

LAHORE RESOLUTION AND PUNJAB POLITICS

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The political events in India and especially in the Punjab began to move at a rapid pace as World War II started in 1939. On September 3, 1939 the Viceroy declared India as a belligerent State without consulting the Provincial Congress Ministeries.¹ The Congress Working Committee met on October 22nd and called upon the provincial ministeries to resign after adopting a resolution in the Provincial Legislatures on the War Efforts.² The provincial ministeries headed by the Congress party resigned from office in protest.³ However, the resignation of the Congress Ministeries in 1939 proved a big 'blunder'. It left the field open to the Muslim League to capture power in the Punjab, Bengal and Sind.⁴

It further provided an opportunity for the Muslim League leaders to prove the validity of the Muslim grievances .Mohammad Ali Jinnah requested the Muslim all over India to observe Friday the 22nd December 'as the Day of Deliverance'.⁵ The day was celebrated as the Day of Deliverance from tyranny, oppression and injustice during the last two and a half years.⁶ Within six months of Second World War Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the League had committed themselves to the demand for Pakistan.⁷ The 27th annual session of the All-India Muslim League was started on March 22nd 1940 at Lahore.⁸ The elected President of this session said, 'The Lahore session is going to be a landmark in the future history of Muslim India'.⁹ On 23rd March 1940 the Muslim League passed Lahore Resolution at Minto Park.¹⁰ Accordingly the Muslim

¹ Ganeshi Mahajan, *Congress Politics in the Punjab 1885-1947*, K.K. Publishers, Shimla, 2002, p. 96.

² *The Tribune*, (Lahore), October 24, 1939, p. 10.

³ *The Tribune*, (Lahore), October 24, 1939, p. 10.

⁴ R.D. Sharma, "Hindu Muslim Divide in Pre-Partition Punjab From 1901 to 1947", *Proceeding of the Punjab History Conference*, 23rd Session, 17-19 March 1989, p. 328.

⁵ Deepak Pandey, "Congress-Muslim League Relations 1937-1939", *Modern Asian Studies* 12, 4, 1978, p. 652.

⁶ K.B. Sayeed: *The Formative Phase 1857-1947*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968, p. 99. See also V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1957, p. 72.

⁷ Penderal Moon, *Divided and Quit*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p. 273.

⁸ *The Tribune*, March 23, 1940, p. 1.

⁹ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 22, 1940, p. 6.

¹⁰ *The Tribune*, March 23, 1940, p. 1. See also Ganeshi Mahajan, *Congress Politics in the Punjab 1885-1947*, p. 96.

League made its demand for a separate Muslim state though “Pakistan” was not mentioned in the Lahore resolution.¹¹

The Lahore Resolution did not refer to Pakistan but next day press published it with the headlines of Pakistan Resolution.¹² It was a co-incident that the League adopted the Pakistan Scheme as its political plank at the Lahore session which is being held only at distance of a few furlongs the mausoleum of the late Mohammad Iqbal who originally conceived the idea.¹³ The session was presided over by Mohammad Ali Jinnah who said in his presidential address;

“The Hindus and Moslems have different religious philosophies, social customs, literature, they neither inter-marry nor dine together and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their views on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Moslems derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics their hero’s are different and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must led to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.”¹⁴

The Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation in the Government of India Act, 1935 is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and it is altogether unacceptable to the Muslims.¹⁵ It declared that no Constitutional plan would be acceptable to Muslim unless,¹⁶ it is designed on the following basic principles, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the area in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India,

11 Anita Inder Singh, *The Partition of India*, National Book Trust India, New Delhi, 2007, p. 29.

12 Narinder Iqbal Singh, *Communal Violence on the Eve of the Partition of the Punjab 1947*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Guru Nanak Dev University, 2002, p. 4.

13 *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 24, 1940, p. 5.

14 *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, p. 309. See also *Khalsa Samachar*, March 28, 1940.

15 *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, p. 312.

16 Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p.55.

should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States’ in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.¹⁷

The resolution reads: ‘That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the Constitution for minorities in these units in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them. In other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a majority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them. The session further authorizes the working committee to frame a scheme of Constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by two respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matter as might be necessary.’¹⁸

In his presidential address to the Lahore session of the League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah said that it was only a dream that Hindus and Muslims could ever evolve a common nationality. The problem of India was not of an inter-communal but manifestly of an international character and it must be treated as such. So long as that basic and fundamental truth was not realized, any Constitution that might be built would result in disaster and would prove destructive and harmful not only to the Muslims but also to the British and the Hindus.¹⁹ He asserted that the Mussalmans were a nation and they must have their homeland, their territory and their state.²⁰ Mohammad Ali Jinnah said that the Hindus and the Muslim belonged to two different religions, philosophies, social customs and literature.²¹

Mohammad Ali Jinnah wrote an article ‘*Time and Tide*’ in which he stated, ‘India is inhabited by many races often as distinct from one another in origin, and tradition and manner of

¹⁷ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 22, 1940, p. 5. See also Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, pp. 55-56, *Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, p. 312.

¹⁸ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 22, 1940, p. 5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *The Tribune*, March 23, 1940, p. 1.

