

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-77
ANSWERED ON- 20/07/2023

SIKH HERITAGE SITES

77. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government has made an assessment and compiled a list of major Sikh heritage sites located in Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to facilitate visit of punjabi citizens and sikh pilgrims to those sites;
- (c) whether Government has taken up the issue of protection and preservation of those sites with Pakistan; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a & b) The Government has identified 15 religious shrines in Pakistan for pilgrimage under the India-Pakistan Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines – 1974, which includes 11 Sikh Gurudwaras. The details of these shrines are attached at the Annexure. Under this Bilateral Protocol, more than 5000 Sikh pilgrims from India have been facilitated to visit these shrines in the last one year.

Further, in October 2019, Government of India signed an Agreement with the Government of Pakistan for the facilitation of pilgrims to visit Gurudwara Shri Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan in order to fulfil the long-standing demand of Indian citizens and Overseas Citizens of India, to have easy access to the holy Gurudwara. Since its inauguration on 9 November 2019, the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor has been used by around 2,00,000 pilgrims to visit Gurudwara Shri Darbar Sahib Kartarpur.

(c & d) The Government has come across reports regarding vandalism and desecration of places of religious worship belonging to the Sikh community in Pakistan. The Government has strongly condemned and lodged protests against these reprehensible acts, calling upon Pakistan to ensure the safety, security and welfare of the members of the minority communities in Pakistan, including their places of worship, and to take immediate measures to expeditiously bring the perpetrators of such acts to justice. In the background of the recent attacks on Sikh community members in Pakistan, Ministry of External Affairs summoned a senior diplomat of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi and lodged a strong protest against these incidents.

The religious shrines identified under 1974 Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines between India and Pakistan in Pakistan are:

1. Shadani Darbar in Hyat Pitafi, Ghotki, Sindh
2. Kataraj Dham in Chakwal, Punjab
3. Gurudwaras of Nankana Sahib, Punjab
4. Gurudwara Panja Sahib, Hassan Abdal, Attock, Punjab
5. Samadhi of Marahaja Ranjit Singh Ji, Lahore, Punjab
6. Gurudwara Dera Sahib, Lahore, Punjab
7. Gurudwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, Punjab
8. Gurudwara Deewan Khana, Lahore, Punjab
9. Gurudwara Shaheed Ganj, Singhanian, Lahore, Punjab
10. Gurudwara Bhai Tara Singh, Lahore, Punjab
11. Gurudwara of Sixth Guru, Mozang, Lahore, Punjab
12. Birth place of Guru Ram Das, Lahore, Punjab
13. Gurudwara Cheveen Padshahi, Mozang, Lahore, Punjab
14. Shrine of Hazrat Data Ganj Baksh, Lahore, Punjab
15. Sadhu Bela, Khanpur and Mirpur Mathelo, Sindh
