

## **Kartarpur Corridor: A Step Towards Indo-Pak Peace**

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### **Abstract**

*Kartarpur Gurdwara Sahibis is a sacred destination for millions of Sikh believers across the world. Gurdwara went under the jurisdiction of Pakistan after the partition of Punjab in 1947. Sikh community wanted to visit their holy place, but the tensions between the two countries were a barricade. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government in 2018 had announced the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor for the Peace promotion between the two conflicted Nuclear powers. The research paper intended to focus on significance of the new corridor as a case study for peace progression between the two countries. We hypothesized that the Kartarpur Corridor would be a glimmer of hope for Indo-Pak peace. An exploratory qualitative method*

*used to find out to what extent the opening up of the Kartarpur border between India and Pakistan will promote peace? How Kartarpur Corridor will support in minimizing the Indo-Pak emergent tensions? It finds out that establishing the new corridor for the religious practices of Sikh community will support peace. These findings would be supportive document for peace policy makers, International political scholars and academia . It is suggested that such practices need to made that would enhance the peace and solidity in South Asia. India should also take steps for the Muslims to visit their holy shrines and Toms situated in India. These political decisions across the world should employ for harmony and stability among the nations. This article will contribute the existing literature in two ways first; it investigates the soft peace plans between India and Pakistan and second, the new corridor opening policy would bring two nuclear adversaries closer to peace. The existing research study would be a contribution on the existing literature and would enhance the soft policies of Pakistan for peace and regional stability.*

**Keywords:** Kartarpur Corridor, Gurdwara, Sikh Community, Peace, Economic Salvation

### **Introduction**

*“I sincerely hope that they (relations between India and Pakistan) will be friendly and cordial. We have a great deal to do...and think that we can be of use to each other (and to) the world”*

----- (Muhammad Ali Jinnah)

Before 1947, united India was a British colony but following the detachment, it was alienated in to two sovereign States namely Pakistan and India.<sup>1</sup> The division set off one of the most misfortunes of the newera; perhaps a biggest migration of masses other than famine and war that the modern world has experienced. Unfortunately, not an exact number of refugees exist but it was predicted that more than 12 million people migrated as they sought dreadfully to shift from one part to another.<sup>2</sup> The simmering apprehensions between the two countries restricted the travelers of business community and

religious tourists. After more than 73 years of tensions, the new government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf announced a peace plan, for healthy neighboring relations with India and construction of Kartarpur corridor for Sikh community for holy visit of their Gurdwara sahib on 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak.<sup>3</sup> The new step by the premier Imran Khan was a glimmer of hope for tranquility between the two nuclear adversaries. This act was enhanced a soft image of Pakistan in the world and highly appreciated by the Sikh ethnic group.

The Kartarpur border opening was first proposed in February 1999 when India former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee came to Lahore by road for peace progression with Pakistan. In the year 2000, Pakistan in return allowed Sikh pilgrims for holy visit to their Gurdwara and Shrines and offered free-visa facility or no Visa policy by constructing a bridge from Indian Territory near border to Pakistan near Gurdwara Sahib.<sup>4</sup> In 2018, Navjot Singh Sidhu (Politician and former cricketer) attended the oath taking ceremonial of recently elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, where General Qamar Javed Bajwa informed him that Pakistan will soon open the border for Sikh pilgrims near Kartarpur. On Indian side in November, the that time of Vice president Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the Dera Baba Nanak at an event of Mann Village of Gurdaspur in Punjab.<sup>5</sup> Primer Imran Khan also inaugurated the corridor and set a target of one year to complete work on the border. Construction Work on corridor continued regardless of strains over Pulwama terrorists' attacks and following the Balakot smacks. On September 4, 2019, a round of meetings conducted between delegates of two countries for finalizing the agreement draft for the opening of the border. India showed reservations over \$20 visa fee. Kartarpur accord mutually signed on October 24 by S.C.L.<sup>6</sup> The joint secretary, internal security of India, and M. Faisal, director General, South Asia, from Pakistan foreign office met for the new discussions on the issue. The ceremony held at the 'zero line' on the boundary line. Mr. Narendra Modi the Primer of India had flags off the earliest batch of 500 Sikh community members at Dera Baba Nanak. On November 9, 2019, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, inaugurated the Kartarpur border at a huge ceremony in Gurdwara Darbar

