

India & Pakistan Extend Kartarpur Sahib Corridor Agreement

Why In News

- India and Pakistan have decided to **extend the validity of the agreement** on the **Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor** by five years to ensure “uninterrupted” travel for Indian pilgrims to the holy Gurdwara in Pakistan, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).



All You Need To Know

- **Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur**, often called just Kartarpur Sahib, is one of the holiest shrines for Sikhs. That is because **Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev** preached there during the last eighteen years of his life.
- **After Partition of India in 1947**, Kartarpur Sahib fell on the Pakistan side of the International Border. With India being the home for more than 95 per cent of all Sikhs globally, pilgrims from all over India always demanded access to go to **Kartarpur Sahib, which is in Shakargarh Tehsil, Narowal District, in Pakistan's Punjab Province.**



- On October 24, 2019, **India and Pakistan signed an agreement** to facilitate the visit of pilgrims from India to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur through the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor.
- This was **initially signed for a period of five years**. This has now been renewed for another 5-year term. The original agreement, signed on October 24, 2019, facilitated visa-free access for Indian pilgrims to the historic gurdwara.



- The corridor was **initially valid for five years** and has become a vital link for thousands of devotees who wish to pay homage at one of the holiest Sikh sites.

- The extension, **confirmed through diplomatic channels**, will ensure that the corridor remains open and functional, allowing uninterrupted pilgrimages. The Kartarpur Corridor, hailed as a symbol of religious harmony, allows Sikhs from India to visit the **gurdwara, where Guru Nanak Dev**, the founder of Sikhism, spent the final years of his life.

Fee Waiver Request

- **Pakistan has been levying a fee of \$20 per pilgrim**, per visit for them to visit the holy shrine. Devotees from India have been urging the Government of India to try and get this fee waived by Islamabad. However, there has been no breakthrough in this regard.



- "In view of the **continued requests of the pilgrims regarding** the removal of **USD 20 service charge levied** by Pakistan per pilgrim per visit, India has once again urged Pakistan to not levy any fee or charges on the pilgrims," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in its statement.