²¹ Perves Amir Ali Hoodbhog, ‘Rewriting History of Pakistan’, *Islam Politics and the State: The Pakistan Experience* (ed. Mohammad Asham Khan), Select Book Service, New Delhi, 1986, p. 168.

life as are the Nations of Europe.²²Two thirds of its inhabitants profess Hinduism in one form or another as their religion, over 77 million are followers of Islam; and the difference between the two is not only of religion in the stricter sense, but also of law and culture. They may be said, indeed to represent two distinct separate civilizations. Hinduism is distinguished by the phenomenon of its caste which is the basis of its religious and social system and save in a very restricted field remains unaffected by contact with philosophies of the west; the religion of Islam on the other hand is based upon the conception of the equality of man’’.²³

Although this was the first time that any Muslim party had adopted ‘Pakistan’ for a policy, the idea was not entirely new.²⁴ The Lahore Resolution was a shrewd game of political chess in India. It presented the possibility of permanent Muslim domination in the Punjab. Despite its vagueness, the Lahore Resolution acquired the name of ‘Pakistan Resolution’.²⁵ The nation of a Muslim homeland in North West and North East India was made possible, not by the fact that majority of Indian Muslims lived in the Muslim provinces (indeed, more than 60 per cent lived in the Muslim minority provinces) but because of what has been described as an accident of geography: That there happened to be four provinces in which Muslims were in a majority. Without these Muslim majority areas, communalism would have existed in India but it seems inconceivable that any section of Muslims would have been able to demand any kind of ‘homeland’.²⁶ The Aga Khan and Muhammad Iqbal were among the first to moot the idea of a Muslim homeland.²⁷ The term ‘Pakistan’ was coined in 1933 by Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, a student of Cambridge University.²⁸ Literally, Pakistan is both a Persian and Urdu word which means the land of the Paks-the spiritually pure and clean. The coinage is said to have been formed from the initial letters of the names of the provinces designed to compose the Pakistan-

²² *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, pp. 302-03.

²³ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, pp. 302-03.

²⁴ Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p. 56.

²⁵ Perves Amir Ali Hoodbhog, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

²⁶ Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p. 56. See also, S.R. Mehrotra, “The Congress and the Partition India”, C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright (eds.), *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspective 1935-47*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1970, p. 563.

²⁷ Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India*, p. 56. See also Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947*, Macmillan Company, New Delhi, 2007, p.47.

²⁸ Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, Publications Division, New Delhi, 1983, p. 318.

The North West Zone. These provinces were: Punjab, Afghanistan (NWFP), Kashmir and Baluchistan which contributed the end letters of the name.²⁹

The idea of an independent Muslim state had been floating in the air for some time. Muhammad Ali Jinnah³⁰ in his interview with Beverley Nichols pointed out that the idea of dividing India was not new for it had occurred to John Bright in 1877.³¹ Lord Cruzan told the Muslims in 1905, “I am giving you a Muslim province”.³² After Kohat riots in 1923 and 1924, Lalalajpat Rai wrote a number of articles on communal riots and suggested remedial measures one of these was the division of the Punjab into East Punjab and the West Punjab. He argued that if democracy was to work successfully and effectively under the system of communal electorates, the partition of the Punjab was essential.³³

In August 1933 the *Statesman* (Calcutta), in June 1934 the *Eastern Times*, (Lahore) and in October 1935 the *Tribune*, (Lahore), commented upon the idea of Pakistan. But it emerged as a subject of practical politics, when a number of schemes were put forward concerning the Constitutions of India.³⁴ When Rahmat Ali published a pamphlet ‘*Now or Never*’ in 1933 in which the idea of Pakistan was explained, the Muslim leaders who came to London to assist the Joint Parliamentary Committee when pointedly asked their opinion of the Pakistan plan, dismissed it as a school-boyish exercise.³⁵ Sikandar Hayat Khan’s scheme for dividing India into seven zones united under a weak Centre (published in July 1939) attracted much notice because of the author’s position as the premier of the Punjab.

²⁹ Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947*, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1950, p. 5.

³⁰ Muhammad Ali Jinnah was also known as Quid-E-Azam (Arabic: “The Great Leader”). He was born on December 25, 1876 and died on September 11, 1948 at Karachi. He joined the Muslim League in 1913. The carrier of Quid-E-Azam indicates a curious and Ironic development from being the “Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity” as he called by admiring Congressmen, to being the chief exponent advocate and creator of Pakistan. He was also the First Governor-General (1947-48) of Pakistan. For details See *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. VI, p. 555. See also Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947*, p. 1.

³¹ Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, p. 317.

³² Khaliqzaman Chaudhary, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Brothers Publications, Lahore, 1992, p. 238.

³³ Kirpal Singh, “Master Tara Singh and Partition of Punjab 1947”, *Master Tara Singh: Political Thinkers of Modern India*, (ed. Varindar Grover), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995, p. 339.

³⁴ Khaliqzaman Chaudhary, *Pathway to Pakistan*, p. 232.

³⁵ Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, p. 318.

