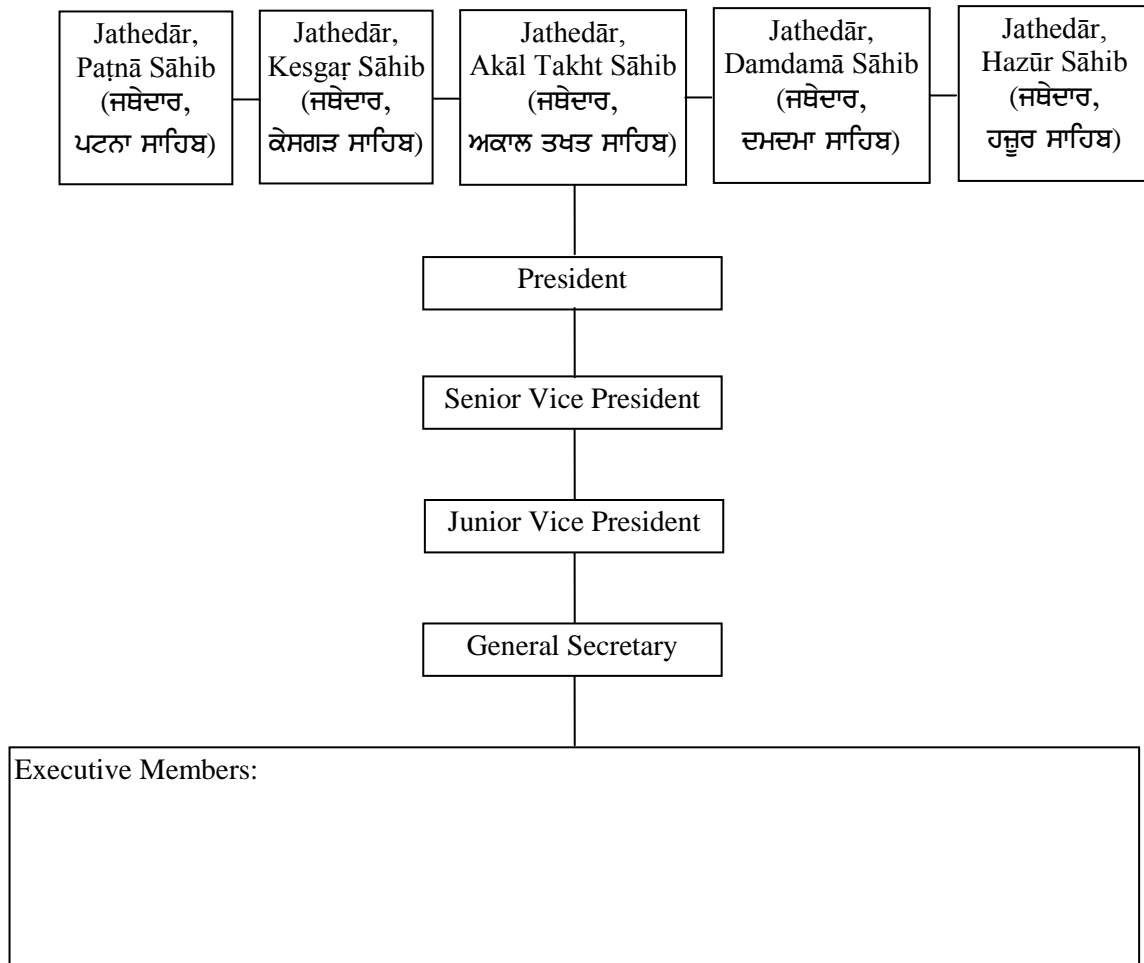


**Answers:**

First picture	Takht Srī Patnā Sāhib
Second picture	Takht Srī Kesgar Sāhib, Anandpur Sāhib
Third picture	Takht Srī Hazur Sāhib, Nanded
Fourth picture	Takht Srī Damdama Sāhib, Talvandī Sābo
Fifth picture	Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib, Ammritsar

**SGPC Executive Committee**

### The Partition of Pañjāb (ਪੰਜਾਬ), 1947

The partition of Pañjāb (1947) was the result of the overwhelming support the Muslims demanded for the creation of Pakistan, an independent and sovereign Muslim state. Part of the Muslim population was suspicious of the mainstream, secular but Hindu-majority Indian National Congress for a long time. The All India Muslim League (AIML) was formed for this particular reason in 1906. Among the first to make the demand for a separate state was writer/ philosopher Allāmā Iqbāl (ਅੱਲਾਮਾ ਇਕਬਾਲ), who, in his presidential address to the 1930 convention of the Muslim league said that he felt a separate nation for Muslims was essential in an otherwise Hindu-dominated subcontinent. The Sindh (ਸਿੰਧ) Assembly passed a resolution making it a formal demand in 1935. Sindh was a region where there was a majority of Muslims and was to be part of Pakistan. Now the idea of a separate state called Pakistan was seriously being taken into consideration in Muslim League circles, and in March 1940, under Muhammad Alī Jinnāh's (ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਅਲੀ ਜਿੰਨਾਹ) leadership, the League passed the famous Pakistan Resolution at Lāhaur (ਲਾਹੌਰ). The Resolution demanded a partition of India and the formation of the Muslim majority zones of the northwest and northeast into independent sovereign states.

