabha opposed the Akali demand of the Punjabi Suba.\textsuperscript{157}
FOOTNOTES


21. *Ajit*, 17 December, 1950


36. Ministry of Home Affairs, F.No. 48/1/56-SRI, NAI, New Delhi., see Appendix-VI.

37. Home Department, Political Notification No. 5643-P-1(C)-57/13421/24 July 1957., NAI, New Delhi., see Appendix-VII.

38. Home Department, Political Notification No. 5643-P-1(C)-57/13421, Dated 24 July 1957., NAI, New Delhi., see Appendix-VIII.


42. *Ajit*, 7 May 1956


54. *Ajit*, 7 June 1957.

55. *Pratap*, 26 December 1957.


60. 
Ajit, 13 October, 1958.

61. Singh, Teja, 'Solution in the hands of Sikh Intelligentsia' in 

62. Stated by Hukam Singh in an interview with Dr. Kirpal Singh, 
Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Oral History Cell, 
Punjabi University, Patiala, File No. OHC-109, p. 112.

63. Pratap, 23 May 1960.

64. Ibid. 25 May 1960.

65. Ibid.


68. Ibid., 17 June 1960.


70. Ajit, 22 August 1960.


73. The Tribune, 2 March 1961.


75. The Tribune, 16 August 1961.

77. Ibid., 25 August 1961.

78. Ibid., 27 August 1961.


82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.


95. The Hindustan Times, 10 March 1966.


100. Lok Sabha Debates, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 1966.


102. The R.S.S. a Hindu central organisation was founded by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar with his five associates, on the Vijayadashmi day, 1925 at Nagpur, which is still its headquarters. Hedgewar and his followers believed that the Hindus needed culture and physical strengthening in order to win freedom for India. The aim of the RSS is to protect itself as a model for a regenerated Hindu society. Since 1940, the RSS was headed by M.S. Golwalkar and after Golwalkar, since 1972, Balasaheb Deoras has been its head. Lal, Shiv, op. cit. p.105.


123. Ajit, 29 August 1965.


133. Gian Singh Rarewala Papers, File No. 38, National Archives of India, New Delhi.


136. Ibid.
137. Home Department File No. 70/1/27, p.12, National Archives of India, New Delhi.
139. Home Political File No. 18/3/47-Poll(1), Bengal Report, p.95, NAI, New Delhi.
142. Ibid., p.218.
144. *The Hindu and Times*, 16 February 1948.
146. Pratap, 14 January 1951.
152. Ajit, 19 January 1954
153. *The Hindustan Times*, 22 July 1953

