

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2054
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
SAFE CORRIDOR FOR SIKH PILGRIMS
Singh Shri Sukhdev

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has received any demand from Sikh pilgrims for a safe corridor from Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur, Punjab to Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara, district Narowal at Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M.KRISHNA)

(a) & (b) Yes. Government has received, from time to time, representations from Sikh pilgrims, religious bodies and leaders requesting for a safe corridor from Dera Baba Nanak, Gurdaspur, Punjab to Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara, District Narowal in Pakistan.

(c) The issue of facilitating pilgrim traffic to shrines in Pakistan, including Kartarpur Sahib, has been repeatedly taken up by the Government, including since the first round of the composite dialogue process in 2004. Revision of the Visa Agreement of 1974 to enable liberalized travel of pilgrims from both countries has also been suggested to Government of Pakistan. In 2005, Government had proposed to Pakistan the inclusion of Kartarpur Sahib in the list of shrines under the bilateral 'Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines-1974'. Pakistan has yet to respond to these initiatives. However, as a result of our taking up this matter at a high level, visas are being issued to pilgrims by Pakistan since 2005 for travel to Kartarpur Sahib.