Sahib Compound, and around 12,000 Sikh pilgrims attended the ceremonial.<sup>7</sup> Gurdwara Kartarpur is the holiest shrine in Sikh religion that built on locate where the founder of Sikh religion Guru Nanak passed away in the 16th Century.<sup>8</sup>

The observers of both countries considered it a confidence building measure for peace progression in the region and it would bring both countries close to each other with soft image and cooperative manner. India Pakistan bordered remained under conflicts and tensions since inception, both fought three wars in 1948, 1965 and 1971.<sup>9</sup> The two countries are nuclear power and the worries need to be diminishing through soft diplomatic strategies to shun new treacherous wars in future. The Kartarpur corridor is highly appreciated at all forums for peace promotion.

The study intended an examining qualitative method used to expose to find out:

RQ1: To what extent the opening up of the Kartarpur border between India and Pakistan will promote peace?

RQ2: How Kartarpur Corridor will support in minimizing the Indo-Pak emergent tensions?

### **Review of Literature**

Shukla has described that the request to open the corridor launched during Prime Minister of Indi visit to Lahore in 1999 .in November 2000, General Pervez Musharraf also gave a “green signal” to build corridor to ease the Sikhs. The both countries connection is generally received greet and shared good gesture but, this time, the Pakistani gesture. The moderate intelligentsia and various groups in Punjab appreciated the Kartarpur project. She has pointed out in concluding remarks that New Delhi was to someway less passionate.<sup>10</sup>

Kartarpur is about four Kilometer away from Indian border. Sikh community use telescope to see their Gudwara every year. The new corridor will facilitate the Sikh community for a without visa visit to Kartarpur. The Pakistani officials had allowed them to see in the angle of political marketing. The authors focused on

the “international political marketing” aspect of the Kartarpur Corridor.<sup>11</sup>

Gurharpal Singh elaborated that in the end of 2018, Indo-Pak officials agreed on Kartarpur corridor construction for the linking of two Sikh shrines. The inventiveness is an imperative emblematic era that would allow the community to visit their holy places in Pakistan. The plan of the states is to reflect peace and claim that it would be a “bridge of peace”.<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Attiq ur Rehman analysis the new corridor in his article and said that global “vision of peace” and its importance to the nuclear Indo-Pak was less global concern. The corridor is imperative plan which is compulsory for peace in the region but is as well an effort of making diplomatic collaboration and enrichment of “people to people” meet up .The new corridor is a gleam of hope for tranquility.<sup>13</sup>

### **Research Methodology**

The study is based on the secondary sources for data collection because of the nature of the work. Analysis is based on International and National media coverage and responses. The published material in abundant news articles and research journals were used for literature reviewed on the existing research work. The results concluded on the basis of secondary sources.

### **Results and Discussion**

The “Shiromani Akali Dal” in 1948 has demanded the attainment of Kartarpur Sahib, the birth place of their Sikh Guru. The corridor is a momentous endeavor to conduit the burst of Partition 1947 in Sikh memory. The study reveals that no region can develop until and unless it establishes and effort for peace. India and Pakistan fought many wars and are know by it across the world. It is now the time to promote and practice peace .The new Corridor will bring the two adversaries closer to peace and prosperity in future .Soft policies of Pakistan will give immense benefits at local and international level to India particularly Pakistan.

