



India- Pakistan Joint Protocol on Religious Pilgrimages 1974

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** announced that India is “positive” and “willing to engage” in talks with Pakistan on upgrading the **1974 Joint Protocol on Religious Pilgrimages**.

- It will allow air travel as well as increase the number of shrines pilgrims from both countries could visit.
- The government also [reopened the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara corridor](#) to Pakistan to allow Sikh pilgrims to cross over, more than 20 months after it was shut down due to the [Covid-19 pandemic](#).
- Earlier, India and Pakistan had [exchanged a list of their nuclear installations](#).

Key Points

▪ About:

- Under the protocol **both the countries agreed on the following principles** for facilitating visits to such shrines :
 - Pilgrimage **visits from one country to the other shall be allowed without discrimination** as to religion or sect. The **list of shrines to be visited shall be finalised** shortly through correspondence.
 - The agreed list may be **enlarged from time to time by mutual agreement**.
 - The protocol currently includes five Muslim shrines on the Indian side and 15 shrines on the Pakistani side, a majority of them gurdwaras.
 - Upto **20 parties may be allowed to visit** from one country to the other every year. This number may be revised from time to time.
 - Every **effort should continue to be made to ensure that places of religious worship mentioned in the agreed list are properly maintained** and their sanctity preserved.
 - Such visitors will be given **Visitor Category visas**.

▪ Kartarpur Corridor:

- The Kartarpur corridor **connects the Darbar Sahib Gurdwara in Narowal district of Pakistan with the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district in India's Punjab province**.
- The corridor was built to **commemorate 550th birth anniversary celebrations of [Guru Nanak Dev](#)**, founder of Sikhism on 12th November 2019.

[Source: TH](#)

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