The idea of a separate Muslim state was expounded by Muhammad Iqbal.³⁶ In his famous presidential address at the Allahabad Annual Session of the All India Muslim League in December 1930, he gave a hint for a separate state for the Muslims.³⁷ In his speech he said:

“The Muslims demand for the creation of Muslim India within India is therefore, perfectly justified... I would like to see the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan into a single state. Self government within the British Empire, or without the British empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslim at least of North West India”.³⁸

Later on, in 1937, V.D Savarkar presided over the session of the Hindu Mahasabha and declared, “India cannot be assumed today to be a Unitarian and homogeneous nation, but on the contrary there are two nations in the main: the Hindus and the Muslims. These two antagonistic nations are living side by side in India.”³⁹ In 1940 Chaudhary Rahmat Ali again published a pamphlet entitled, ‘*The Millat of Islam and the Menace of Indianism*’. It was confined to the formulation of a demand for Pakistan, that is, for separation of the five constituent parts which gave to the whole zone the name of Pakistan, viz., Punjab, Afghan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan.⁴⁰ In the same year, Mohammad Ali Jinnah also called for a separate state for the Muslims. It was a turning point in the history of India.⁴¹ With the Muslim League demand for Pakistan the outlook of political parties in the Punjab underwent a radical change and Punjab politics entered a new era.⁴²

Lahore Resolution was crucial point for India, particularly for the Punjab. When the Muslim League passed Lahore Resolution all the political parties in the Punjab like the Akali Party, the Unionist Party, the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha, reacted strongly.⁴³ The two nation scheme as propounded by Mohammad Ali Jinnah marked a new orientation in the policy

³⁶ Muhammad Iqbal was born on November, 1877 at Sialkot and died on April 21, 1938 at Lahore. He was a great poet and philosopher. He was known for his Influential efforts to direct his fellow Muslims toward the establishment of a Separate Muslim Sate, an aspiration that was eventually realized in the country of Pakistan. He knighted in 1922. He is acclaimed as the father of Pakistan, and every year “Iqbal Day” is celebrated by Pakistanis. For details see *The New Encyclopedia of Britannica*, Vol. VI, p. 373.

³⁷ Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Hind Kitabs, Bombay, 1946, p. 192. See also Penderal Moon, *Divide and Quit*, p. 11.

³⁸ Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947*, p.4.

³⁹ Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, p. 317.

⁴⁰ Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, p. 173.

⁴¹ Richer Symonds, *The Making of Pakistan*, Faber and Faber, London, 1949, p. 56. See also *The Tribune*, 2 April, 1940.

⁴² *The Tribune*, Lahore, 2 April, 1940.

⁴³ Khushwant Singh, *A History of Sikhs 1839-1974*, Vo. II, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1977, p. 225.

of the Muslim League.⁴⁴ The Working Committee of the provincial Muslim League welcomed the Lahore Resolution on religious, social and cultural grounds.⁴⁵ Saikh Abdul Majid, Finance Minister, defended the Lahore Resolution in following words:

“There is a lot of loose talk about Muslim League’s aims and objects as envisaged in the League’s Lahore resolution. The assertion that the league is aiming at the destruction of solidarity and unity of India is absurd”.⁴⁶

The Lahore Resolution was criticized by many leading Muslims. Syed Atta Ullah, the well known Ahrar leader said that in India there could be no Pakistan or Khalistan, only Hindu-Muslim unity would bring the Freedom of India.⁴⁷ Maulvi Muhammad Sidik said that the Muslim League had given the wrong lead to the Muslims and the Leaguers were incapable of making sacrifices for the country.⁴⁸ Maulana Muhammad Sayeed said that Jinnah was neither a true Musalman because there was nothing about him of a Muslim nor was he fit to be a Quid- E - Azam.⁴⁹ The Lahore Resolution met a nation wide criticism in the political circles.⁵⁰

Beni Prasad argues that, ‘the idea of Islamic state in the North West had floated in an amorphous form in a few minds in the general ferment of 1919 and was later espoused by Sir Mohammad Iqbal, the poet of Pan Islamism. Under the pressure of communal tension it was worked out in a few pamphlets and last figured on the programme of the Muslim League in March 1940.’⁵¹

The Hindu press through articles, pamphlets and books condemning Mohammad Ali Jinnah and his utopia of Pakistan, however, published and propagated the idea all over India. Even from the Muslim side, the Khaskar, the Ahrars and Jamat-i -Ulema, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was denounced as a *Kafir*, and agent of the British.⁵² Ghulam Nabi Janbaz, an Ahrar leader said

44 *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 22 March, 1940, p. 4.

45 *The Tribune*, September 22, 1940, p. 16.

46 *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 27, 1940, p. 4.

47 *The Tribune*, April 15, 1940, p. 9.

48 *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 24, 1940, p. 8.

49 *The Tribune*, April 16, 1940, p. 9.

50 *The Tribune*, April 14, 1940, p. 9.

51 Beni Prasad, *The Hindu-Muslim Questions*, Kitabistan, Allahabad, 1940, p. 81. See also P. Hardy, *The Muslim of British India*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1972, p. 219.

