

**KARTARPUR CORRIDOR: SOCIO-POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS  
FOR PAKISTAN AND INDIA**

By

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF  
**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Department of International Relations**

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad**

November 2022

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## **DEDICATION**

Oh, Allah Almighty open our eyes,

To see what is beautiful,

Our Minds to know what is true,

Our Hearts to Love what is good

Humble efforts are dedicated to

**“HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H)”**

(The Greatest Social Reformer),

**Peace, Humanity,**

**Beloved Country Pakistan,**

The sublime love of my FATHER

**Abdul Majeed**

&

**My Sweet Mother, Sisters & Brother**

By whose prayers I have been able to reach this position,

And whose hands are always raised for My Blessed life.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**ALLAH** never spoils any effort. Every piece of work is rewarded according to the nature of devotion in it. I am, though, never be feeling myself able to offer my thanks to **Almighty ALLAH**, the propitious, the sole creator of the universe, the source of all knowledge and wisdom. Trembling lips and wet eyes praise for **Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him)**, who is a torch of guidance and knowledge for humanity forever, for his sacredness, due to whom I have been able to achieve this milestone of my academic career.

Thanks are extended to my teachers throughout my academic career whose efforts made me able to do this work. I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. Arshad Mahmood Department of IR National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad** who in spite of his busiest routine work, provided me guidance and valuable suggestions throughout research. He made himself available all the time and his positive attitude, patience and advices was helpful in this research work. I am thankful for all the support and care.

I am thankful to my Father **Abdul Majeed** and Brother for their moral support during my studies. I have no words to say thanks to my **mother** and **Sisters** for their prayers, love, and care. I am also indebted to my loving friends, colleagues, class fellows for their unforgettable cooperation throughout my career. They helped and supported me in every situation. They stayed beside me in every problem.

May **ALLAH** bless all these people with long, happy and peaceful lives (Ameen).

**Mujahid Ali**

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## **Abstract**

The qualitative study examines the process of transformation through the construction of Kartarpur corridor and its socio-political implications on Pakistan and India. Both states have religious, historical, cultural, ethnic traditional and social values. Despite of these facts and common socio-political aspects; the relations between two states are stringent since inception. Meanwhile opportunities are existed to overcome the intensity of these clashes. Furthermore, it also can be revamped through soft image building among communities of both states. In this respect, the Government of Pakistan has taken a great initiative of Kartarpur Corridor by keeping in view the mutual interest, interfaith harmony and stability. The socio-political implications of Kartarpur corridor analyzed through the theory of constructivism and it has been observed that such religious corridor would strengthen the states relations, enhance economic and trade relations, change the mindset of political think tanks and public to alternate options. Moreover, this initiative has given a message to world that Pakistan has executed the corridor; not only providing rights to its own state's minorities but also Sikh community across the border. Hence, this mega project is appreciated by religious communities as well as globally. The political and economic opportunities are more feasible to attain. It is, therefore, Kartarpur corridor will reduce surface tensions by radiating positive energy to heal up social and political communities.

**Key Words: India, Pakistan, Kartarpur Corridor, Constructivism, Interfaith Harmony, Socio-Political**



## Abbreviations

BJP	Bhartiya Janata Party
CARs	Central Asian Republics
CBM	Confidence-Building Measures
CM	Chief Minister
CPEC	China–Pakistan Economic Corridor
ETPB	Evacuee Trust Property Board
EU	European Union
GOI	Government of India
GOP	Government of Pakistan
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir
JUI	Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam
MFN	Most Favored Nation
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NTS	National Tourism Strategy
PM	Prime Minister
PMLN	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PMU	Project Management Unit
PTDC	Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SGD	Sustainable Development Goals
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
UK	United Kingdom
UNO	United Nations Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USA	United States of America

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

Since inception, the Pakistan and India relations have been subjected to multiple strains by frequent political dilemmas in historical backdrop and in current age, including the division of Subcontinent, Kashmir dispute and many military skirmishes which have escalated tensions between both states. The formation of these two states was accompanied by mass migration, having use of force as well as voluntary accession. Pakistan and India having legacy of border skirmishes, proxies and direct wars in their relations. **Many times, international border is completely sealed and movement of common public is also banned.** The inability to travel across the **border and limited relation has created misunderstandings** among communities, which ultimately affected political institutions, economic collaborations, social relations and religious freedom- cutting off from holy shrines.

Kartarpur is the second most **sacred** place for Sikhism located in Pakistan, the founder of Sikh religion was Guru Nanak who spent last 18 years of his life at this place from 1521 to 1539. The significance of this place has great emotional and religious values especially for Sikhism. Before the partition of subcontinent, all communities travelled and performed religious rituals as per their customs. **After independence of Pakistan & India, majority of Sikhs were settled down in India, whereas most of the holy places of Sikh community were located in Pakistan.** As a result, somehow Sikh community became victim of enmity of Pakistan-India rivalry and cut off from their some of important holy religious shrines including Kartarpura. The demand for visa free traveling to Kartarpur was a long-lasting demand of Indian Sikhs since 1947. **Pakistan and India have signed 1974 protocol to visit**

the shrines across the border but Kartarpur shrine was not included in that list. In 1999, Vajpayee visited Lahore and discussed the project with Nawaz Sharif but could not be proceeded despite the assurance. Thereafter, the Gurdwara Kartarpur sahib was renovated in 2000 and Sikhs were allowed to visit the gurdwara after valid visa processing in limited numbers. In 2008, an elevated platform was erected on Dera Baba Nanak at Indian side of border; permitting pilgrims to view the Shrine of Kartarpur. A number of Sikh community leaders participated at the event of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's oath taking ceremony in August 2018, Navjot Singh Sadhu MLA in Indian Punjab also participated in ceremony and was warmly welcomed. He met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa who assured him the opening of Kartarpur. The former Prime Minister announced a mega project of Kartarpur Corridor and foundational stone was laid down by Imran Khan on November 28, 2018.

The Kartarpur corridor inaugurated by former Prime Minister of Pakistan for Sikh community on November 9, 2019 at the event of 550th anniversary of Guru Nanak. Despite tense situation after Pulwama attack, Balakot airstrikes and abrogation of special status of Kashmir under Article 370&35-A of Indian Constitution, Pakistan executed the said promise by opening the Kartarpur corridor for the cause of minorities rights and religious harmony. During inauguration speech of Kartarpur, PM Imran Khan also waived off two important demands of visa fee policy and sharing the visitors list prior 10 days of visit. The Kartarpur corridor bridges Dera Baba Nanak located at Gurdaspur, India with Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Shakargarh, Narowal Pakistan. The Project of holy religious Kartarpur corridor has been completed which paved the way for Sikh community to offer religious rituals. The fenced corridor is directly connected with borders of both states which

has reduced the distance to 4.7 km from border line. [The incumbent government has taken this appreciable step in line with the vision of founder of Pakistan to give religious rights to minorities.](#) After the completion of highway and bridge, it has become very easy to perform pilgrimage without any visa process and fee charges, up to 5000 pilgrims can visit in a day through corridor.

Pakistan has a community of rich culture with various religions such as Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism and Christianity. The religious diplomacy and soft approach were adopted by Pakistan to build up good image in Sikh community worldwide. As a result, interfaith harmony among Muslim-Sikh community was also observed as two Sikh politicians, Tanmanjeet Singh a Labour MP and Gurratan Singh, New Democratic Party (NDP) legislator from Canada took firm stand against Islamophobia. India propagated campaign against Pakistan as a hard state to isolate her from the rest of world. A glorious initiative taken by Pakistan to facilitate Sikh religious community in line up with fulfilment of sustainable development goals agenda (SGD2030) that has been appreciated across the globe. Opening the corridor was welcomed by US, China and other major powers of the world. Antonio Guterres the UN Secretary General also visited the Kartarpur Corridor on 18 February, 2020. [He welcomed the opening of Corridor and said that facilitating visa-free across the border will paving the way for interfaith harmony.](#)

The birth of Pakistan based on two nation theory that was outcome of collective struggle of Muslim leaders of the subcontinent to get freedom from Britain colonial rule and Hindu. [The founding father of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah had cleared views regarding minorities rights and to maintain peaceful ties with neighboring states. Quaid-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his speech on 11th August 1947 reiterated; “you are free! You](#)

are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the state”<sup>1</sup>. Founding father focused on religious autonomy, rule of law and equality of all in the state in his memorable speech. The People of both states have common holy sites across the border, having common culture, history, traditions, language, sports and games, folk lore, same ethnic group and customs. The kartarpur corridor has opened multiple doors to bring harmony among people of both states, to maintain people to people relations, to keep movement across the border, and to establish public relations. This narrative of soft image has developed mutual confidence among the people, that will radiate positive energy all round. Many Indians nationals of Sikh community and Indian parliamentarians were welcomed on the inaugural ceremony of kartarpur corridor. Moreover, a former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also visited the shrine at day of its inaugural. Thus, the corridor will further enhance the cultural diplomacy and people to people relations.

Despite the long-stretched border and big markets on the both side of borders, states could not fruitfully enjoy the economic benefits due to tense relations. As a result, the slope of economic trajectory gets nose dive because of insecurity and political instability. The corridor gave a hint to officials of both sides, that the border can be more porous and multiple religious corridors can be established along the border. Whereas, shortest transit trade routes to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs) are already being demanded by India.

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<sup>1</sup> Shoaib Mukhtar, “SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION OF PAKISTAN UNDER THE SPEECH OF MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH ON 11TH AUGUST 1947,” *Social Transformations in Contemporary Society* 6, no. 2018 (August 4, 2018), 90.

