

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1357
ANSWERED ON- 14/12/2023

APPOINTMENT OF CEO OF KARTARPUR SAHIB CORRIDOR

1357. SHRI VIKRAMJIT SINGH SAHNEY

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government has made any communication with Government of Pakistan to appoint a Sikh as CEO of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor, given the sensitivity and religious sentiments of the Gurdwara for Sikhs all over the globe;

(b) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of number of applicants got rejected for visiting Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in last three years, month-wise;

(d) whether Government has taken up the issue of removing the requirement of passport and fees of 20 US dollars with Pakistan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a to e) An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the facilitation of Pilgrims to visit Gurudwara Sri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, Pakistan, was signed on 24 October 2019 in order to fulfil the long-standing demand of the pilgrims to have easy and smooth access to the holy Gurudwara and to operationalise the Corridor for the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

The Agreement, inter alia, provides for visa-free travel of Indian pilgrims, as well as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders, from India to Gurudwara Shri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan on a daily basis, throughout the year. To facilitate the visit of pilgrims, a modern infrastructure, including a highway from the town of Dera Baba Nanak to Zero Point and an Integrated Check Post (ICP) has been built on the Indian side. The CEO of the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor is appointed by Pakistani authorities.

Since its inauguration on 9 November 2019, the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor has been used by around 2,35,000 pilgrims to visit Gurudwara Sri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur. The Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor remains functional on all seven days of the week.

The number of applicants that got rejected due to various reasons for visiting Gurudwara Sri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur through Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in the last three years is as follows:

Sr. No.	Year/Month	2021*	2022	2023
1.	January	--	855	713
2.	February	--	514	717
3.	March	--	945	1089
4.	April	--	999	903
5.	May	--	565	459
6.	June	--	361	303
7.	July	--	330	369
8.	August	--	469	327
9.	September	--	437	488
10.	October	--	777	745
11.	November	287	1019	820
12.	December	715	1038	399 (till 04.12.2023)

**Suspended from January to October 2021 due to COVID-19.*

Representations have been received to make the visit to Gurudwara Sri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur through Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor passport-free. However, the Bilateral Agreement signed between India and Pakistan on 24 October 2019 mandates that pilgrims shall travel on valid passport. The Government of India has consistently urged the Government of Pakistan that in deference to the wishes of the pilgrims, it should not levy any fee or charge on the pilgrims who visit Gurudwara Sri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur through the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor. Pakistan, however, continues to levy US \$20 on every pilgrim for every pilgrim for each visit.