### **Kartarpur: A Historic Significance**

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 had a religious exposure 30 years later, and got one of divine journeying to various parts. The Amritsar city official Website "*Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee*" mentioned that "*Guru Nanak was married to Mata Sulakhni ji, who gave birth to two sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. In November 1504, Guru Nanak's elder sister Nanaki ji took him to Sultanpurlodhi where her husband Jai Ram ji got him the Job of storekeeper at Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi's darbar (court).*"

It further added; "*In the year 1520, Babar attacked India. His troops slaughtered thousands of innocent civilians of all walks of life. Women and children were held captives and all their property was looted. Guru Nanak Sahib challenged this act of barbarity in strong words. He was arrested and released, shortly after making Babar realize his blunder. All the prisoners were also released.*"

It also stated that "*Guru Nanak Sahib settled down at Kartarpur city (now in Pakistan) which was founded by him in 1522 and spent the rest of his life there.*" Guru Nanak was a poet and put in writing 974 hymns. These hymns were collected, compiled and mail to remote Sikh populace for daily reciting in prayers. It later formed "Guru Granth Sahib," Sikh holy book Gurmukhi script. It was used by "*second Sikh Guru, Guru Angad Dev*", in late 16th century.<sup>14</sup>

Kartarpur is the part of historic city of Narowal in the central part of the Punjab in Pakistan. The Guru of Sikhism established Kartarpur in 1504 AD. He spent his last years of life from 1521 to 1539 in this locality. Guru Sahib travelled with the message of peace, serenity and affection through many world countries and lastly inhibited in Gurdwara Kartarpur in the year 1521.<sup>15</sup> The Duni Chand, the Governor of the district provided 100 acres land near the Ravi River to Nanak Sahib.<sup>16</sup> Kartarpur is not only a religious place for the Sikhs, but has a political and social focus as Guru GI used this podium in Kartarpur to condemn existing politics, culture, and religion. In Kartarpur, Guru Nanak practiced Sikhism and its three principles.

- i. **KiratKaro** --- honest living and completion of all duties even in hard times.
- ii. **VandChhako**---contribute and share your capital, belongings and knowledge with others.
- iii. **NaamJapo** ---cogitationor mediation for emancipation from all negative thoughts.

Navtej Sarna, writer and ex- Indian diplomat in the United States has stated that Guru Nanak discard his travelling attire and take on a simple dress of an ordinary man and settled in Kartarpur. It got the status of a holy site where he spread love, loyalty and mesmerized natives by his preaching and acts. Guru Sahib collected several hymns of the Guru Granth Sahib in Kartarpur. The Guru Sahib started food for common man, travelers and needy was famous as guru's Langar. Guru Nanak passed away on 1539 and two shrines were built by his devotees (Hindu and Muslim), in Kartarpur. Later natural disasters ruined the Shrines and later rebuilt in 1572 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh with a gold plated Tom. The existing building was fabricated in 1925 by the Maharaja of Patiala Bhupinder.<sup>17</sup>

Gurharpal Singh in "*The Control of Sacred Spaces*" has described that the all India's detachment in 1947 also dissection the Punjab that bear a loss of collective religious and spiritual legacy. It was not a single territorial division but a spiritual dissection as well. The new countries had intricate ruling systems and pilgrims from the two countries remained deprived to visit holy Shrines.<sup>18</sup>

The Shiromani Akali Dal stipulated the getting hold of Nankana Sahib Gurdwara and Kartarpur Gurdwara Sahib. Indira Gandhi in 1969, the then primer of India, pledged to send a proposal of Kartarpur terrain substitute with Pakistan. In 1999, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the then

Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif also talked about the concern of the Sikh community during Prime Minister of India Atal Behari Vajpayee visit to Pakistan.<sup>19</sup> Later the Indian premier Manmohan Singh and President Pranab Mukherjee also endorsed the proposal of opening up the corridor but the plan met failure due to growing existing political apprehension and cross-border violence.