52 A.B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and Today*, Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1948, p. 78.

that Pakistan scheme is opposed both to Islam and to the cause of India. After the celebration of Deliverance Day, this was the second stigma on the Muslims of India.⁵³

The Muslim League Resolution for a separate Muslim state, popularly known as 'Pakistan Resolution' threatened the position of the Sikhs in the Punjab. They were faced with two rival freedom movements. One led by the Congress for the freedom of the country on the whole, the other being led by the Muslim League for an Independent Muslims State.⁵⁴ The position of the Sikhs in the Punjab was almost similar to that of the Muslims at all India level. Thus the Sikhs with the fear of Muslim domination in the province followed the policy of defence and later on, that of defiance. In other words, on the one hand, they struggled for their adequate representation to safeguard their interests, and on the other, they strongly opposed the statutory majority of the Muslims and the demand of a separate Muslim state. The Pakistan Resolution of Jinnah came as a bomb shell to the Sikhs. The Khalsa National Party, a party representing landed aristocracy in the Punjab passed a resolution at Lahore on 29 Marc 1940, opposing the demand for Pakistan.⁵⁵ The Khalsa National Party resolved that the Sikhs would never tolerate for a single day the rabid communal role of any community in the Punjab, which was not only their homeland, but their holy land as well.

The Pakistan resolution was widely denounced both by the Hindu and Sikh Press. Large number of meetings were organised and the Pakistan scheme was severely condemned.⁵⁶

The Akali Dal strongly condemned the Pakistan Resolution.⁵⁷ Master Tara Singh, President of the Shiromani GurdwaraPrabandhak Committee might mean 'a declaration of civil war' as to realize it; the Muslims would have to cross an ocean of Sikh blood.⁵⁸ Dr. V.S. Bhati of Ludhiana published a pamphlet 'demanding Khalistan as a buffer state between India and Pakistan'.⁵⁹

⁵³ *The Akali*, 1947, p. 83.

⁵⁴ K.C.Gulati, *The Akali :Past and Present* , Ashajanak Publication,New.Delhi,1974,p.87.

⁵⁵ K.L. Tuteja, *Sikh Politics 1920-40*, Vishal Publications, Kurukshetra 1984, pp. 192-93.

⁵⁶ K.L. Tuteja, *Sikh Politics 1920-40*, p.192.

⁵⁷ Bir Good Gill, "Road to Nowhere: The Akalis, Cripps and the Azad Punjab Scheme," S.Settar, Indra B Gupta (eds.), *Pangs of Partition: The Parting of Ways*, Vol.I, Manohar Publishers, Delhi, 2002, p. 243.

⁵⁸ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I 1940, p. 248. See also, InduBanga, "Crisis of Sikh Politics 1920-40", p.40.

⁵⁹ K.C. Gulati, *The Akalis: Past and Present*, p. 88.

The Central Akali Dal ⁶⁰ under the banner of Baba Kharak Singh also opposed the Pakistan Scheme as strongly as Shiromani Akali Dal had done. Baba Kharak Singh said against this scheme, “I wish to be clearly understood by Jinnah and his colleagues that as long as a single Sikh exists on the surface of the earth, India shall not be allowed to be divided into such absurd regions”⁶¹.

Baba Kharak Singh stood for the unity of India. If there is going to be any “*Pakistan*” in real sense of the word, it will be only India as one and united nation as a whole, for the word “*Pak*” literally means pure. As such “India for Indians” is the only pure and real definition of the word “*Pakistan*”⁶². Baba Kharak Singh, while presiding over a huge gathering held in Moti Gate Garden said that we do not want Hindu Raj or the Muslim Raj, not even the Sikh Raj, but a Raj of the people of all communities. You may call that Ram Raj or Khudai Raj. We cannot tolerate any attempt to cut India into pieces.⁶³

Baba Kharak Singh in a Conference at Lahore also condemned the Pakistan demand. Teja Singh Swatantar, a Communist MLA, also spoke against the Pakistan Resolution. Master Tara Singh said that Jinnah wanted to divide India into *Hindu India* and *Muslim India* and at the same time he was trying to crush the rights of minorities especially those of the Sikhs. His attempts were a step towards establishing Muslim rule in India.⁶⁴ This Pakistan scheme of Jinnah was adopted by Muslim League, but this shall not be hold. He added, it was Jinnah’s deep set plotting to divide India which had come to the fore.⁶⁵ Thus Master Tara Singh was highly critical of Jinnah’s Pakistan scheme.⁶⁶

Master Tara Singh made the declaration that the Muslim League by their Pakistan scheme has dealt a blow to PuranSwaraj for India. In the course of his Presidential address at the first U.P. Sikh Conference which met at Lucknow on 15th April 1940, Master Tara Singh made a

⁶⁰ J.S. Grewal, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Sikhs of the Punjab*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 172.

⁶¹ Baba Kharak Singh was the President of the Shiromani Akali Dal In 1930, he Broke away from it and in March 1934, formed a new party, the Sikh National League, which was later named the Central Akali Dal. For details see Bir Good Gill, “Road to Nowhere: The Akalis, Cripps and the Azad Punjab Scheme” p. 243.

⁶² *The Tribune*, April 11, 1940

⁶³ *The Tribune*, April, 11, 1940.

⁶⁴ Cited by, Kanwaljit Kaur, *Punjab and Pakistan Resolution of Muslim League 1940-1942*, Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, Guru Nanak Dev University, 2005, p.46.

⁶⁵ *TheAkali*, March 28, 1940.