In a positive scenario where a lot of opportunities are existing the strategist lenses shadow another view, the opening of Kartarpur corridor is being criticized by India as sponsoring Khalistan movement to sabotage (Indian) sovereignty. However, rational political move by Pakistan can't be ignored at any cost. The prime focus of Indian government was to inculcate prejudice and blame game against this religious project to defame Pakistan internationally, the Indian former foreign minister Sushma Suraj said that “The moment Pakistan stops terrorist activities in India, the dialogue can start but the dialogue is not connected with only the Kartarpur corridor”<sup>2</sup>. Such good initiatives could not survive in past, as Samjautha Express, a train service between Lahore and Delhi, and Sada-e-Sarhad, a bus service linking Delhi and Lahore, were past initiatives that were carried out with similar hopes but could not proceed successfully. The Kartarpur Corridor will not be only a source of cross border movement but also a source of interfaith harmony, mutual trust and sociopolitical stability.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Relations of Pakistan and India have been defined by the violent partition of subcontinent, the Kashmir conflict and the many military wars fought between the two nations. Despite the history of hostile relations of states, both of communities shared many communalities of beliefs, linguistic and holy shrines. Kartarpur is an important shrine for Sikh community and they had a long-standing demand for its opening. The opening of Kartarpur corridor gave a new line of thinking across the border. This study will shed light on that how the corridor will impact social and political relations between the two arch rivals. The hostile

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<sup>2</sup> Rajish Kumar, “Talks with Pakistan Will Start When Terror Activities Stop: Sushma Swaraj,” The Print, November 28, 2018, <https://theprint.in/india/governance/talks-with-pakistan-will-start-when-terror-activities-stop-sushma-swaraj/155870/>.

political setup and security think tanks have to think on new lines of engagements, and policy makers would also have to move with new opportunities to enhance cooperation. The social communities and civil societies across the border encouraging such positive steps and lobbying for more initiative. It's important to turn the harsh political and social relations between India and Pakistan.

### **Objectives of Study**

Objective of the study is to investigate the historical context of Kartarpur and Importance of Corridor and elucidate the Kartarpur corridor implications for social and cultural developments among communities. The motive is to describe the importance of social and community relations as well as cognitive variables, soft image building and analyze the political developments vis-a-vis state developments of states relations in context of Kartarpur Corridor. **The study will discuss the building of soft image of Pakistan and improvement of community relations across the border.**

### **Literature Review**

India and Pakistan are the two important South Asian states are witnesses of Indus valley civilization and have same historical, cultural background, Both of States share norms, beliefs, rituals, social values as well as professions. Since independence rivalry between Pakistan and India facing the same security culture for each other. Public have religious sites across the border but due to tense state relations they always faced difficult to visit. **The trade and economic opportunities are also existing across the border. Pakistan initiative of Kartarpur Corridor will must affect these tense relations and will further increase the public interaction. The peaceful measure of corridor not only change the public narrative but also built the soft image of Pakistan.**

Muhammad Saleem Mazhar and Naheed S. Goraya defined the importance of kartarpur corridor in context of Pakistan-India relations. The opening of Corridor has definitely a strong link to the past relations between Pakistan-India and the current political scenario it. If India criticizes it, it is understandable because the Sikh minority is very much important from many aspects, and their tilt towards Pakistan, though it is for religious or social reasons; it is not acceptable for them. Indian government is aware about the direct impact to bring Muslims and Sikhs close and it will positively impact on Indian Muslims as well. This will in the long run make hurdles for Indian extremist minds and Hindutva. Likewise, many groups in Pakistan have condemned the government's decision to open the Kartarpur corridor, claiming that it is like turning a blind eye to India's abrogation of Kashmir's special status on August 5, 2019. While others assert that the visa-free border crossing would be a compromise on national sovereignty. It is indeed surprising that Khan not only permitted the construction of the corridor, however also worked on it dynamically, bearing in mind the fact that his political rival and former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was one of the architects of the passage.”<sup>3</sup>

While the “European Foundation for South Asian Studies” in its article explain the political situation of both states at inauguration of kartarpur corridor. The decision to open the kartarpur corridor can indeed be considered an important moment in the history of Pakistan-India relations, it would be naïve to disregard the political tensions lingering behind the arrangement. The Prime Minister India Narendra Modi's preferred to remain on

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<sup>3</sup> Muhammad S Mazhar and Naheed S. Goraya, “The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor-Reimagining the Relationship with Sikh Heritage & the Religious Diplomacy of Inclusive Pakistan,” *Pakistan Vision* 21 (March 20, 2020), 563.



the Indian side of the border while other notable Indian officials, including Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, celebrated on the Pakistani side of the border was surely a deliberate decision indicating that any rapid breakthrough in the fractured relations between India and Pakistan is unlikely to be merely dependent on the construction of this corridor and should harbor demonstrable steps by Pakistan regarding terrorists and terrorist organizations operating on its soil against India.<sup>4</sup>

Akhtar Hussain Sandhu in his research paper defined the multidimensional importance of Kartarpur Corridor. The Kartarpur Corridor, being a revolutionary step, will cast a tremendous impact on the politics of India and social setup of Pakistan but situating on the Pakistan-India border, it will never be freed from watch, monitoring and supervision by the agencies of both the rival countries which can hatch any conspiracy anytime. Kartarpur Corridor is presented as the Pakistan's credit therefore India will try to sabotage the project India will never tolerate the success of Pakistan in the foreign and internal affairs. Therefore, I am doubtful about the maturity of this understanding. Another reservation and notable point are that both the governments will carve their respective administrative influence in the affairs relating to permit, process of the permit, documentation, searching the visitors, suspicion on the visitors which can be resented by the Sikhs. Therefore, Pakistani government should recruit Sikh personnel along with other Pakistani officials for this job. Pakistan ought to devise a mechanism to ensure respect and security of the Sikh visitors. To avoid any embarrassment and propaganda, the Pakistani policymakers should

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<sup>4</sup> European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS), *A flicker of light at the end of Kartarpur Corridor*, (December, 2019)

work out the contingency plan to counter any emergency and embarrassing situation. The facilitation of the Sikhs should be the main objective of any policy designed or to be designed by the Pakistani authorities.<sup>5</sup>

Tejpal Singh Baniwal from Department of Religious Studies, University of California in his article Kartarpur Corridor: Divergent Dimensions and Its Impact on Pakistan and India, explain the importance of corridor and tense relations between Pakistan and India. Punjab is proud of its intellectual and cultural heritage it offered to its inhabitants and the world. This creative land gave birth to several religious traditions and intellectual movements. Guru Nanak Dev is one of the iconic figures the fertile land of Punjab produced. The land has been a liberal and moderate land and the historical evidence corroborates the narrative that no persecution of the first Hindu who accepted Islam was witnessed at the hand of the Hindu majority.<sup>6</sup>

The Hindu BusinessLine in article “can Kartarpur corridor ease tensions between India and Pakistan?” define the political issue between both of states in context of Kartarpur corridor. With India-Pakistan ties, nothing can ever be said. But any diversion from the air of mistrust is to be welcomed Physically, it could be said that the gap between Narendra Modi and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan narrowed on Saturday. They were slightly over 4 km apart at either end of the Kartarpur Corridor. Their language too was distinctly emollient, especially from Modi who unreservedly thanked Imran saying: “He understood

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<sup>5</sup>Akhtar Sandhu, “Kartarpur Corridor: Divergent Dimensions and Its Impact on Pakistan and India,” [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331064178\\_KARTARPUR\\_CORRIDOR\\_DIVERGENT\\_DIMENSIONS\\_AND\\_ITS\\_IMPACT\\_ON\\_PAKISTAN\\_AND\\_INDIA/link/5c63f5d292851c48a9d0280b/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331064178_KARTARPUR_CORRIDOR_DIVERGENT_DIMENSIONS_AND_ITS_IMPACT_ON_PAKISTAN_AND_INDIA/link/5c63f5d292851c48a9d0280b/download), 2020.)

<sup>6</sup> Tejpal Singh Baniwal, “Religious and Political Dimensions of the Kartarpur Corridor: Exploring the Global Politics behind the Lost Heritage of the Darbar Sahib,” *Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute* 11, no. 11 (2020): p. 560

India's feelings on the Kartarpur Corridor issue, gave respect and, keeping in view those feelings, worked accordingly.<sup>7</sup> Modi even thanked the Pakistani workers who had built the corridor in double-quick time. Imran, on the other side of the corridor, did bring up Kashmir, but added effusively that, "Today we are not only opening the border, but also our hearts to the Sikh community.

Aminah Gilani & Aliya Talib discuss the importance of Kartarpur corridor in their Research paper Kartarpur corridor: A step towards regional cooperation in South Asia. It is not appropriate to expect from SAARC a major breakthrough in regional cooperation without minimizing the bilateral differences among member states. Developing desire for peace and strong will to resolve political differences seems a prerequisite to achieve socio economic growth in the region. In the backdrop of stressed bilateral relations of India and Pakistan, opening of Kartarpur corridor makes it a milestone and a great leap to the future of this region by increasing people to people contact. Regional organizations strive for the welfare and betterment for their member states. The success story of EU (European Union) paved way for the prospective regional organizations to promote interactions between and among member states in their regions and provide platform to solve conflicts in a peaceful manner to promote political and economic cooperation.<sup>8</sup>

The relationship between India and Pakistan has been on a downward trajectory for several years now. Despite longstanding disagreements over Kashmir, Islamabad and New Delhi now have growing differences on Taliban-led Afghanistan. When the Taliban began

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<sup>7</sup> Akash Shukly, "Can Kartarpur Corridor Ease Tensions between India and Pakistan," *The Hindu Businessline*, (November, 2019)

<sup>8</sup> Amina Gilani and Aliya Talib, "Kartarpur Corridor: A Step towards Regional Cooperation in South Asia," *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, (March 2021)

gaining control of territories in July-August 2021, India closed all its diplomatic missions in Afghanistan. In November 2021, New Delhi hosted the third Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan involving some of its neighbors such as Russia and Iran, but there was no representation from China, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Against this backdrop, it was surprising and a positive development that New Delhi and Islamabad have re-opened the Kartarpur corridor.<sup>9</sup>

Sikhs the world over commemorated the 550th anniversary of Guru Nanak's birthday on 12 November 2019, giving added significance to the inauguration of the Corridor. The Corridor connects Dera Baba Nanak (in India), with Kartarpur, a distance of less than five kilometers. Although it is still early days, the Corridor is an initiative that has the potential to be a positive force in the India-Pakistan relationship by contributing to a general reduction in tensions, while also helping to facilitate to greater economic linkages and increased people-to-people ties over the bord.<sup>10</sup>

The research gap existed in the study of Kartarpur corridor for its implications on rival social and political setup across the borders. The social relations in context of pre partition has not been analyzed. The available literature does not discuss the new way of engagement for political leadership and social relations. **The soft image and narrative building among nations had not been discussed. The overall impact of religious sentiments on the national level is not analyzed. This research will fill the gap with the perspective of social and political impacts of Kartarpur Corridor. The research will discuss the impact of religious**

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<sup>9</sup> Zahid Shahab Ahmed, "Reopening the Kartarpur Corridor: Tangible Benefits for Indo-Pak Ties," *Institute of South Asian Studies*, (November, 2021)

<sup>10</sup> Tridivesh Singh Maini, "The Kartarpur Corridor Initiative: Can It Be a Corridor of Peace and Prosperity in South Asia?" *Strategic Analysis Paper*, (December, 2019)

harmony and soft image on social and political communities. This research will give a future perspective keeping in the view of initiative of Kartarpur Corridor in the field of social cooperation, public to public relations, economic and trade opportunities as well as cooperative political relations by discussing the historical background. Research will also fill the gap regarding the importance of cognitive variables in relations of both states. As the project is unique in the world and corridor between the two hostile states for religious obligations has the implications for social and political issues.