### **Indo-Pak Border Conflicts: Historical Overview**

India and Pakistan shared a series of conflicts on diplomatic grounds and battlefields. Territorial clash over the Kashmir state has glimmer the three Indo-Pakistan wars in 1948 and 1965, 1970 and Kargil war in 1999. They maintained a frail cease-fire since 2003 but often exchange fire across the Line of Control. In these exchanges of fire dozens killed and thousands of people dislocated near the Line of Control.<sup>20</sup>

In 2014, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif on his oath taking ceremony, then it was hoped that the new Premier would trail peace talks with Pakistan. The bilateral relations turned vinegary. India stopped negotiations with the foreign minister of Pakistan in the mid of 2014.<sup>21</sup> India showed her reservations on the union of Pakistani high commissioner with Kashmiri leaders. A series of breach sustained till December 2015 and on the occasion of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, a meeting between national security advisors was held in Bangkok where the advisors discussed Kashmir.<sup>22</sup> Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Lahore to meet up with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; it was the first visit of Indian top leadership to Pakistan after a long decade.<sup>23</sup>

In September 2016, the negotiations between the two neighbors stopped when the Indian Army was attacked by the terrorists in the Uri sector, close to the disputed Line of Control (LoC).<sup>24</sup> Few Indian soldiers were killed in these attacks. Indian political and military leadership blamed on Jaish-e-Muhammad group with severe allegations and tied it with Pakistan's Inter-



Services Intelligence (ISI). In September 2016, the Indian army chief threatened Pakistan that they would carry out “surgical strikes” Jaish-e-Muhammad camps in Pakistani territory, on the other side Pakistani, warned India that if any operation tried to conduct, Pakistan would not bear such acts and threats.

In October 2017, militants again targeted Indian paramilitary base camp near Srinagar in occupied Kashmir and in next year, an Indian army base camp in Jammu expanse was attacked where few civilians and Indian soldiers were killed. India started cross-border firing and shelling in rage across the Line of Control. In May 2018, both countries contracted to cease-fire on Line of Control. In February 2019, terrorist group conducted a suicide bomb attack in occupied Kashmir and over 40 India’s paramilitary forces personnel killed. India in revenge made an air strike across the Line of Control, and Indian aircraft shot down by the quick response of Pakistan Airforce and captured a the pilot .It intensified the apprehensions between the two states.<sup>25</sup>

In August 2019, the Indian government imposed Article-370 in the Indian occupied Kashmir. It was against the United Nations policies passed for the Kashmiris.<sup>26</sup> The Indian Prime Minister justified that the imposed Article required to put Kashmir on the same status as exercised in India. Pakistan kept silent but highlighted the growing hostility in Kashmir since August.

### **Indo-Pak Peace Building Plans: A Critical Overview**

In the last 73 years of partition, India and Pakistan have shared a long disputed bilateral relation history and remained unable to widen a friendly neighborhood, which was problematic for the people across the two borders. There have been multiple local and international level attempts to instigate a peace practice. But it does not mean that the two nuclear powers remain adversaries’ .It is the time to triumph over historic enmity and follow the France and Germany who after the World War-II established new relations that went for their benefits . The

worries and border apprehensions are deep-rooted and the disappointment to settle discrepancy resulted in the division of Sub-continent in 1947.<sup>27</sup>

The division was a result of a constitutional practice (Independence Act) based on mutually agreed by the leadership of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. In spite of all agreements few militants and criminal minded groups sabotage the peaceful partition and converted it into bloodshed on both sides. The Radcliffe Commission late announcement also was a factor of this unrest that was not delegated with the legal marking of boundaries of the two new states.<sup>28</sup> The British government adopted complicated procedure and reservations of both Muslims and Hindus were not attended. The Muslim-majority state of Kashmir went under the control and command of India and still a root cause of conflict between the two nations. The two wars fought 1948 and 1965 fought on the Kashmir issue and Kargil, 1999 was also baking the same issue.<sup>29</sup> The people on both sides suffered and restricted. It has unsettled clashes that are also a major drain on the resources of the two nations.