⁶⁶ *TheAkali*, March 30, 1940.

strong speech. A large number of delegates from all parts of the province were present. Master Tara Singh hoped that the Muslims of India would repudiate the League scheme. He made it clear that Sikhs did not want to usher in Sikh rule and expressed their determination to oppose any communal or foreign rule.⁶⁷ He appealed to his Muslim brethren not to be carried away by these proposals and delay the advent of Swaraj as he felt that any unreasonable attitude taken by them at this moment would prove disastrous not only to the Sikh ideals of Sikhism. He stressed that *Guru Gobind Singh Ji* organized the Sikh Panth for the service of humanity and for affording protection to the weak and not to rule others.⁶⁸

Master Tara Singh urged the Sikhs to get ready for every sacrifice that they might be called upon to make. Master Tara Singh added that the Akali Sena organized by the Shiromani Akali Dal was not designed to overawe others or establish any communal raj but to end the menace of atheism which was threatening the community. He appealed to the Sikhs to become devout followers of the Gurus and assured them that the Guru would bless them with the strength which their forefathers possessed. The Akali Conferences against the Pakistan scheme started in Gujranwala and Rawalpindi, during May 1940. The congregation of the Sikhs at Gujranwala also promised the Akali Dal that they will be ready to make any sacrifice and they will stand with the Shiromani Akali Dal to oppose this scheme. The Lyallpur Singh Sabha also extended their co-operation to Shiromani Akali Dal against the Pakistan scheme.⁶⁹

The Punjabi weekly *QuamiSutantar* also followed the line of the Akalis. In its editorials, it opposed the scheme and said that this scheme should be withdrawn by Jinnah or the Sikhs will oppose it strongly with all their means.⁷⁰

The Punjab Premier, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan disliked the idea of Pakistan as articulated in the Lahore Resolution of 1940. He irreverently called it 'Jinnahstan'.⁷¹ He had more than

⁶⁷ Cited by Kanwaljit Kaur, *Punjab and Pakistan Resolution of Muslim League 1940-1942*, pp. 42-43.

⁶⁸ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, p. 358.

⁶⁹ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1940, p. 358.

⁷⁰ *The Akali*, May 9, 1940.

⁷¹ *The Akali*, May 10, 1940.

once publicly declared that⁷² “if a Pakistan meant a Muslim Raj here and a Hindu Raj elsewhere, he would have nothing to do with it”.⁷³

Sir Sikandar further said, “if Pakistan meant unalloyed Muslim Raj, he would have nothing to do with it”, ‘and ‘that he wanted a raj in which every community would be partner.’⁷⁴ He said that the Pakistan scheme had sown the seed of communal hatred and it was the duty of every Nationalist to condemn it.⁷⁵ He opposed the division of India.⁷⁶ Sikandar prophetically feared that, if Pakistan was created there would be widespread bloodshed within the Punjab. He declared during the course of a debate in the Legislative Assembly on Pakistan, ‘If this is what Pakistan means I will have nothing to do with it... if you want real freedom for the Punjab... Punjab will not be Pakistan, but just Punjab ... the land of five Rivers; Punjab is Punjab and will always remain Punjab whatever anyone says.’⁷⁷

The Lahore Resolution was interpreted by Jinnah and Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan in different ways. The former was clear in mind that the League Resolution implied the establishment of a separate state or states; while Sikandar interpreted it as meaning no more than the concession of maximum autonomy to regions in which the Muslim formed a majority of the population.⁷⁸

There was a strong reaction against the demand for Pakistan in other quarters also.⁷⁹ S. Satyamurti said, ‘Mr. Jinnah wants what the Moughal Emperor did not want, not even Emperor Aurangzeb. Mr. Jinnah wants on a smaller scale what Hitler wants in Europe. He cannot have it. Muslim League wants to divide India geographically into Hindu and Muslim India. It is impossibility from the point of view of India, of England and of the world.’⁸⁰ Liaquat Hayat said, “for Heaven’s sake, let us unite to save India first before deciding about its future

⁷² QuamiSutantar, June 19, 1940.

⁷³ V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India 1942-47*, p. 105. See also S. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1984, p. 185.

⁷⁴ Ikram Ali, “Pakistan Resolution and Unionist Party”, Kainz F. Yusuf, et al. (eds.), *Pakistan Resolution Revisted*, National and Cultural Research, Islamabad, 1990, pp. 347-365.

⁷⁵ Nicholas and Mansergh (eds.), *The Transfer of Power in India 1942-47*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1979, p. 105. See also *The Tribune*, March 14, 1941.

⁷⁶ *The Tribune*, March 14, 1941.

⁷⁷ *The Tribune*, September 9, 1940, p. 16.

⁷⁸ Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj 1849-1947*, p. 190.

⁷⁹ B. Siva Rao, “India 1935-47”, C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (eds.) *The Partition of India, Politics and Perspectives 1935-47*, George Allen and Unwin London, 1970, p. 425.

⁸⁰ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 26, 1940, p. 8.

