

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2951
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2014
LAND CORRIDOR TO RELIGIOUS PLACES IN PAKISTAN
Panda Shri Baijayant "Jay"

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes or has any proposal to construct a special land corridor linking Dera Baba Nanak in Punjab with Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of the said proposal;
- (c) whether any requests have been received from various quarters by the Government in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has taken up or proposes to take up the matter with the Government of Pakistan and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the time by which the said land corridor is likely to be constructed?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) to (e) Government from time to time has received requests including from the Government of Punjab with regard to the proposal for creation of a land corridor linking Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur to Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan. In this context, the idea of a visa free corridor extending from the International Boundary projecting approximately 3 km into Pakistan's territory was also examined.

Government's view is that a faster and more efficient manner to ensure easy access to the sacred Shrine of Kartarpur Sahib for all Indian pilgrims is by seeking inclusion of the Kartarpur Sahib Shrine and further liberalization of the 1974 Protocol on visits to Religious Shrines. Government has raised the matter of expanding the list of Shrines included in the 1974 Protocol on visits to Religious Shrines including during meetings at the level of Foreign Ministers. There has been no response from Pakistan so far.

Government will continue to take up the issue of facilitation of the visit of pilgrims from India to Shrines in Pakistan including the inclusion of Kartarpur Sahib in the expanded list of Shrines under the bilateral '1974 Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines' with Pakistan.