<b>Table:01 INDO-PAK RELATIONS: A TIMELINE OF EVENTS</b>	
<b>Month /Year</b>	<b>Events</b>
<b>August ,1947</b>	India as Britain colony divided between India and Pakistan.
<b>October ,1947</b>	The two new born nations experienced war over Kashmir and divided Kashmir divided between India and Pakistan.
<b>January,1949</b>	India and Pakistan agreed to the UN Security Council decision for a referendum in Kashmiris.
<b>September 1960</b>	India and Pakistan sign Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

<b>August,1965</b>	A war started over Kashmir.
<b>December ,1971</b>	A war fought, India supported separatists in East Pakistan. Indian troops moved forward within the Northwest zone of East Pakistan .The war ended with the formation of Bangladesh.
<b>July,1972</b>	The India and Pakistan premiers signed an agreement on prisoners release from jails captured during war.
<b>May,1974</b>	India conducted a nuclear explosion in Pokharan in Rajasthan.
<b>December ,1989</b>	Armed confrontations started to Indian occupied Kashmir .India charged Pakistan of providing weapons and training to the fighters. Pakistan says it offers only "moral and diplomatic" support
<b>May,1998</b>	India set off more nuclear tests. Pakistan also exploded.
<b>February,1999</b>	Indian premier Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan and met Nawaz Sharif, and sign peace pact.
<b>December,2001</b>	Gunmen attack Parliament in India and India blamed Lashkar-e-Taiba Pakistan.
<b>February ,2007</b>	Train service Samjhouta express started between India and Pakistan, bombed in India.
<b>December,2015</b>	Narendra Modi, Indian Prime minister visited Pakistan
<b>September ,2016</b>	Terrorists targeted Indian army in Uri sector and India blamed Pakistan.
<b>May ,2017</b>	Indian Army attack Pakistan Army posts in Nowshera near LoC .
<b>February, 2021</b>	On February 25, 2021, both countries announced a joint statement and two countries agreed on cease-fire at LoC

	boundary in Kashmir.
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**Source:** *Authors contribution after review of the literature*

A key problem is Kashmir, because major rivers flowing to Pakistan from there. Pakistan is an agrarian economy and its agriculture sector based on water resources and can sustain only on the continuation of ample on irrigation water. In 1960, the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) was made with the cooperation of the World Bank. Later India has started many hydroelectric projects and Pakistan showed her serious concerns over these projects on the western rivers. Pakistan has clear stance that it will influence on the agriculture sector in the country and is against the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) of 1960. It is being projected that after the Kashmir issue both countries may have water disputes or wars in coming future. The peace in the region of South Asia cannot fulfill unless these two nuclear powers may settle their conflicts and disputes. Afghanistan existing situation also disturbed the Indo-Pakistan affairs. The new India and Afghanistan strategic cooperation and Indian involvement in the area has opened up a new Pandora box and highly affected the bilateral relations. It is projected that it will also get serious after the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan.

### **Kartarpur Corridor: A Glimmer for Peace**

The land of greater Punjab means the land of five has richness of agriculture landscape, festivals, literature, divided by the British under Redcliff award in 1947. This division hurt many people and religious groups and grieved them since many decades. In an annual Diwali crowd in November 1948, Jathedar Mohan Singh Nagoke of Akal Takht Sahib passed on the following note to his Sikh Baradriin Amritsar:

*“India, our country, has become free from slavery of the British, and the Sikh community has made tremendous sacrifice for this freedom. In this*

*free India, we are to keep the Sikh community ever in high spirits and lead the country to its acme heights of progress. As such, the Sikh congregations should pay special attention to the following matters during the next year”<sup>31</sup>*

Punjab had a deep rooted heritage and holy saints of all religion, including Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs such as Baba Fareed, Bulleh Shah, Sultan Bahu, and Baba Guru Nanak. After the new division by the British, the Sikh community showed their religious based grieves but the new born states did not allow them to go for visit of their holy Shrines and Darbars. The conflicts rose higher and the pilgrims remained unprivileged. The Sikh community pressurized the then governments for open access to their historical Shrines in Pakistan. A clandestine deal made between Pakistan’s Governor General Sikandar Mirza and India’s Foreign Minister in 1955, famous as “Pant–Mirza Agreement” to avert boundary confrontations and security of the Holy Shrines, but it ignored the difficulties of Sikhs.<sup>32</sup> More than 73 years of restricted visa policies and long routes with high security concerns were the major problems for pilgrims.