Constitution’’.⁸¹ Sir Chhotu Ram, Minister for Development said, “The two nation theory is impracticable.”⁸² Mahatma Gandhi said, “The two nation theory is an untruth, as the Hindus and Muslims are not two nations’’.⁸³ Pandit Jawaharlal Lal Nehru, at Shivaji Akhada in Poona, characterized the Pakistan scheme as a “foolish scheme’’. It was highly anti national and pro-imperialistic to which no freedom loving man would agree.⁸⁴

Mirja Yarjung Bahadur, Agent of Nizam’s Government in Central Province also characterized two nation theory as absurd.⁸⁵ The Congress in Punjab at the time of celebration of national week put upon its agenda to condemn Pakistan scheme. The first public meeting was held in the Jallianwala Bagh under the auspices of the district Congress Committee. Dr. Saiffud - Din-Kitchlew addressing the meeting condemned the Pakistan scheme.⁸⁶ Mahatma Gandhi had rejected the scheme in his own way. In his newspaper ‘*Harijan*’ he had repeatedly shown his indifference towards this scheme. He asserted that no compromise could be made on any such lines.⁸⁷ In a political conference, on 19th May 1940, The Hindu Mahasabha condemned the Pakistan scheme as anti Hindu and anti national.⁸⁸ Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, in a Hindu Conference, addressed at Lahore said that as long as 28 crore Hindus remain alive Pakistan scheme would not operate in any part of India.⁸⁹

On 1 December 1940, Conference was convened at Lahore and addressed by Dr. Amey (Later Governor of Orissa), Veteran Journalist Mahashe Krishan, Krishan Gopal Dutt (Later Finance Minister, Easter Punjab), Jalul-ud-Din Amber, M.L.A. (Christan Leader) Raja Narindra Nath, Professor Abdul Mazid Khan, Nationalist Muslim, Hindu Leader Raja Narindra Nath, Giani Kartar Singh and Master Tara Singh. The Conference passed a resolution opposing the formation of Pakistan.⁹⁰ Another Sikh Conference was held at Rurkalana on 16 Feb., 1941. All the Sikh leaders who had collected to attend Second All India Akali Conference

⁸¹ Harpreet Kaur, *The Press And the Partition of Punjab*, Unpublished M. Phil. Dissertation, Guru Nanak Dev University, 2006, p. 26.

⁸² *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 4, 1940.

⁸³ *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 6, 1940, p. 9. See also, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 14, 1940.

⁸⁴ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 19, 1940, p. 10.

⁸⁵ *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 30, 1940, p. 4.

⁸⁶ *The Tribune*, January 10, 1945, p. 1.

⁸⁷ *The Tribune*, April 18, 1940.

⁸⁸ *Barma Sikh Samachar*, May 10, 1940.

⁸⁹ C.H. Philips and M.D. Wainwright (eds.), *The Partition of India: Politics and Perspectives 1935-47*, George Allen & Unwin London, 1970, p. 563.

⁹⁰ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. I, 1941, pp. 45-46.

unitedly opposed the Pakistan scheme and called it sectional. They recommended a National Government. At the stage main leaders were Master Tara Singh, Kartar Singh Advocate of Rawalpindi, Kartar Singh M.L.A., Isher Singh Majhail and Professor Ganga Singh.⁹¹

Jathedar Udam Singh Nagoke issued a statement on March 20, 1941 that the whole world is going through a critical situation and it affects India also. At this time, India needs to be united, whereas this scheme plans to divide the country.⁹² Master Tara Singh further commented that ‘we are opposed to Pakistan and we shall not accept it’.⁹³ He said that ‘factionalism is the origin of Pakistan. The purpose of Pakistan is to defend the interests of Muslims and to suppress the minority community.’⁹⁴ Harnam Singh of Akali Dal too protested against the scheme. He added that Jinnah said in his speech at Kanpur that without Pakistan independence cannot be achieved. Harnam Singh added, ‘That how harmful this scheme is, can be assessed from the fact that only Muslims supported it.’ He declared that, ‘I am sure that if need, the Sikhs will go to the extent of sacrificing their lives to oppose this scheme.’⁹⁵

Some ambitious Sikhs and newspapers even suggested that the Sikhs should ask for a separate Sikh state in opposition to the Pakistan demand. But neither the moderate leaders of the Chief Khalsa Diwan nor the Akali Dal had any such inclination so far. Master Tara Singh said, ‘‘while opposing the Pakistan scheme some Sikhs have lost their heads and they are preaching the establishment of Sikh rule. This will simply be adding to the confusion already being created by the Muslim League’’.⁹⁶

In the beginning the Congress was somewhat indifferent. At its Ramgarh Session, it did not take notice of the League Resolution. Congressmen were busy at the time with the Individual Satyagraha Movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi.⁹⁷

The Hindu Mahasabha celebrated 10 May, 1942 as Anti Pakistan Day. They passed resolutions all over India opposing the Pakistan scheme.⁹⁸ All India Hindu Mahasabha meeting

91 K.C. Gulati, *The Akalis: Past and Present*, p. 88.

92 *The Akali*, February 18, 1941.

93 *The Akali*, March 18, 1941.

94 *The Akali*, March 26, 1941.

95 *The Akali*, April 16, 1941.

96 *The Akali*, April 17, 1941.