### **Research Questions**

Q 1: What is the historically significance and importance of Kartarpur corridor?

Q 2: How Kartarpur corridor could contribute towards socio-cultural engagements among communities?

Q 3: How Kartarpur could be utilized for improvement of intra-state relations?

Q 4: what is the significance of cognitive variables attached to Kartarpur Corridor?

### **Theoretical Framework**

Over the period of time, Pakistan–India ties severely lacked stability while numerous transformations were witnessed. Since inceptions, over the span of history, the nature of the relationships like a swing pendulum from extremely hostile to inadequate cooperation. Due to geo-strategic dimensions and security dilemma either side could not avail opportunities to ameliorate relations.

The kartarpur corridor opening for Sikh pilgrims opened a window of hope and peace across the border communities for further engagements and people to people contact. These

transformations in Pakistan–India relations can be observed through the prism of “constructivism”; highlighting the importance of “perceived identities” in establishing bilateral relations, the role of leadership in image building orientation of a state and perceptions trumping material gains while formulating inter-state relations. The Constructivism sees the world, and what we can know about the world, as socially constructed. This view refers to the nature of reality and the nature of knowledge that are also called ontology and epistemology in research language. Alexander Wendt (1995) offers an excellent example that illustrates the social construction of reality when he explains that 500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than five North Korean nuclear weapons. Constructivists define the power of identity, ideas, beliefs, culture, norms, values, language, image building and interfaith harmony which are socially constructed. Theory of constructivism will better explain the socio-political implications of Kartarpur corridor. Constructivists, believe that ‘anarchy is what states make of it’ (Wendt 1992). Wendt believes that the nature of international relations is not anarchy itself but states make it. The states as decision maker can decide whether the international stage is conflicting or cooperative. In his famous essay “anarchy is what states made” he explained that the states play the significant role as the main actors about the nature of international relations. This means that anarchy can be interpreted in different ways depending on the meaning that actors assign to it. Theory of constructivism define ideas or beliefs among the state relations and states power to change these beliefs are intersubjective.

The theory of constructivism defines Agency and structure entities to explain the relations of States. India and Pakistan are the agency or actors have the powers to change the existing

structure (shared ideas and beliefs among the States) which have the history or legacy of seventy years. The initiative of open the corridor taken by Pakistan is the power of agency to change the existing ideas or beliefs among the States. The language, norms, values, social and cultural ties across the border are supporting factors which motivated Pakistan to open the Kartarpur Corridor. The opening of corridor impacts the social relations and change the narrative of Sikh community and other religious community about Pakistan. Now Pakistani Muslims are also demanding ease in visa policy to visit the religious shrines in India. Many families which were separated at the time of independence met at Kartarpur. Many personalities relating to showbiz have also visited the place, appreciated the project and demand for more closeness among both of states. Now other segment of society like business community, sports, showbiz and public on both sides are demanding for more easiness. While politically initiative warmly welcomed by Indian Punjab government in specific and world community and UNO in general which build a positive posture of Pakistan across the world. The step taken by Pakistan to accommodate the Sikh community is the tip of ice berg which will further broader the social communities' relations. In today's world, people-to-people and cultural exchanges are inseparable from regional and global politics.

Although the cultural differences between India and Pakistan have deep roots, there are many things in common that can help fill this gap, including sharing social structures, cultures and norms shared over thousands of years. In addition, approaches such as track two-way diplomacy and four-way diplomacy help bridge the gap between people. The biggest obstacle to progress in a relationship is a lack of trust. The current campaign to improve people-to-people contacts has shown hope.

Social institutions are assumed to have influence on the formation of social intellectual identities, and these identities lead to interactive models of international societies. we examine the influence of social institutions in India-Pakistan relations. Social organizations use ideas and rules to create self-identity through an interaction and learning process. This self-identification builds people's self-esteem in internal and group relations. The identities created by these communities can be seen in the international hostility. The social system forms an ideological model through the process of socialization, which influences international relations in the behavior of the state (Wendt, 1992).

Constructivist believes that the interests of the country are shaped by the social structure. The school has not completely refuted the specific or barbaric facts of India-Pakistan relations. On the contrary, it is believed that only through the study of international knowledge can the physical aspects of conflicting relationships be fully understood. India and Pakistan are traditional societies. Social and cultural institutions not only play an important role in private life, but also in shaping government foreign policy. As the policy of opening the Kartarpur corridor not only welcomed by the states officials but also the communities on both side of border which gave a ray of hope for peace and cooperation. The social foundations of South Asian societies have a profound effect on the formation of identities that shape individual and collective lifestyles. The interrelationships of ideas, rules, beliefs and history are important for the role of social institutions in the relations between India and Pakistan.

### **Research Methodology**

This is qualitative research based on secondary data resources. The descriptive analysis technique is used during the course of research work. The data was obtained from published



materials in the form of books, Research papers, journals, newspapers, archive, reports, and online resources.

### **Significance of Study**

The research explored the new knowledge about historical back ground and importance of Kartarpur Corridor. It highlights the Pakistan image at international level developed in opening the Kartarpur corridor. It explains implications for social relation of Pak-India communities and opportunities for economy and trade. Research discussed the role of shared ideas beliefs and values. It is helpful for government officials and policy makers to consider the new dimensions and opportunities to enhance public relations and normalize the state relations. Behind the opening of Kartarpur corridor, the political objectives, motives and interests of Pakistan are also discussed. While the research will provide a future outlook and way for further research on different aspect and opportunities in Pak-India relation.

### **Delimitation**

This study is aimed to discuss the implications of kartarpur corridor on social and political issues. The overall research focuses the post inauguration scenario of social and political communities of both states. Implications for Pakistan at international level also discussed. The issues linked with Kartarpur corridor are discussed specifically. This study has not discussed the Security issues, background and history of Pak India relations.

### **Organization of the Study**

- The First chapter discuss the historical background and significance of Kartarpur Corridor.

- Second chapter examines implications of Kartarpur Corridor (Social, and cultural Factors).
- Third chapter explains the Economic Dimension of Kartarpur Corridor.
- Fourth chapter examines Political importance and political implications of kartarpur corridor
- **Fifth** chapter discusses the cognitive variables attached with Kartarpur Corridor

## CHAPTER ONE

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

#### 1.1 Historical Background

Punjab has the legacy of its knowledge and culture, that portrays its colors to the people of world. This unique culture has given rise to many intellectual movements and religious traditions. In this chapter, author has answered to research question concerning historical importance of kartarpur corridor. Guru Nanak is one of the icons of the fertile lands of five rivers. Guru Nanak who was to revolutionize the mental attitude and physical action of the mute and down-trodden people, not only of the Punjab but also, in time to come, of the whole of India.<sup>11</sup> This territory has always been a land of freedom, delicacy and historical evidences. Undoubtedly, it is a peaceful territory because no heavy weapons were found during the excavation of the ruins of old civilization, despite of anti-British protests and various wars were being carried out, it is still a brave and courageous territory. Furthermore, this region also supports new religious and political movements. The Punjab was one of the most important regions in British India and was the homeland of a many socio-religious movements. The socio-religious movements were founded with a variety of aims like purifying a particular religion or spreading education among the masses or propagating new ideas or philosophies.<sup>12</sup> Sikh Guru Nanak (1469-1539) introduced a new religion of Sikhism. Guru Nanak spent the 18 years of his life in Kartarpur which Guru himself named and settled. He spent a longtime of travelling and many missions at the age of 55. Guru Nanak Dev was settled in Kartarpur and lived there until his death. Guru Nanak

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<sup>11</sup> Mohinder Singh, *History and Culture of Panjab* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1989),5.

<sup>12</sup> Adeel Malik, "Religion, Land and Politics: Shrines and Literacy in Punjab, PakistanAsd" *THE PAKISTAN STRATEGY SUPPORT PROGRAM* (PSSP), (2015)

during his stay at Kartarpur, spread a message to the community- Kirt Karo (Do Work), Naam Japo (Do Meditate) and Vand Chako (Share in charity).<sup>13</sup>

Kartarpur shrine is located near tehsil Shakargarh, district Narowal, Pakistan but before independence the area was part of district Gurdaspur India. Kartarpur shrine is very close to the Pakistan-India border and the border's length is 2,980 km, the Indian side is connected to Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Rajasthan while Pakistani side is connected AJ&K, Punjab and Sindh. Guru Nanak had cultivated the land of five rivers during last eighteen years (1521-1539). Kartarpur was founded by Guru Nanak, this is the first place where Gurdwara was built, where the mooring was founded and administered by Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak setup the first langar at Kartarpur (Pakistan) where people brought corn and fuel and worked for preparing and serving of common meals.<sup>14</sup>

Under the auspices of Guru Nanak, the first Sikh community or society was established in the same area. Many people claim that Guru Nanak never announced a new religion, but always answered the question, who are you, a Hindu or a Muslim? Thus, the original Sikh community appeared in the area of Kartarpur, explaining the importance of this town to Sikh community. The location of Kartarpur village is the west bank of river Ravi where Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent 18 years of life. The distance is approximately 1 km from the Pakistan- India border of Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak on the east bank of River Ravi. The Kartarpur village is located at the west bank of river Ravi, Gurdwara Sri Kartarpur Sahib

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<sup>13</sup> Taranjeet Kaur Chawla, "Visa-Free Travel to Sri Kartarpur Sahib: Historic Pilgrimage and Religious Tourism from Indian Punjab to Pakistan Punjab", *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 12, no. 3(2020):77

<sup>14</sup> H.S Sigha, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism: The Story of Guru Nanak* (New Dehli, India: Hemkunt Publisher, 2000).

falls in district Narowal of Pakistan, about 4.5 km from the international border near the historic town of Dera Baba Nanak, District Gurdaspur, Punjab<sup>15</sup>. The Vital role was played by Punjabi community to respects other religions, ideals and cultures. Guru Nanak is reportedly far from proclaiming his views, but history proves that he has publicly expressed his faith in Multan bazar, although the text of this sermon cannot be preserved. This may be the first time the Guru has publicly spoken about his religious teachings, because in the past he has caused injustice, insults and sometimes sarcastically. This successful method was able to force people to understand virtue and evil.