#### **A Case of Gurdwara Kartarpur:**

Baba Guru Nanak is a holy personality accepted by all religion but specifically for Sikh community. Sikh Baradri rejoices four fiestas in a year.<sup>33</sup>

- i. Baisakhi
- ii. Maghi Festival
- iii. Holla Mohalla
- iv. Guru Nanak Jayanti

Guru Nanak Jayanti is known as Guru Nanak's birthday. Jayanti festival held with admiration and ecstasy by the Sikh community each year. The respect is given to the Guru gi as he was the first ever Guru in Sikh religion. On Jayanti day Sikh

community, wear new-fangled dresses and go to worship.<sup>34</sup> The celebrations start with the Prabhat Pheri at the Shrine and a pageanttakes in the hymns singing. The pilgrims offer their prayers and pay reverence to their Granth Sahib. The holy manuscript of Sikhs Guru Granth recites incessantly in Gurudwaras. Smaller and larger groups participate in 'Gatka manifestation. Gurdwara in Kartarpurwas first inaugurated in 1521 near Ravi River in the Punjab province. Baba Guru Nanakspent approximately spent 18 years of his last period of life her in Kartarpur from 1521 to 1539. The Gurdwara and Kartarpurhas great got significance for Sikh community in severalstandpoint; religious as well as historical. The millions of Sikhs across the world visit India and Pakistan to pay accolade to their renowned head Baba Guru Nanak.<sup>35</sup>

#### **Kartarpur Corridor Project:**

Pakistan is highly committed to the internal and external rights of minorities. In the Objectives Resolution drafting process several committees were made by the Constituent Assembly to formulate a constitution that allow all citizen equal sharing on legal basis. The “Basic Principles Committee” consisted of 24 members chaired by the prime minister made a Committee for “*Fundamental Rights of the Citizens of Pakistan*” and ordered it to deal with the Minorities under Constitution. The new assembly in its initialsitting on 12 August 1947 discussed the minorities’ issues. The committee was alienated into two parts. First one was worked with the shaping of “Basic Human Rights” and the second one was allocated the responsibility to look into the “*rights and protection of the minorities in Pakistan*”. The Constituent Assembly in 1950 discussed the reports presented by this committee in the session,it was later approved in 1954 and minorities were given generous rights in Pakistan.<sup>36</sup>

The constitution 1962 also granted Right to life and liberty, personal freedom, protection against punishment, principle of custody, arrest, principle of defensive imprisonment and right to Constitutional safeguard to protect fundamental rights. The

existing constitution 1973 also empowers the minorities with rights of liberty, religious practices and etc. Pakistan has a soft policy to deal with the people on humanitarian basis. The new PTI government believes in peace and harmony.

<b>Nature of Rights</b>	<b>1956 Constitution</b>	<b>1962 Constitution</b>	<b>1973 Constitution</b>
<b>Rights to equality</b>	a) Equality before law. b) Equal protection of the law. c) All duly qualified citizens were eligible for appointment to service of state, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex, descent or place of birth.	a) Equality before law. b) Equality regarding accessibility to public places. c) Equality of opportunity.	a) Equality before law and entitlement to equal protection of law. b) Equality regarding accessibility to public places. c) Safeguard against discrimination in services.
<b>Rights to life and personal liberty</b>	a) Right to life and liberty. b) No punishment for the act which was not punishable when committed. c) The right to apply for a writ of habeas corpus.	a) Right to life and liberty. b) Right to personal freedom: i) Protection against retrospective punishment. ii) Principle of detention and arrest. iii) Principle of preventive detention.	a) Security of person. b) Safeguards as to arrest and detention. c) Right to fair trial. d) Protection against retrospective punishment. e) Protection against double punishment and self incrimination. f) Inviolability of dignity of man etc.
<b>Rights to freedom</b>	a) Freedom of speech, expression, association, occupation, and peaceful assembly. b) The right to move freely throughout Pakistan and to reside in any part of the country. c) Freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice, and propagate any religion, subject to public order and	a) Freedom of speech, assembly, association, movement, religion, trade, profession, etc.	a) Freedom of movement, assembly, association, trade, business or profession, and speech. b) Freedom to profess religion and to manage religious institutions. Safeguard against taxation for purposes of any particular religion. c) Safeguard as to educational