The Sikhs were feeling the pressure at this time and had tried different approaches to the situation. In 1928, Chief Khālsā Divān (ਖਾਲਸਾ ਦਿਵਾਨ) observed that “Sikhs are anxious to maintain their individuality while at the same time they are ready to co-operate with their sister-communities for the development of a united nation. They would, therefore, be the first to welcome a declaration that no consideration of caste or religion shall affect the matter of organization of a national government in the country. Sikhs are prepared to stand on merit alone.” ([www.allaboutsikhs.com](http://www.allaboutsikhs.com)) The British at this time decided to appoint a committee under Motī Lāl Nehrū (ਮੋਤੀ ਲਾਲ ਨੇਹਰੂ) to work out a method of government that would be acceptable to all. In August 1928, the committee published a report but the Muslim opinion was completely against the report and Muhammad Alī Jinnāh suggested a number of amendments to it. Sikhs rejected the Nehrū report for different reasons. Bābā Kharāk Singh (ਬਾਬਾ ਖੜਕ ਸਿੰਘ), in his speech, mentioned the following points: first, the report asked for domination of Indians under the British and not total freedom; second, the report had laid the foundation of communalism by accepting separate electorates. On 20 December 1929, Bābā Kharāk Singh gave a speech at Lajpat Nagar (ਲਜਪਤ ਨਗਰ), and emphasized that the Sikhs stayed determined not to let any single community establish its political hegemony in Pañjāb. Sikhs, he said had suffered the most; of the 31 Indian patriots sentenced to death, 27 were Sikhs, and out of 121 sentences to long imprisonment, 91 were Sikhs. Nehrū and Gāndhī (ਗਾਂਧੀ) met with Kharāk Singh and assured him of Sikh representation and of keeping the country, while Muslims remained silent.

This uncompressing demand for Pakistan and the partition of India aroused intense opposition throughout the whole country. The Sikhs were especially worried because now they would become a permanent minority in a Muslim state, which would be their fate if the whole of Pañjāb was to be included in Pakistan. In an attempt to break the deadlock that arose between Congress and the League over the Pakistan issue, Mr. Rājāgopālācārī (ਰਾਜਗੋਪਾਲਾਚਾਰੀ), in 1944, persuaded Mohandās K. Gāndhī (ਮੋਹਨਦਾਸ ਕੇ. ਗਾਂਧੀ) to offer Mr. Jinnāh a Pakistan consisting of those contiguous areas in the northwest and northeast of India in which Muslims were in a majority. Mr. Jinnāh outright rejected the idea. During this time Mr. Jinnāh and the Muslim league had gained great strength and most opponents of the Muslim league had been crushed. Fresh elections, held after World War II of 1945-46, confirmed that Mr. Jinnāh had secured the backing of almost all Muslims in India. The League won every Muslim seat in the Central Legislative Assembly and the majority of those in the provincial

assemblies. The most striking success of the Muslim League under the leadership of Mr. Jinnāh was in Pañjāb. Seventy nine seats had gone to the League while only seven seats were left for Sir Khaizār's (ਖੈਜ਼ਾਰ) Muslim Unionist. This had a huge impact on Pañjāb because now the once powerful Unionist party under Sir Khaizār's leadership was not able to stand up against the demand for Pakistan and the resulting partition of Pañjāb.

Sikh representation at this time disagreed with the separation of Pañjāb and stood by an all-India union. After it was a certainty that Pakistan would be formed, Giānī Kartār Singh (ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ), in 1943, declared a call for a separate state called Azād Pañjāb (ਅਜ਼ਾਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ), to be comprised of Ambālā (ਅੰਬਾਲਾ), Jalandhar (ਜਲੰਧਰ), Lāhaur (ਲਾਹੌਰ), Multān (ਮੁਲਤਾਨ), and Lāyalpur (ਲਾਯਲਪੁਰ) divisions. Master Tārā Singh (ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ), president of Shromāṇī Akālī Dal (ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ), and other Sikh leaders such as Giānī Sher Singh (ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ), Sādhū Singh Hamdard (ਸਾਧੂ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਮਦਰਦ), Amar Singh Dosāñjh (ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੋਸਾਂਝ), Ajīt Singh Ambālvi (ਅਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਅੰਬਾਲਵੀ), all supported this call for an Azād Pañjāb. In August 1944, Master Tārā Singh presented a speech declaring that Sikhs were a nation and as such a demand was formally put forward by the Shromāṇī Akālī Dal in a resolution passed on March 22, 1946 for a separate Sikh state.

The British Cabinet Mission (a group of various British and Indian leaders) was in charge of finalizing the plans for the transfer of power from the British Rāj to Indian leadership, providing India with independence. All of the major parties had rejected the plans the Cabinet Mission had proposed, including the Sikh representation. However, the Mission, anxious to show that something had been achieved, announced that constitution making could now proceed with the consent of the two major parties. It seemed that the division of India had been avoided and that there was no longer any need to consider the partition of Pañjāb and Baṅgāl (ਬੰਗਾਲ). However, the Congress and the Muslim League had interpreted the proposals differently, especially on the question of the grouping of provinces. Over the next few months all plans to work with the Cabinet Mission failed and nothing less than a sovereign Pakistan would satisfy the Muslim League.