The History of Kartarpura is full of interesting facts. [The Kartarpura is located on the west bank of river Ravi River, the historical building of shrine was destroyed due to floods in 16<sup>th</sup> century.](#) Maharaja Ranjit Singh also worked in this village, but the actual service was provided by Maharaja Patiala (grandfather of Captain Maninder Singh), Bhupinder Singh. [The construction of Gurdwara was completed from 1920 to 1929 but the division of Indian subcontinent had changed the situation of whole region. The Radcliffe award gave this area to Pakistan, the Sikh community was forced to migrate to East Punjab, India. Due to hostile relations of Pakistan and India Kartarpur Gurdwara remained closed after 1947.](#) Despite the fact that a train with stations and platforms passed through rural territory, almost everything was destroyed after 1947 due to the reckless behavior of the governments.

After the division of subcontinent, the migration took place at huge level that massively hit the Punjab especially. [Despite the hurdles and difficulties, the holy place survived and prospered because of the Muslim's honor to Guru Nanak.](#) The flocks, especially the

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15 Ministry of Home Affairs Government of India, *PILGRIMAGE TO SRI KARTARPUR SAHIB: PILGRIMAGE TO KARTARPUR SAHIB* (mha.gov.in)

Randava tribe, maintained the sanctity of this place, regulated the building and its surroundings. The Sikhs began pray to God every day with the hope of having the prospect to visit Kartarpur sahib and other Sikh shrines in Pakistan. The Indian government set up a site on the Indian side near Dera baba Nanak Sahib to view Kartarpur Gurdwara. As a defensive tactic, the bridge over the Ravi River was destroyed in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. Many Sikhs managed to approach Gurdwara Dera baba Nanak during the Sikh struggles for Khalistan in 1984. The Pakistan adopted the policy to support the Sikh movement for independent Khalistan. When PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party) came into power the policy was changed and support to Sikh movement was withdrawn. Many people were against the PPP government because Aitzaz Ahsan (former Interior Minister) presented a list of Sikhs fighting for Khalistan movement. During the Pakistan-India peace process 1998-1999, a friendly meeting was held between Nawaz Sharif and Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee, but the ongoing tensions prevented any cooperation. There was an agreement to start a bus service linking New Delhi and Lahore. This was afterward the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's famous and publicized bus tour to Lahore and ensuing signing of famous the Lahore Declaration on February 21, 1999 an attempt to dramatically improve, if not completely restart bilateral relations.<sup>16</sup>

In 2004 /2005, General Pervez Musharraf and Indian Government agreed to open the Kartarpur, Lahore and Amritsar highways and the railways, later on could not be executed. The 2018 elections gave a great impetus to the Pakistani Tehreek Insaf (PTI) and Imran Khan, who took the oath as Prime Minister of Pakistan. At oath taking ceremony Imran

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<sup>16</sup> Arndt Michael, "Realist-Constructivism and the India– Pakistan Conflict: A New Theoretical Approach for an Old Rivalry," *Asian Politics and Policy*, (January 2018).

Khan invited Navjot Singh Sadhu, Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar but due to pressure from the BJP and the media, only Navjot Singh Sadhu attended the ceremony.

Navjot Singh Sadhu's extraordinary relations with Imran Khan introduce a new episode to political and social relations of Pakistan-India and people to people contact. Sadhu said "In my personal opinion sportsmen always break barriers. They unite people. I see a sportsman in great Imran Khan and I see someone who will always do good to mankind. I have great hopes that relations will improve."<sup>17</sup> The COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Navjot Singh Sadhu were met warmly at oath taking ceremony. At this occasion, COAS General Qamar Javed assured Sadhu to open the corridor for Kartarpur shrine. On return back to India, Navjot Sadhu answered with great enthusiasm and boldly asked by opponents with cultural, moral and religious arguments. "I consider it to be a very important confidence building measure. Mr. Navjot Singh on his return from Pakistan had justified his "Hugging" Pakistan Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa saying that it was General Bajwa who gave him this news of intent of opening the Kartarpur Corridor on the occasion of 550th Birth Anniversary and he reacted emotionally in the moment."<sup>18</sup> He claimed that the Indian prime minister had been ignored and was jealous at the invitation of the Pakistani prime minister. The Pakistani government ordered the FWO to complete the reconstruction work of Kartarpur Gurdwara and Corridor, which completed by November 2019 (550th anniversary of Guru Nanak).

On November 28, 2019, Imran Khan opened the Kartarpur Corridor project at a famous ceremony. The ceremony was attended by Navjot Singh Sadhu and other parliamentarians,

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<sup>17</sup> Annel Smith, "India-Pak Relation to Improve with Imran Khan as PM: Navjot Singh Sidhu," *The Economic Times*, August 2, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Commodore D.S Sodhi, "Importance of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor," *DAILYEXCELSIOR*, November 26, 2019.

who issued a religious statement regarding emotional discourse and heartfelt understandings. He also thanked the governments of Pakistan and India. Sadhu said “It is the first time since partition that the boundaries have been dismantled. No one can deny my friend Imran Khan's contribution”.<sup>19</sup> The passage was considered by joint efforts by Prime Minister Imran Khan, General Qamar Bajwa and Sadhu. Muslims and Sikhs believes to create an atmosphere of fraternity, the three leaders took step for visa-free movement for Sikh pilgrims on the Kartarpur Pass, paying tribute to Guru Nanak by his followers. Jut Singh Anant expressed his happiness over the Sikh religion and thanked Imran Khan for his glorious efforts. The late Kuldeep Singh Wadala was visiting the border (Dera Baba Nanak) since 2001 and had visited the border more than 400 times to inform Sikhs about this demand and needs. Border points can be used to visit this holy place.

The Randava family and the local government are responsible for managing the Kartarpur Sahib building and the surrounding areas. It shows the devotion of Muslims to Guru Nanak and interfaith Harmony. The shrine remains a symbol of respect and blessing, having thankful to local Muslims who appreciated its sanctity and importance. Despite the lack of facilities when the Sikhs could not enter, Muslims still held the religious pride, majesty, and light of this holy place. Prior to the partition in 1947, Shakargarh was part of Gurdaspur. Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib is about 3 miles far from the Indo-Pak border, while Dera Baba Nanak Sahib is 1 km from the India-Pakistan border. Both places belong to Guru Nanak and his family.

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<sup>19</sup> Ayaz Khokhar et al., “Opening of Kartarpur Corridor: A Gesture of Peace - Strafasia: Strategy, Analysis, News and Insight of Emerging Asia,” *Strafasia*, (November 13, 2019)



The medieval poet, mystic and philosopher Guru Nanak had many Sikh followers from different parts of the world. The birth and death places of Sikh Guru Nanak remained in Pakistan at the time of division. The Sikh community has emotional attachment with Pakistan due to their holy religious shrines. Its Punjab province is home to five most important pilgrimage sites for Sikhs including

1. Kartarpur sahib
2. Gurdwara Panja Sahib
3. Gurdwara Dera Sahib, Lahore
4. Nankana Sahib
5. Samadhi of Ranjit Singh, Lahore<sup>20</sup>

Kartarpur have a special significance in the history of Sikhism; it was the village where Guru Nanak took up his residence after long pilgrimages to different destinations in India and elsewhere, and continued to preach his faith that incorporated a variety of ideas from medieval Bhakti (sometimes called ‘mystical Hinduism’) and Sufism (a mystical belief in Islam). Guru founded and made his home in the Punjabi township of Kartarpur, also known as the “creator’s town,” in the last years of his life.<sup>21</sup> It was Kartarpur that he worked in the fields together with his two sons implementing the idea that worldly duties and believes inseparably associated with individual spiritual quest and core of human life. In Kartarpur, Guru Nanak established his first free kitchen or langar where any traveler or a person in

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<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Saleem Akhter and Iqra Jathol, “Peace Building through Religious Tourism in Pakistan: A Case Study of Kartarpur Corridor,” *Pakistan Social Sciences Review* 3, No.2 (December 2019): 207

<sup>21</sup> ClearIAS Team., “Guru Nanak Dev: First Guru of Sikhism,” ClearIAS, October 8, 2022, <https://www.clearias.com/guru-nanak-dev/>.

need was provided food and shelter irrespective of faith, caste, age, sex, or social status. Guru Nanak's disciples, Sikhs have been doing their best to follow these principles ever since. Most significantly, Kartarpur was the abode of Guru Nanak for the last 16 years of his life and also the site where he breathed his last on Earth.<sup>22</sup> In the 16th century, Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib was set up at Guru Nanak's death place; it was rebuilt in the 1920s by the Sikh ruler of Patiala. Today it is considered the largest gurdwara in the world covering a territory of about square kilometers. However, from August 1947 until November 2019, when a special pilgrimage passage to Kartarpur was established, it had remained virtually out of reach for Sikhs residing in India. That's why in India's town of Dera Nanak Sahib across the border, a special site had been set up allowing darshan (viewing) of the inaccessible Kartarpur Sahib.

## **1.2 The Historical and Religious Significance of Kartarpur Sahib**

The first religious leader of Sikh community (Guru Nanak, 1469-1539) traveled with the Bhai Mardana to many countries, before he finally reached Kartarpur in 1521. Donnie Chand was very fortunate to meet Guru Nanak and donate about 100 acres of land to Guru Nanak. Based on the teacher's consent, he settled in Kartarpur and built a small building. The master gave up his travel uniform and chose simple home and clothes in Kartarpur. He spread love and faith and attract People to hold the key to light. It must be assumed that Nanak was recognized as a Guru, an inspired teacher of Sikh religion, and in accordance with the custom of India, disciples who accepted him as their Guru gathered around him in

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<sup>22</sup> Akrita Riyar, "An Indian in Kartarpur: A special pilgrimage, soaked in the Pakistani experience" TimesNow News, January 2020.