Sources: [http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/4\\_55\\_2\\_18.pdf](http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/4_55_2_18.pdf)

### **Kartarpur Corridor: A Pace Keeping Project**

The south Asian region is facing tensions among nations and the worries are rising high, it is a threat to peace in the region.<sup>37</sup> The world forums have tried and are trying for smooth relations among these two South Asian countries. The India and Pakistan disruptive relations are problematic and need to be resolve not by hard tactics. The peace plans and diplomatic soft decisions can only enhance the friendly relation. The new PTI government after 2018 elections announced the peaceful

healthy relations with the neighbor states particularly India. After the oath taking of Prime Minister Imran Khan and General Qamar Javed Bajwa announced the construction of the Kartarpur Corridor. It is expected that Kartarpur soft policy will promote peace, harmony and economic development. In June 2019, the UK businesses promised 500 million pounds for various religious tourism plans in Pakistan. The Pakistan Tourism Board (PTB), and special assistant to Imran Khan, Syed Zulfiqar Bukhari, Peter Singh Virdee, and many British citizen Sikhs community made the pecuniary pledge to ascertain a trust to help out in the refurbishing of Gurdwaras located in Pakistan.<sup>38</sup> Later a “Guru Nanak Global Sewa Trust” was made for global funding for the renovation of the holy Gurdwaras.<sup>39</sup> The two parts of Punjab have potential of trade, and business that will support States in different dimensions. The study will focus on the Peace.<sup>40</sup>

<b>Table:02 KARTARPUR CORRIDOR PLAN: AN OVERVIEW</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Chronological Overview of the Corridor</b>
<b>1999</b>	Proposed by premier Vajpayee in his visit to Lahore for peace process progression with Pakistan.
<b>2000</b>	Pakistan allowed Sikh visitors from India to attend their religious ceremonies visa-free.
<b>2004-2008</b>	Sikh delegations from the US and the UK met with PM Shaukat Aziz and Yousaf Raza Gillani and launch a request for an easy access to Gurdawras
<b>2018</b>	<b>Aug 15</b> , Navjot Sidhu attended PM Imran Khan's oath taking ceremony and met General Bajwa,there he gave indication to Sidhu Sahib of opening Kartarpur corridor ,
	<b>Aug 21</b> , Sidhuannounced that Pakistan government would open the Kartarpur border on 550th birth anniversary of GruGi.



	<b>Nov 22</b> , Indian Cabinet permitted the Kartarpur gateway from Dera Baba Nanak to Kartarpur
<b>2019</b>	<b>Oct 20</b> , PM Imran Khan announced inaugurate of the corridor on November, 9
	<b>Oct 21</b> , India deep expressions' over \$20 fee charged by Pakistan
	<b>Oct 24</b> , Indo-Pak officials sign and documented to open the corridor
	<b>Nov 7</b> , Pak -Armey said that Indian pilgrims would compulsory require passport to visit Gurdwara. <b>Nov 8</b> , Pakistan announced no charge \$20 fee from Sikh pilgrims on November 9 to 12. <b>Nov 8</b> , Indian Premier Modi sea offthe first group of 550 pilgrims. Imran Khan inaugurated the Kartarpur Corridor near Narowal District.

**Source:** *Authors Contribution after Review of the Literature*

The corridor is also a great sign of political harmony. It is expected that the corridor will bring two adversaries of decades closer where both will sit together and resolve past conflicts through the dialogues. History predicted that nations learn from disrupted conflict based history. World has many good examples of soft policies after a decade battles and wars like Japan, how it restored its infrastructure and implemented rehabilitation agenda. They drafted new foreign policy and pledged never to fight. The Kartarpur corridor supposed to a program of Pakistan to extend a hand of friendship to India.