97 K.L. Tuteja, *Sikh Politics 1920-40*, p. 193.

98 K.C. Gulati, *The Akalis: Past and Present*, p. 88.

passed a resolution in which they demanded that the British Government should immediately give complete independence to India. They further demanded that Indian National Government should be established. All the important political parties should be represented in government. Hindu Mahasabha was of the opinion that India must have a federal type of Government in which the provinces should have maximum rights. They warned if the Government did not accept this demand then Hindu Mahasabha will take strict action.⁹⁹ The Akalis also joined the Hindu Mahasabha in celebrating 10 May 1942 as Anti Pakistan Day.¹⁰⁰

The Khalsa Nationalist Party also passed a resolution in a separate meeting held at Lahore on March 29, 1940 and opposed the demand for Pakistan.¹⁰¹ The Akali held an anti Pakistan conference at Lyallpur.¹⁰² They opposed the scheme vehemently¹⁰³ Master Tara Singh issued a statement on 20 May, 1942 that we neither want Pakistan nor want to separate from India.¹⁰⁴ In one interview Baldev Singh said that, “I shall not let any such division take place in which Hindus and Sikh suffer.”¹⁰⁵ Ishar Singh Majhail in a conference said, “This scheme has created doubts in the hearts of Hindus and Sikhs of Punjab.¹⁰⁶ We should continue struggle for Complete Independence of India and oppose Pakistan fully.¹⁰⁷ Master Tara Singh said, “The two nation theory was good as long as it benefited the Muslims but when the Sikhs put forward the three nation theory, it was bad, as it did not suit the communal Muslim leaders.”¹⁰⁸

Kharak Singh of the Central Akali Dal declared that “so long as there was a single Sikh there could be no Pakistan in the Punjab.¹⁰⁹ Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Minister for Revenue, said that the Sikhs would “fight to the last”, if an attempt was made to cut up India into

⁹⁹ Bir Good Gill, “Road to Nowhere: Akalis, Cripps and Azad Punjab Scheme”, p. 247.

¹⁰⁰ *The Akali*, September 2, 1942.

¹⁰¹ Lovely Sandhu, *Akali Congress Relations 1920-47*, Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1985, p105.s

¹⁰² Bir Good Gill, “Road to Nowhere: Akalis, Cripps and Azad Punjab Scheme”, p. 249.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *The Tribune*, April 8, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ Jogindar Singh, *Sikh Leaderships: Early 20th Century*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1999, p. 338.

¹⁰⁶ *The Akali*, May 20, 1942.

¹⁰⁷ *The Akali*, June 13, 1942.

¹⁰⁸ *The Akali*, June 21, 1942.

¹⁰⁹ *The Akali*, June 27, 1942.

communal independent states.¹¹⁰ The Chief Khalsa Diwan considered, this resolution of Muslim League to divide India into Muslim India and Hindu India a mischievous and an anti-social act.¹¹¹

With the demand of Pakistan, many other counter schemes came into existence, *Khalsa Sewak* (daily) in its Visakhi number of 1940 wrote that territory from Jmuna to Zamraud should be formed *Khalistan* on the lines of Pakistan. The *aschut* members on the Punjab Assembly Mula Singh, Jugal Kishore, Fakir Chand and Harbhajan Das in a statement demanded the formation of *Aschutistan* in India by which 12 crore *aschuts* of India would be in a position to maintain their traditional culture.¹¹² The General Secretary of All India Congress Committee, Kriplani, said in a joke that the women of India should have a separate state known as *Zananistan* where they could be free to maintain their habits, dress, standard of living, nature and other trades. He suggested the area of Gujrat for Zanasistan be under the rule of an experienced lady who had been subjected to tourcher by men.¹¹³

Apart from the criticism of Lahore Resolution by different political parties the reaction of the Press was also significant. The press criticized the League's resolution in bitter words.¹¹⁴ The *Fateh* said in its editorial note on 27 March 1941, that the Muslims want Pakistan because they think that in the four provinces out of eleven provinces they are in majority and they have every right to be free. But Jinnah cannot hide this fact that in the Punjab, Sikhs are equally important. The land of Punjab is homeland of Sikhs and the Britishers had taken the Punjab from the Sikhs. Therefore, the Sikhs cannot permit the Punjab to be turned into Pakistan. Moreover they shall fight for the unity of the country.¹¹⁵

The Akali newspaper constantly followed the policy to declare that this scheme of Pakistan was a wicked scheme and it will only postpone the mission of freedom of the country.¹¹⁶ The *Khalsa Advocate* stated that Muslim League's Lahore resolution had left the country panic stricken. It would be impending disaster to the country.¹¹⁷ In an editorial, *The*

110 *The Tribune*, April 30, 1940.

111 *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 20, 1940, p. 7.

112 *The Civil and Military Gazette*, April 14, 1940, p. 16.

113 *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 20, 1940, p. 9.

114 *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 27, 1940, p. 8.

115 *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 27, 1940, p. 8.

116 *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 13, 1940, p. 3.

117 *Fateh*, March 27, 1941.