[Kartarpur](#).<sup>23</sup> The foundation stone of Gurdwara Sahib was laid in Kartarpur in 1572 and Maharaja Ranjit Singh covered his dome with gold. [Maharaja's Bhupinder Singh Patiala grandfather of Captain Amarinder Singh, Chief Minister of the Punjab built the current building of Gurdwara in 1925](#). By abolishing caste, idolatry, and empty rituals, Sri Kartarpur became a sacred place of Sikhism. Kartarpur Corridor opened the way for Sikh community to one of the holiest shrines. Gurdwara kartarpur is a historical shrine, refers to a pilgrimage inspired by religion or spirituality and important to all Sikh community.

[The border between India and Pakistan is so-called traditional understanding of boundaries as fixed lines, physical or material entities](#). It is a line that can be interpreted as a 'fact on the ground' that is absolutely visible and strictly guarded for its entire length. [The historical and cultural community of Punjab featured a mix of religious and cultures values was split in 1947. Majority of Muslims shifted to West Punjab while Hindus and Sikhs were migrated to the eastern part](#). Thereafter, both India and Pakistan are using political borders as an important tool for 'othering'. [The role of border is defined as 'line of mutual hatred' a common definition of the India-Pakistan frontier](#). Along the entire border line there are only two passages: the Atari-Wagah crossing in Punjab located 32km from Amritsar, India and 24 km from Lahore, Pakistan, and the Munabao-Khokhrapar railway crossing between India's state of Rajasthan and Pakistan's province Sindh. One of the most famous manifestations of the border is a large-scale and colorful ceremony of lowering the flags (Beating Retreat) held almost every evening since the late 1950s at the Attari-Wagah crossing in Punjab: tall officers wearing red (India) and black (Pakistan) turbans with

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<sup>23</sup> Kenneth bletcher, "Guru," Encyclopedia Britannica (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Guru-Sikhism>.

decorations march, menacingly gestures, and roll their eyes, as to trying scare their counterparts across the border. [The flag-lowering ceremony is extremely popular on both sides, with crowds every day packing out bleachers set up on either side of the gates.](#)<sup>24</sup> When closing up at the border line, they show utmost uniformity of movements and gestures, a result of joint drills. The pompous 45-minute show ends at sunset by closing the massive iron gates and lowering of the flags. With perfect coordination, the two flags are carefully taken off, neatly folded and carried away on both sides. Indian and Pakistani border security officers shake hands and after that the iron gates remain closed until the next morning. [The flag ceremony on border starts with parade conducted by Indian and Pakistani soldiers. Then, the opening of the gates and the lowering of the national flags on both sides take place.](#)<sup>25</sup> The dramatic and spectacular show at the border draws thousands of visitors at each side, with foreign tourists among them. Performed jointly by the Indian Border Security Force and Pakistan Rangers, the emotional ritual is generally perceived as a mutual demonstration of aggressive intentions, but to an extent also as a symbol of goodwill and cooperation between the two countries. A similar but smaller-scale and less affected performance, takes place at the Ganda Singh Wala checkpoint in Punjab. The border crossing was closed several decades ago, but the lowering of flags ceremony has been held at the site every day since 1970. These performances are generally supposed to confirm a separating role of the sealed border. They aim at physical demonstration of a boundary between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, which reflects the specificity of relations between

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<sup>24</sup> Kamal Joshi, “Beating Retreat: India75: Thousands of People Gather at Attari Border,” accessed October 25, 2022.

<sup>25</sup> Mahima Joshi, “India at 75: History & Significance of the Beating Retreat Ceremony at Attari-Wagah Border Mahima,” Republic World, August 15, 2022, <https://www.republicworld.com/india-news/general-news/india-at-75-history-and-significance-of-the-beating-retreat-ceremony-at-attari-wagah-border-articleshow.html>.

India and Pakistan. At the same time, such performances and practices make the border an ideological entity verifying the argument that never being neutral lines, borders are often reflections of sentiments, fears, memories and beliefs that can be used for progressive as well as regressive purposes. To this end, borders are both symbols and institutions that ‘at once produce differences between social groups and are produced by them’. Notably, as institutions, they construct a continuity for social interaction by linking the past, present, and future together. This is an absolutely different approach to borders which holds that borders are results of dominant conversational processes that have led to the fencing of territory and people from each other. Naturally, such processes can vary, so the meaning of the borders can also change with the course of time.

India Pakistan relations developed from bad to worse during seven decades of independent history, visiting significant gurdwaras remained extremely difficult for Indian Sikhs. Obtaining the Pakistani visa usually took a long time; visa fees were also a problem for potential visitors and in many cases, Sikhs were also denied visas. However, Pakistani pilgrims willing to visit Muslim shrines at the Indian territory faced similar difficulties. Pakistan’s High Commissioner to India Sohail Mahmood stressed upon the Indian government to fully implement the bilateral 1974 Protocol between India and Pakistan on Visits to Religious Shrines.<sup>26</sup> Some 7,000 Indians were visiting Pakistan-based gurdwaras per year, but for an overwhelming majority of India’s 21-million Sikh community the access to these gurdwaras remained closed. The Kartarpur Sahib also remained inaccessible; despite its historic significance for Sikh community and near the border

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<sup>26</sup> Arshad khan, “1974 Protocol: Envoy Urges India to Allow Religious Tourism,” *The Express Tribune*, (April 16, 2018)

location. The gurdwara Kartarpur was not included in list 1974 protocol religious shrines defined by bilateral agreements. This explains the Indian Sikhs' concern about the idea of establishing a dedicated pilgrimage corridor that allow Indian followers of Guru Nanak to get quick and easy access to Kartarpur.

Now, the Kartarpur Corridor initiative shows, it is conceivable that the time has come to resolve the legitimate dissatisfaction of political and historical tensions between India and Pakistan. [The Kartarpur corridor opened by the special efforts of Pakistan; the corridor is not only a way to the Gurdwara Darbar sahib but also has the ability to proclaim new opportunities to address differences.](#) UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited Gurdwara, he said that Kartarpur Corridor is an example of Pakistan's call towards peace and interfaith harmony.

### **1.3 Kartarpur; Road to Religious Tourism and Connectivity**

Under an official agreement between India and Pakistan signed on October 24, 2019, over 5000 tourists are allowed to visit Kartarpur every day without visa. Indian government has opened the e-service center for pilgrims who want to use the Kartarpur Pass. It helps to revitalize the existing tourism industry and pilgrimage traditions. Under the registration process, the trip is visa-free, but it requires an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) certificate, which can be obtained by submitting an application via the website which provides detailed information and guidelines that all Indian pilgrims must follow. [The Electronic Travel Authorization \(ETA\) is a bar-coded authorization paper that contains the applicant's name, confirmation of registration, travel date, and other information for his or](#)

her trip to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur.<sup>27</sup> A study by World Bank's team about Kartarpur estimated that if proper facilities were provided and marketing efforts made, tourism could exceed 300,000 persons per years which could yield economic benefits of up to \$300 million per year. The opening of Kartarpur corridor is a step in that direction.<sup>28</sup> However, Kartarpur will bring economic benefits to Pakistan. Moreover, the governor of Pakistan's Punjab Ch. Sarwar had highlighted the importance of religious tourism and claimed it is more economically beneficial and could bring 55 million tourists every year. There are more than 20 gurdwaras in Pakistan which have significant spiritual significance for pilgrimage are recognized by members of the Sikh community. To promote religious tourism, the Pakistani government should implement a comprehensive strategy at the national level. The Federal & Punjab Governments of Pakistan are planning to build up a highway from Sialkot International Airport to Gurdwara Kartarpur Complex to provide international transport services for tourists and Sikhs.

#### **1.4 Phases of the Kartarpur Dialogue**

The Kartarpur dialogue developed and starts in the years that followed, being largely determined by the personal interests of Indian Sikhs. The viewpoint of India's Sikhs community remained central in the negotiations with Pakistan. The influential Sikh communities in the USA, Canada, and Great Britain, especially the descendants from the western parts of colonial India also play a vital role. The procedure for pilgrimage to visit the shrines was determined by a number of bilateral documents, first of all by the 1950

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<sup>27</sup> Visa Journal, "Kartarpur Pakistan Visa Process and Requirements," Visa Journal, May 25, 2022, <https://visajournal.com/2022/03/kartarpur-pakistan-visa-process-and-requirements/>.

<sup>28</sup>Ministry Of External Affairs Government of India, *PANT-MIRZA AGREEMENT*, (LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.546 TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.07.2017), QUESTION NO.546 PANT-MIRZA AGREEMENT (mea.gov.in)

Agreement was signed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Liaqat Ali Khan known as “Liaqat-Nehru Pact 1950” followed by other arrangements specially the 1974 Protocol to Visiting the Religious Shrines that limited annual number of pilgrimage teams from one country to the other to 20 parties. Citizens of Pakistan and India are facilitated to visit the religious shrines including in mutually agreed list signed in 1974, under the ‘Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines. The shrines in 1974 protocol includes of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (Delhi), Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti (Ajmer shreef), Hazrat Amir Khusro (Delhi), Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Sani (Sir hind Sharif) and Hazrat Khwaja Alauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir (Kalyar Sharif) in India and Shadani Darbar (Hayat Pitafi), Shri Katas raj Dham, Gurudwaras of Shri Nankana Sahib (Rawalpindi), Shri Panja Sahib (Rawalpindi) and Shri Dera Sahib (Lahore) in Pakistan”<sup>29</sup>. In compliance with these agreements, Sikh jathas (pilgrimage groups) headed to Pakistan several times a year to visit three historical gurdwaras, the Nankana Sahib and Panja Sahib in the Rawalpindi, and the Dera Sahib in Lahore. Such visits were usually arranged at Guru Nanak’s birthday, Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s Memorial Day and at the Baisakhi spring festival, which are extremely important in the Sikh tradition. To get into the Pakistani Punjab, pilgrims had to travel on bypass roads filled with checkpoints. However, government-level discussions of this issue officially began only in the late 1990s, the Kartarpur corridor topic was first discussed in February 1999, during Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee visit to Lahore, where he had talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Notwithstanding, the negotiations focused on nuclear armaments in South Asia, the final statement noted that the parties would continue the dialogue on the liberalization of the visa processing and border crossing rules.