Pakistan has supported and warmly welcomes the Sikh pilgrims on their land and offered facilities and shows them a good face of Pakistan and Pakistanis. The agreement will allow 5,000 Indian pilgrims daily to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib. The building of the corridor is a “win win” game that provides India to welcome in the same manner as Pakistan has offered. On the opening day, Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed his views;

*"First of all, I congratulate the Sikh community on the 550th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak and welcome you all,"*

He further added that;

*"When this problem is solved and Kashmiris get their rights, the sub-continent will see prosperity and our entire region will rise in the world, and I pray that day is not far,"*

Indian former cricketer and politician Navjot Singh Sidhu in his address at Kartarpur ceremony, thanked Prime Minister for opening up the Kartarpur Corridor Navjot Singh Sidhu said in his speech;

*"You have won hearts, there are people who are swept away by the tides of time, even the mountains bow to the tides of time, man is left spinning as it whirls by, but then there are those like Imran Khan who stand the test of time and create history. No benefit or loss was weighed. No deals were considered. My faithful friend (PM Imran) did this for the love of God. What will you gain from killing in a war? If you want to win someone over, do so by generosity. The enemy can neither die from loss that way nor be able to hold his head high after being struck by such generosity" (Naveed, 2019)*

Minister for Religious Affairs Pir Noor ulHaq Qadri" in his address on the occasion said;

*"The biggest message of peace and love since Partition Imran Khan, the promise you had made to the millions of Sikhs has been fulfilled. And I congratulate Sardar NavjotSingh as it was you who brought this idea to the Prime Minister" <sup>41</sup>*

On Indian side Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the corridor and addressed Sikh community.

*"I also thank Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan for understanding India's wishes and turning Kartarpur into Reality,"*

Undeniably, the new corridor prominent the strategic concealed intentions for Indo-Pak, both countries officials and politicians are taking the credit of the new step for peace. Since the 1947 partition, the Sikhs across the world have made several meetings and efforts on political and civil society grounds in the US and UK. They wanted an easy open access to their religious sites in Pakistan. Despite their pleas, India and Pakistan but the tensions in bilateral relations over numerous issues did not facilitate the Sikh community on Visa grounds. On the other hand, Pakistan and India paid respect for their rights and value demand on humanitarian grounds. Several attempts made in the history for facilitating pilgrims but no permanent solution finalized. No doubt the Kartarpur Gurdwara has historic value and a heritage site for all religions but its inauguration took place after more than 70 years efforts of the community.<sup>42</sup> There are two perspectives on the Corridor opening, but both have common views that it will bring nations closer to peace and prosperity.

### **Conclusion**

In recent years the international media and foreign policymakers across the world much focused on the Kartarpur Corridor. The new corridor is considering a glimmer of hope for harmony and peace despite existing tensions between India and Pakistan. Narendra Modi and Imran Khan, both prime ministers inaugurated on their territory. The Corridor will facilitate the Sikh pilgrims, from India and across the World. It is considering a proposal of positive force in Indo-Pak relations by minimizing growing tensions. The Secretary General of the United Nations during his visit has said that the Kartarpur

Corridor is a realistic practice and Pakistan's craving for peace and harmony. The opening of the border is an excellent pace and it would promote lenience and harmonization. Kartarpur Corridor inaugurated at a time when Indo-Pak diplomatic relations are at risk. From a geopolitical perspective, it is a significant confidence-building decision between the two nuclear democratic powers. The US-State Department has also appraised the Kartarpur Agreement (2019).The Spokesperson Morgan Ortagus expressed views that the project is 'impressive' and an important step towards 'promoting greater religious freedom". China has also welcomed the project. Geng Shuang, a Chinese spokesperson on a media talk on 11 November, shared views as a 'good interactions' between both India and Pakistan.

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