Tribune criticized the Lahore resolution stated that it would be a landmark not in the political advancement of the community but in political retrogression.¹¹⁸ *The Times of India* called it 'vague' and far from being a complete solution of the Muslim problem. *The Civil and Military Gazette* dismissed the demand as unnecessary.¹¹⁹

On 11 October, 1940, the Congress Working Committee decided to start Individual Civil Disobedience Movement.¹²⁰ A supreme Satyagraha Committee had been formed in the Punjab to enroll the members.¹²¹ In the Punjab, the Congress leaders, Iftikhar-ud-Din, initiated the Individual Satyagraha by offering himself for arrest. The total numbers of arrest from the Punjab was more than 200.¹²² Craik wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow on 30 November 1940 'as regards the actual campaign in the Punjab, my information is, the most of Satyagrhis are in reality extremely lukewarm'.¹²³ The Governor of the Punjab, B.J. Glancy noted that the Punjab Congress Party was fortunately at low and its leaders were continually at loggerheads with each other.¹²⁴ The factional rivalry weakened the Congress position in the Punjab from 1937 elections onwards. The Ahrar had started Satyagrha on small scale, but quite independently of the Congress. Their plan was that one Ahrar leader should raise slogan in a mosque every Friday.¹²⁵

In this critical situation, C. Rajagopalachari, an eminent Congressman acknowledged the Muslim League's claim for separation and came out with his sporting after on August 23, 1940. He persuaded his compatriots to accept a Muslim League Prime Minister with right to nominate the persons of his own choice in the National Government.¹²⁶

In a meeting, Shiromani Akali Dal discussed several important matters pertaining to the Pakistan scheme and Rajagopalachari's suggestion. The Shiromani Akali Dal asked the Congress

¹¹⁸ *Fateh*, Dec 11, 1941.

¹¹⁹ *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 13, 1940, p. 3.

¹²⁰ *The Tribune Advocate*, April 13, 1940, p. 8. See also *The Khalsa Advocate*, April 13, 1940, p. 3.

¹²¹ K.K. Aziz, *History of Partition of India: Origin and Development of The Idea of Pakistan*, Vol. III, Atlantic Publishers and Distributions, New Delhi, 1988, p. 658.

¹²² *The Civil and Military Gazette*, March 30, 1940, p. 4.

¹²³ Tara Chand, *History of freedom Struggle in India*, Vol. IV, p. 309.

¹²⁴ *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 248.

¹²⁵ K.L. Tuteja, "The Congress in Punjab", H.K. Puri and Parmjit Singh Judge (eds.), *Social and Political Movements: Reading in Punjab*, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, 2000, p. 214, See also Harish Jain, *The Making of Punjab*, Unistar Book, Chandigarh, 2003, p. 202.

¹²⁶ Lionel Carter (ed.), *Punjab Politics, 1940-43: Strains of War, Government Fortnightly Reported and other Key Documents*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2005, p. 202.

to immediately reiterate its position with regard to Pakistan Scheme.¹²⁷ The Akalis under the leadership of Master Tara Singh sharply reacted. They described this attitude of the Congress as unjust. Masters Tara Singh in a statement opposed Rajagopalachari's plan and pleaded that they should unitedly fight for Independence of India.¹²⁸ Giani Kartar Singh then an M.L.A and also the General Secretary of the Gurdawara Prabandhak Committee sent a letter to the President of the Indian National Congress asking the Congress to disassociate from the offer.¹²⁹

Master Tara Singh's criticized the pro-Muslim tendency of the Congress and the 'sporting offer' made to the Muslim League by Rajagopalachari.¹³⁰ The Raja gopalacharia scheme came as a shock to the Sikhs who felt that further alliance with the Congress was useless.¹³¹ Master Tara Singh resigned form the Provincial Congress and the All India Congress Committee. He said, 'For winning freedom, the Sikhs will remain with the Congress, but not for establishing Pakistan. We want freedom but not change of masters.' He added, "Sikhs could not tolerate the Pakistan scheme nor leave the question of setting the communal dispute in the hands of the Congress."¹³² Master Tara's resignation was criticized by many Sikh leaders. Sardar Amar Singh Jhabal, a former President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee said that it was highly unbecoming on the part of Master Tara Singh to resign from the Congress.¹³³ Jaswant Singh Jhabhal, ex president of District Congress Committee and Darbar Sahib Committee, Amritsar said that it was not commendable on the part of Master Tara Singh, to resign from the Congress at a time when the national struggle for freedom was shortly to be started.¹³⁴

With the Muslim league demand for Pakistan the outlook of political parties in the Punjab underwent a radical change. Then onwards the whole Punjab developments .became a hotbed of politics.

¹²⁷ Galaxy to Linlithgow, 26 July 1942: Lionel Carter (eds.), *Punjab Politics, 1940 - 43: Strains of War, Government Fortnightly Reported and other Key Documents* p. 321. See also G.S. Bhorgava, Bhim Sen Sachar: *An Intimate Biography*, Har- Anand, New Delhi, 1997, p. 39.

¹²⁸ Lionel Carter (ed.), *Punjab Politics, 1940-1943: Strains of War*, p. 208.

¹²⁹ *The Tribune*, August 24, 1940, p. 5.

¹³⁰ *The Tribune*, August 24, 1940, p. 5.

¹³¹ *The Tribune*, August 24, 1940, p. 5.

¹³² Sukhmani Bal Riar, "Circumstances Leading to the Sikh Demand for Azad Punjab 1920-42", *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1992, p. 205.

¹³³ *The Tribune*, September 13, 1940, p. 12.

¹³⁴ Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of Partition of India 1936-47*, p. 79.