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<sup>29</sup>Dr. Ashish Shukla, “The Politics of Kartarpur Corridor and India-Pakistan Relations,” *INDIAN COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS* 18, no.2 (April 2019)



Moreover, Nawaz Sharif agreed in principle to start the corridor construction. One argument in favor of building the corridor was that it should be used not only by Indian Sikhs, but also by some Pakistani Sikhs, to access the Dera Nanak Sahib gurdwara. From a distant and most proposed perspective, it could also be used by Pakistani Muslims to visit several small dargahs, shrines of Muslim saints that remained at the Indian side of the border after the 1947 partition. [The Kartarpur corridor perceived by the two sides as a channel of peace and cultural cooperation during the troubled times.](#) However, the emerging positive trends in the negotiations came to end with the beginning of border conflict (Kargil War) in May 1999, with the result that all discussion concerning humanitarian cooperation, the Kartarpur corridor included, were taken off the agenda.

India's authorities often expressed concern about security issues. [India summoned Pakistan's deputy high commissioner and conveyed concerns over the presence of a leading Khalistani separatist in a committee appointed by Pakistan on the Kartarpur Corridor project.](#)<sup>30</sup> Due to objection of India, [Pakistan dropped the name of Gopal Singh Chawla from the list of committees.](#) In particular, they noted that Pakistan could potentially operate the Kartarpur to undermine stability in India by using the gurdwara for tacit support of pro-Khalistan forces, and for recruiting radical Sikhs, especially young people. [The logistics and infrastructure issues were main concern of Pakistan due to cost of construction.](#) In 2009, According to the American nongovernmental organization, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, the infrastructure expenditure including a highway with pedestrian and bicycle lanes, and checkpoints, was estimated at \$2.2 million for India and \$14.8 million for

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<sup>30</sup> Economic Times, "India Conveys Concern to Pakistan over Presence of Khalistani Separatists on Kartarpur Panel," *The Economic Times*, March 2019.

Pakistan. Nevertheless, in 2000, formally consent was given by Pakistani authorities to build a bridge leading to the Kartarpur Sahib over the Ravi River and several tenders were announced, but construction work **was not started at that time**. A new stimulus in to this issue was received in 2004, after the victory of the United Progressive Alliance which was led by the Indian National Congress in general elections; Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, a Sikh, supported the idea of the Kartarpur Corridor. In 2004, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amrinder Singh that the Kartarpur issue will be discussed with Pakistan in the round of any next bilateral by Indian side but not any major development on this issue was surfaced. In 2000, Pakistan had also fully repaired and rebuilt the gurdwara, as the condition of the shrine remained in a state of poor condition from 1947 until then. Furthermore, a road was also constructed to provide easier access to the shrine. Indian Punjab Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution in 2010, urging India's central government to facilitate the setting up of the corridor. **In 2010, the then Punjab Assembly had passed a resolution in support of a 'religious corridor' from India to Pakistan to allow access to the shrine located just three kilometers away from the India-Pakistan border.**<sup>31</sup> While in 2012, the same request was addressed to India's Foreign Minister by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). The SGPC is an influential Sikh organization which is responsible for the management of gurdwaras in three states of India Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the union territory of Chandigarh. **The Hindu focused Bhartiya Janata Party led by Narendra Modi was victorious in general elections of 2014, but Sikhs persisted in lobbying for top-level**

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<sup>31</sup> Singh Melinda, "Pakistan Ready to Give Sikhs Visa-Free Access to Kartarpur Gurudwara," SBS Language, accessed October 25, 2022, <https://www.sbs.com.au/language/punjabi/en/article/pakistan-ready-to-give-sikhs-visa-free-access-to-kartarpur-gurudwara/vzgomt2uo>.

[Kartarpur dialogue](#). Sikh leaders brought up this issue in the Indian parliament in different occasion. In 2017, Indian parliamentary standing committee relating to external affairs ruled out construction of any corridor on border linking Indian Punjab with the historical Kartarpur shrine situated in Pakistan. Former Indian minister of State for External Affairs and committee chairman Shashi Tharoor said that current political situations are not at all conducive for constructing such a corridor. “We have been flooded with requests to construct such a corridor which will not only boost religious-tourism in both States but will also prove to be beneficial to pilgrims desirous of visiting the shrine. However, in the current political situation, where Pakistani militants are regularly beheading the Indian soldiers, we cannot even think of taking such an initiative. I know that this link will reduce the distance considerably but the condition should first be conducive,”<sup>32</sup>. [Negotiations were activated in 2018 when a former cricketer and famous Politician came into power in Pakistan, Imran Khan head of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf party \(PTI\)](#). India was represented by Navjot Singh Sadhu at oath taking ceremony, Minister for Tourism Punjab also a professional cricketer and Imran Khan’s friend since the 1980s. [At oath taking ceremony, the COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa hug to Sadhu and informed about the plan of opening Kartarpur corridor for Sikh community](#). Navjot Singh Sadhu says this happy development is the "result" of a hug -- the one he gave Pakistan's army chief in August, when Imran Khan was being sworn in as prime minister.<sup>33</sup> [The sportsmanship and cultural engagements were reflected in Cricket diplomacy and hug diplomacy](#).

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<sup>32</sup> Ravi Dhaliwal, “Corridor connecting India with Kartarpur Sahib shrine in Pak ruled out,” *The Tribune*, May 2, 2020,

<sup>33</sup> Ganesh Kumar, “My Hug Worked: Navjot Sidhu on Pakistan Opening Kartarpur Corridor,” *India Today* (November 23, 2018)

Soon after Imran Khan's came into power, the Government of Pakistan announced its decision to open the Kartarpur corridor on the eve of 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. Indian parliament also took a similar decision and in November 2018 both countries started the construction of the corridor infrastructure. While, relations between both states were so much tense that the issue of peaceful transborder cooperation was seemingly removed from the agenda in a number of cases in 2018-19. Especially, happened during the border conflicts in February 2019, after the Pulwama (Kashmir) attack when a suicide bomber killed 40 Indian security personnel, the Indian response further escalated the situation. Furthermore, India's government repealed the Articles 370&35-A of the Indian constitution deals special status of Jammu and Kashmir, Indian-Pakistani relations were again suffered a setback with the escalation of military presence in border areas, especially in Kashmir. The future of the Kartarpur corridor was remained at risk but the construction works continued without any hurdle and were to a large extent completed by October 2019. Simultaneously, negotiations regarding the details of visa-free visits of Indian Sikhs to Kartarpur Sahib continued. First of all, it was necessary requirement to come to an agreement regarding the definition of what constitutes an official document (passport or other ID) for purposes of checkpoints at both sides, and preliminary registration for visiting the gurdwara. Secondly, Pakistan was also announced its decision to introduce a USD 20\$ fee for every pilgrim as a service charge for expenditures relating to the corridor infrastructure's. India insisted on fee-free entry, noting that the proposed sum was prohibitive for many Sikh families; besides, the compulsory pilgrimage fee did not comply with the preached by the Sikh faith. on October 24, 2019, both sides signed a final agreement on the Kartarpur corridor. The document defined the five-year working schedule for the corridor, stating that it would be operational every day from dawn to dusk, and all

pilgrims from India would return to their country on the same day. The last sticking point was the \$20 service fee that Pakistan would charge from every pilgrim for a single trip. However, India reluctantly agreed to it.<sup>34</sup> Travelling was permitted for pilgrims to visit the Kartarpur with valid Indian passports, and for the people of Indian origin (PIO) carrying Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards along with their passports. Pilgrims seeking to visit also had to register two weeks in advance at a special website of India's Ministry of Home Affairs. The maximum number of allowed visitors was limited to 5,000 per day with additional provisions for more pilgrims coming on special days like Baisakhi. On India's objections concerning the 20\$ fee, Pakistan waved off the services charges. The Kartarpur corridor was inaugurated three days before the Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary celebrated in 2019 on November 12. Pakistani part of corridor was inaugurated by Prime Minister Imran Khan, while Narendra Modi did the same for the Indian part of the passage. The first pilgrimage group that departed to Kartarpur comprised prominent Sikh leaders and politicians including Indian former PM Manmohan Singh, Chief Minister Punjab, Amarinder Singh and Navjot Singh Sadhu, among others. For the first time in 70 years, Guru Nanak's followers could follow the shortest route to the historical gurdwara; thus, the way to Kartarpur was open.

### **1.5 Perspectives of the Kartarpur Corridor**

Pakistan-India relations constantly remain in tensions and seemed to negate all positive efforts including the Kartarpur dialogue. For this reason, prospects remained blurry until the inauguration in November 2019. When the passage became operational, several experts remained skeptical about its future. This skepticism has been exacerbated by the COVID

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<sup>34</sup> Naveed Siddique, "Pakistan, India Sign Agreement on Kartarpur Corridor," *DAWN*, October 24, 2019.

pandemic restrictions and sealing of the borders since mid-March 2020. So, the again opening of Corridor in November 2021 gave a mature and permanent message of goodwill all around. Nevertheless, this project has the more chances of development, Negotiations in present state have prospects of the mutual engagements, as well as trans-border cooperation in future. The construction of Kartarpur is ideologically advantageous for both Pakistan and India to demonstrate respect to their religious minorities. The government of Pakistan is steadfast to pursuing policies that are intended to creating greater harmony and cohesion among communities of different faiths. Pakistan has always happily welcomed Sikh brothers and sisters with open arms and makes excellent arrangements to ensure the provision of maximum facilities to seek pilgrims to visit the Gurdwara Sahib regularly to offer religious rituals<sup>35</sup>. Ideologically, the place connected with the life of the founder of Sikhism is neutral: Guru Nanak is neither Hindu nor Muslim. In a sense, the Sikh religion historically absorbed elements of both Hinduism and Islam. To this end, the bridge over the Ravi River that pilgrims have to cross on their way to Kartarpur and back acquires a metaphorical meaning. So, it is almost impossible to suspect those in favor of developing trans-border contacts as taking either a pro-Indian or pro-Pakistani stand. Furthermore, the Kartarpur corridor is commercially feasible for both sides. A substantial number of contractors from the Pakistani side took part in constructing a 4.5-km highway including the 900-m bridge across the Ravi River. Pakistan Being interested in developing its tourism industry, gets an opportunity to host more foreigners. India (especially the state of Punjab) also stands to benefit from the project. By November 9, 2019, a 3.5 km modern highway in Punjab became operational to bring pilgrims to the huge passenger terminal building