The immediate result of the resolution was the outbreak of communal rioting in Kalkattā (ਕਲਕੱਤਾ) on an unprecedented scale, known as the 'Great Calcutta Killing', which took place on August 16, 1946. The casualties were estimated at 5,000 dead and 15, 000 injured. This was followed in October by Muslim assaults on Hindus in East Baṅgāl and these provoked Hindu assaults on Muslims in Bihār (ਬਿਹਾਰ). The Sikhs of Kalkattā were notable in that they tried to help save many innocent Hindu and Muslim lives. According to the Muslim league, the Sikhs were the only viable obstruction to Pakistan. Justice G.D. Khoslā (ਜੀ. ਡੀ. ਖੋਸਲਾ) of the Fact Finding Organization setup by the government of India observed: "Sikhs had opposed the partition of India with even greater vigor than Hindus, because they felt that as a community they could only expect disaster in Pakistan, therefore it was against the Sikhs that the spear-point of the Muslim league attack was first aimed."

In the March 1947 riots, the Sikhs of Rāvalpiṇḍī (ਰਾਵਲਪਿੰਡੀ) faced isolation and large number of them left the district. Within a few weeks almost the entire Sikh population had migrated from the district. A Holy war was declared on Hindus and Sikhs. Sikh habitations were wiped out, *Gurduārās* were dishonored. Rioting in Lāhaur started out on 4 March 1947 on a small scale, but soon spread out to become arson and murder. Soon after, Muslims in Ammritsar (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ) (Muslims were about 40-50% of population before partition) went rioting, and a mob even tried to attack the Harimandar Sāhib (ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ). However, they were met with a handful of Sikhs under the leadership of Jathedār Uddham Singh Nāgoke (ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਉਧਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਗੋਕੇ). That same day Muslims of Sharīfpurā (ਸ਼ਰੀਫਪੁਰਾ) (a

suburb of Ammritsar), stopped a train full of refugees from Pakistan for slaughter. After this incident, Sikhs and Hindus in Ammritsar were furious and many innocent Muslims had to bear the brunt of their fury. Many women were also abducted and raped. In a village called Thoh Kḥālsā (ਥੋਹ ਖਾਲਸਾ) (now in Pakistan), 1000 Sikh and Hindu women jumped into a well to avoid Muslim mobs coming after them. It is estimated that about 1 million Hindus/Sikhs/Muslims were murdered and 10-50 million were injured. Property lost was in trillions of dollars.

The border between India and Pakistan was determined by a British government-commissioned report usually referred to as the Radcliffe Award, named after the London Lawyer, Sir Cyril Radcliff, who wrote it. Pakistan came into being with two bordering states, East Pakistan (which today is Bangladesh) and West Pakistan, separated geographically by India. India was formed out of the majority Hindu regions of the colony, and Pakistan from the majority Muslim areas. On July 18, 1947, the British parliament passed the Indian Independence Act that finalized the partition arrangement.

The partition was a highly controversial arrangement, and remains a cause of much tension on the subcontinent today. Because independence was declared before the actual partition, it was up to the new government to keep order. However, it was an impossible task at which both states failed miserably. According to Richard Symonds, this was one the largest population movement in recorded history.

Massive population exchanges occurred between the two newly-formed nations in the months immediately following the partition. Once the lines were set, about 14.5 million people crossed the borders to what they hoped would be a safer region. Based on the 1951 Census of displaced persons, 7,226, 000 Muslims went to Pakistan from India while 7,249,000 Hindus and Sikhs moved to India from Pakistan immediately after the partition. About 78% of the transfer took place in the west, with Pañjāb accounting for most of it; 5.3 million Muslims moved from India to West Pañjāb in Pakistan, 3.4 million Hindus and Sikhs moved from Pakistan to East Pañjāb in India. However, the Sikhs and Hindus had to abandon much more property than the Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs left behind 6.2 million acres in West Pañjāb, which went over to Pakistan.

As a community the Sikhs had suffered the most from the partition, since such a large proportion of their total population was affected. But many of the Sikhs who had migrated from the colony districts of West Pañjāb were good farmers and to some extent helped to deal with the huge losses during the partition. As we can clearly see from our Sikh history the Sikh people have always been resilient and courageous.

*Adapted From:* <http://thesikhencyclopedia.com>, <http://www.allaboutsikhs.com>

***Additional Resources for Teachers:***

- *Singh, Kirpāl, The Partition of the Pañjāb. Paṭiālā, 1972*
- *Singh, Harbans, The Heritage of the Sikhs, Dillī, 1983*
- *Rāi, Satya M., Partition of the Pañjāb. Bombay, 1965*



Sikh Empire (1849)



Indian partition (1947) and areas of migration



Partitioned Pañjāb (1947)



Indian Pañjāb further partitioned into Himachal, Haryana and Pañjāb (1966)