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<sup>35</sup> Shazmina Saheer and Munira Hassan Ali Tharwani, "CRITICAL ANALYSIS RELATION BETWEEN INDO-PAK: KARTARPUR CORRIDOR," *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews* 7, no;5 (February 2020)

with a waiting hall, and prayer and medical rooms at the border. The passenger building is supposed to demonstrate India's glory and prosperity. By setting up international checkpoints and hoisting national flags at border, India and Pakistan received another occasion for 'patriotic' competition: India installed a 300-feet-high pole carrying a huge tricolor, noting that it was one of the biggest national flags in the country. Contrary pole's height also had problem for Pakistani side: As the Kartarpur corridor was linked to religious pilgrimage, the Pakistani flag was not supposed to be dominate over the Sikh Nishan sahib, a flag that is hoisted at every gurdwara, but making it lower than the Indian flag meant giving India 'the first win in the "Attari-Wagah-like macho contest". To manage and maintain the Gurdwara Sahib Federal Cabinet sub-committee "Economic Coordination Committee" had recently approved a self-financing body of Project Management Unit (PMU) Kartarpur Corridor under the administrative control of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB). Kartarpur project Phase 2, covering an area over 50 acres, is supposed to be completed by 2022; it will include building hotels and hospitals, VIP lounges, watchtowers, and vast lawns. In recent years, the Indian town of Dera Nanak Sahib has been evolving into an important transportation and commerce point. Considering the plans for 5,000 visitors travelling to the Kartarpur Sahib every day, the financial benefits to the town and the entire Gurdaspur district are unquestionable.

The author has discussed the historical facts and background of Kartarpur corridor in this chapter for better understanding of the topic and it related issues. Social, cultural, economic and political importance of corridor and role of cognitive variables will be discussed in next [chapter](#).

## CHAPTER TWO

### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

#### 2.1 Socio-Cultural Setup of Pre-Partition Punjab

The Punjab has a special importance in the history of the Indian subcontinent. Before the "High Season", according to census of India 1921, the population was made up of many religious and ethnic groups, including Muslims (50.6), Hindus (35.7%) and Sikhs (12.1), the remaining 2 percent were Christian, Jainist, Buddhist, Persian, Jew and others. [The history of Islamic rule in the region has increased Islamic values and culture of Dawah and Hijra.](#) This means that there were two groups, Muslim conquerors, such as the descendants Mughal, Sheikh, Pathan and local Muslims of subcontinent, whose fathers converted to Islam, mainly in the hands of Sufis and Sunnis. [Despite the religious difference the people of subcontinent especially Punjab have mutual respect and common culture outlook.](#) This chapter will address the question of Kartarpur possible contribution towards social cultural associations among the communities.

Muslims represent only 28% of the total population in the Indian subcontinent, but Muslims in the Punjab are mostly compared to other religious groups. There are a lot of Muslim cities and most of them live in rural settlements, but this includes more than 50 urban populations in Punjab. The leading role to spreading Islam in the region played by the vast majority of the Sunni Muslim population (which is still a large religious group in the Punjab) recognizes of Sufis. [Sufi efforts across the subcontinent were directed toward the creation of healthy social order free from conflicts.](#) They brought a new, liberal way



of living and relating to the core Islamic messages.<sup>36</sup> The three main religious sects, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, can be easily distinguished by name, clothing, eating habits, social system, language and literature. Ancient human civilization has the greatest cradles in term of Sub Continent. Subcontinent is the birth place of Hinduism and Buddhism and great center of Islam. The Asian mainland culture has permanent impacts of this region. Due to Pakistan-India historic enmity, this region is often referred as a high-risk conflict zone. The majority and minority based upon ethnic and religious characters are major variables that have profound impact upon the intra region relations in the Sub Continent.”

<sup>37</sup>People who belong to one caste or religious may also be among the followers of other religions. However, before British rule, the Punjab never had a permanent government like other states, which allowed it to build its cultural tradition permanently. On the contrary, it provides a breeding ground for religious mysticism, missionaries and social discord.

The ancient Hindu, Brahmin, Islamic, and Sikh tribes had been in conflict in the history of the Punjab but none of them were much stronger to have a decisive influence on the fortune of the province. The major activities relating to economics and professions in the region were agriculture, trade and debt. A common profession was Agriculture for both Muslims and Sikhs. Many live their lives and suffer from creditors. However, some Muslim sects, such as Khwaja, Paracha, Khokar, Sheikh, Patan and Kashmir, also engage in business activities, but the industrial, commercial and banking sectors were dominated by Hindus and Sikhs. Hindu had hegemony over Trade and loans professions while in arid western areas a large proportion of Hindu traders are influenced by Muslims. They enjoyed wealth,

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<sup>36</sup> Hebah Jamal, “Sufism Helped Spread Islam in the Indian Subcontinent,” <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/> (morroco world news, August 15, 2021)

<sup>37</sup> Mussarat Jabeen and Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, “SAARC and Indo-Pak Relationship,” *Journal of Political Studies* 1, no:2 (March, 2013): 139

work and better educational opportunities, as compared to Muslims. Given the demand for better jobs in the public sector, education has an incentive effect. As Muslims lag far behind Hindus, they have long sought out community leaders in the civil service.

Equal opportunities were not provided to Muslims in education, business, work and other areas of life, while the political and economic interests of Muslims were more at stake than the interests of Hindus, it becomes an important reason for difference between Hindu and Muslim. Hostility among non-Muslims and economic control of non-Muslims over Muslims reinforces the argument that they are in permanent danger of being exploited by Hindus and Sikhs.

The economy and politics of Indian society has undergone a wave of dynamism from ancient times to 12th century. A vital and dynamic process of cultural assimilation was observed due to series of new arrivals Seythians, Parthians, Aryans, Greeks, Shaik's and Huns before 8th century as well as the Arabs, Afghans, Mongols, Persians, Turks, between 8th and the 12th century. Moreover, creative role was also played by native tribal groups in the process of state formation. Economically tribal societies played a positive role in mobility and commercial exchange among communities. In trade and culture of Indian Ocean, the sub-continent has played a main role.<sup>38</sup> Subcontinent region has rich land, rich agricultural resources and the socio-economic structure is in fact rural. People have long since habits of walking agriculturalist, settled in stable houses and established a permanent connection with the community. In the Punjab, a large proportion of farmers own and cultivate the land, so this area is highly agricultural. Pre-partition Punjab was producing a

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<sup>38</sup>Nabeela Akbar, "Socio-cultural and Economic impact of Central Asian Muslim rulers in Sub-Continent (India)," *Journal of Indian Studies* 1, no:2 (December, 2015): 62

third of the country's total wheat, while other countries faced an agricultural crisis.<sup>39</sup>

Sargodha was the largest wheat market in the world. Muslim flocks are mostly limited to the western region of Punjab, Sikhs in the central region, and Hindus in the southeast of Punjab. Innovation by Mughals flourished the foreign trade in region. Indian imports from Persian Gulf region were silk, wool, pearls, dried fruits and dates; imports from China were including silk, tea and porcelain; Imports from Arabia were including drugs, Coffee, honey and gold; luxury goods were imported from Singapore, Tibet, Indonesian Islands and Europe. Whereas, subcontinent was major exporter of fabrics, raw silk, pepper, indigo, sugar and many other things. Moreover, the cotton textile industry of subcontinent was famous all over the world.

An agriculturally based Muslim tribe was Aryans especially in central Punjab. Famous as the most skillful and brave farmers in the Punjab, many of them settled in Faisalabad, Jalandhar and Lahore. They also served as civilian as well as military officers and some worked in construction. There are Rajput, mostly Muslims, known as the state aristocracy, based mainly in Rawalpindi, Jhelum and some in **Jhang**, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Hisar and Karnal. The participation in military, police and other forums weakened their positions and enabled them to participate in the process of social change. Aries family is not limited to the Salt Ring area, but is spread throughout the Punjab and covers a large part of the Punjab population. They were sent in large numbers to the army. The Gujar's are predominantly Muslims and live in mountainous and rivered areas. Gujarat, Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur are their strongholds and are largely engaged in animal husbandry and dairy products

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<sup>39</sup> Parvesh Sharma, "Wheat Production Drops by 67 Kg/Ha across Punjab," *The Tribune*, (October 25, 2021).

(cattle farmers), while they are less involved in agriculture. The Balochis tribes formed another large part of the Muslims in south Punjab especially Dera Ghazi Khan and were lived under a leader named Tumandar. They also have strong hold in the areas of Bahawalpur, Muzaffargarh and Multan. Although the position of the Pathan people is relatively smaller due to economic and educational backwardness, they formed large agricultural tribes in the areas of Mianwali and Attock. They are engaged mainly in basic agriculture and also work for the army, police and small businesses. The Sardar and Quraysh are another important part of the Muslim community, they are mainly landowners and claim to be saints. Most deal with education and civil administration. The Lords, Sardar, Mughal and Pathan are also called Ashrafis and belong to the ruling class. Jut, Rajput, Gujjar, and five other families are called agricultural classes engaged in agricultural activity.

Brotherhood among Muslim community is an important social base, reflecting close social relations and lineage. In this system, marriage usually concluded between close relatives or caste, which is also a great force in strengthening the unity of the community. The system has been effectively run by the Panchayat (Ancient Crisis Management Committee), which decides the matters of inheritance, divorce, quarrels and also makes decisions relating to social and political issues. However, this system is less important for teenagers and senior owners and they often use it for their own political purposes. The sarpanch also sought a prestigious place in the village community, took on the role of village leader and resolved conflicts according to his own ideas. In communities of subcontinent, Shrines and holy places have a profound influence on rural communities. The Sayed claim to be the families of Sufi saints, who played a major role in the spread of Islam and transformation of tribal

community in Punjab. With the passage of time these holy places and holy religious shrines became a very influential force in society. Sufi shrines work in multidimensional ways, have implications on social, cultural, economic and political setup. From Ancient times, tradition to visit the sacred places and shrines for religious merit, washing off the sins and accomplishment of desires has been a practice across the world.<sup>40</sup> [These shrines and followers play an important role in history in social, cultural and political dimensions.](#) Since the Mughal era, a great political influence over the people and the aristocracy, helping rulers to maintain the power of independent tribes. The government therefore couldn't neglect its political role. The Sajjada nasheen of the Muslim shrines also played an administrative role, especially in southwestern part of Punjab, as honorary peace keepers, landowners and members of the district assembly. In the communities of sub-continent these religious shrines of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh community also played role in social, political and economic dimensions. The structure of Punjab varies considerably in different parts of province. Pakistani Punjab, with the exclusion of Districts Rawalpindi, Jhelum and Gujarat, most of the territory is owned by most Jaghirdars (landowners) such as, Laghari, Tawana, Daulatana and Sayed (Bukhari, Gilani, etc.).

The Punjab province is divided into the following six parts According to geopolitical, social and economic conditions, 1st Pothohare Highlands, including Attock, Rawalpindi and Jhelum Valley. Due to the low level of comfort, unpredictable precipitation, lack of water and the danger of drought, the area is poor in agricultural production but it is also known for its human supply especially in armed forces. [Most of the people from pothohare region join armed forces or went abroad.](#) The 2nd Mountain region lies between the

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<sup>40</sup> Safdar Abbas and Shazia Qureshi, "Peoples' Perceptions about Visiting Sufi Shrine in Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 28, no:2 (December, 2013):380

Himalayas and central Punjab, including the four-foot-high alpine regions of Sialkot, Gurdaspur and Ambala. The Central Maidan consists of eight districts: Gujarat, Amritsar, Sheikhpura, Ludhiana, Lahore, Ferozpur and Jalandhar. The Aryans gained an important position in this region as Muslims. Most of them are hard-working, have small plots of land and mostly grow vegetables. The eastern region includes the arid Hisar region and the areas around Delhi, including the four areas of Haveli, Karnal, and Gurugram. The life and culture of this region is different from other regions. Most of the farmers in other regions are Hindus and Muslims, followers of their traditions and customs. The Jut family controls the number of people who work hard to survive. Due to lack of irrigation channels, unpredictability of rainfall and insecurity of crops, farmers in the area are in trouble. In the center, west of the Beas, Sutlej and eastern of Jhelum River are the Lyallpur and Sahiwal areas, which attract the available land. The south-western areas of Province include Multan, Bhakkar, Muzaffargarh, DG Khan and Mianwali Districts. Because of the severe drought, this area is very different from other parts of the province. Much of it is in the desert hills, except north area of Mianwali in others area agriculture is a dream. The Baloch control the DG Khan area, while the Bheas and the Sardars, who have public power, control the other three areas. Farmers are at the mercy of their superiors, colleagues and creditors. the standard of living in Muzaffargarh and DG Khan is lower than all the other districts of Province.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area was a vast desert called Tana or barren land, inhabited by a variety of mobile pastures. The Great Plan of Agricultural Colonization was implemented in 1886, and then during the British occupation, the area became as a human laboratory, where different clans, tribes, and castes from different areas of the province gathered on new land. This settlement has left its mark on the people of the region. People

had no permanent residence prior to 1860 and rarely stayed in one place for months or more. They are predominantly Muslim, most of them belonging to the Jut dynasty, and sometimes Rajput's, and are divided into several smaller communities. The 1891 census recorded 70,000 inhabitants. However, with the colonization of the area, the elderly who keep livestock have become really rich and advanced when they grow up in the area. They grew up in the socio-economic class, making the region richer and more modern than any other region of the Punjab.

## **2.2 An Outlook of Common Culture**

The Culture is defined as a behavior relating to human beings, together with material objects. It contains of language, ideas, techniques, tools, beliefs, customs, institution, codes, ceremonies, works of arts and so on. Although cultural backgrounds are associated with work, the type of work and its causes are unclear. The Romans historians associated human traditions with human nature, humans, animals, towns, villages, towns, and rural areas. Allama Iqbal defined culture as: "Culture encompasses all the mental, spiritual and physical activities of a nation. It includes the basic beliefs and faith, values and literature, art and architecture, music and mode of dress, manners and customs prevalent in a given society."<sup>41</sup> However, many people think that this is such an unnatural, and the traditional explanation is to create a difficult life in the building. Kroeber and Kluckhohn mean to repeat theories and definitions: "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core

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<sup>41</sup> Ahmed Maqsood, "Ahmed Maqsood," Ahmed Maqsood, January 1, 1970, <https://ahmedmaqsoodmian.blogspot.com/>.

of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action”<sup>42</sup>.

Subcontinent culture is one of the oldest cultures in the history of the world, from ancient times to modern times, in the fields of culture, history, complexity. There are important parts of culture such as: Punjabi cuisine, philosophy, poetry, art, music, architecture, traditions, values and history. In India, the continuity of cultural traditions which go back to ancient times, myths and narratives travel through the paradigm of history to represent and validate contemporary social reality.<sup>43</sup> Some cities in Punjab are considered more important to the Sikh community than Indian cities. Guru Nanak founder of Sikhism was born in the South Nankana district of Punjab, therefore Sikhs from all over the world came to Punjab to visit the holy shrines. The tomb of Jahangir and the Royal Mosque in Lahore are also important places in Pakistan. People in Sub-continent are composed of different races, tribes and communities, and celebrates all the traditions according to their culture. The Punjabi people firmly believe in Peer Fakir, Jogi, Tawfiq, Manat etc.

People in rural areas usually live-in small communities, but they live in peace and harmony. They share each other's grief, respect their culture and standards very much, they live their lives according to their traditions. Punjab is known as a land of its hospitality and love. Over the times, the culture of Pakistani society has evolved, opening from Paleolithic Age it transformed into Neolithic Revolution being the first manifestation of a settled society

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42 AL Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture; a critical review of concepts and definitions*, (Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press): 147

43 Surjeet Singh, *Old Traditions and Cultural Heritage of Punjab*, (Patiala, India, Publication Bearu Punjabi University Patiala, 1992): 119



represented by the old sites of the lithic period which set into motion the urbanization process eventually terminating into the establishment of urban areas like Mehargarh in Baluchistan, Rehman Deri in KPK, Harappa in Punjab and Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh. New patterns of life were witnessed by Aryan and the Buddhist ages evolving. Moreover, the emergence of Gandara and Hindu civilizations also reached at peak point here. Muslim civilization advanced and introduced this land in the medieval period to the Arabs, Goris, Ghaznavid, Sultanate of Delhi and the Mughal influences. The salient cultural traits of the Buddhist and Hindu communities were absorbed by the Arabs and Muslim which still has their character in the present-day Pakistani socio-political and cultural setting.<sup>44</sup> In post partition era, the Indo-Pak culture transformed especially western culture hit the after 1990s. Subcontinent society has undergone tremendous changes since its inception, and this process is still continuing. The behavior behind this change is globalization. Especially since the early 1990s, society has undergone major changes. After the Cold War era, a concept of free and open world emerged and industry has developed. Private banks and state-owned commercial banks compete as antennas to enter foreign television channels, and promote the advancement of science, communication and information technology. This wave resulted as destruction of national identity, especially in Asia and Africa. Now, Indo-Pak communities use Western style in their daily life especially in urban areas. As people often use English as the language for instruction, Western-style clothing, Western-style fast food restaurants, family and love marriage, all levels and learning. People are increasingly eager to establish independent fellowships between men and women and immigrate to the West. Westernization is a social method of seeking modernization. The

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<sup>44</sup> Robert Ackman, "History of Subcontinent," *International Cultural Studies* 8, no:2(March,2011); 74

hybridization impact is particularly important in developed countries. Economics as a major factor play an important role for changes in people's social life style. Economy determines the social and political conditions and power of the society and State. Despite these developments in Indo-Pak societies in post partition era both of states share a cluster of cultural traditions which have absorbed by the society over the history. [India and Pakistan are almost the same. Maybe it's because they are neighbors or they were one previously. But our culture, traditions, customs and school of thought is quite similar.](#)<sup>45</sup> These can be considered as major common traditions in Pak-India culture.

**Marriages;** Despite that the variety of marital arrangements is different according to respective regions and religions but arranged marriage is still a traditional feature of almost all the communities in subcontinent. Arranged marriages are still widely practiced. Those marriages are considered as love marriages that are not arranged by the couple's parents. The celebrations among all the communities are same Despite the different religions.

**Rituals and Holy Places;** Concept of rituals and holy places is widely acceptive by the communities across the border. The difference of religions among communities existed but the thousands of temples, shrines, and other holy places of all the communities are across the border. As for Hindus temples are the holiest, the religious shrines for Sikhs are sacred places and the tombs of saints are important for Muslims.

**Sports and Games;** Both of communities have common Sports and games, loved and promoted with same enthusiastic. These can be called as traditional games and some of these are still quite popular in the countryside. These games are also perfect for mental and

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<sup>45</sup> Namenda Krishna, "Indian vs Pakistani Culture," Speakingtree.in (Speaking Tree, October 21, 2013), <https://www.speakingtree.in/blog/indian-vs-pakistani-culture>.

physical exercise such as Kabaddi, held every year at Kartarpur shrine since inauguration. So, sports cultural events can ultimately change the narrative across the border.

**Arts And Language;** The languages in subcontinent such as Punjabi, Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Urdu and Manipuri, all have their own sole and important literary traditions which go back for many centuries. But if we discuss the Sikhism, we will ultimately find Punjabi at top. The same language, Poet, and Sufi kalam is liked by people on both side of border especially in Punjab. Which have natural bounding and can further strengthen the communities.

**Food And Drink;** In routine food items, bread of wheat is the primary staple and rice predominates as the main starch across the border. People mostly like healthy foods like milk, butter and chili.

**Caste System Historically;** Indian history is witnessed a centuries old caste system. Despite the invaders like Muslims, Arabs, Mughals gave a new the narrative to society but still caste system is rooted in Pak-India societies. The reflection of caste system can be observed in every manner from gross root level to national level.

**Paintings;** Painting's art was developed by the Muslims of South Asia gradually. Initially on the walls and buildings of the state attractive paintings and embroidery were made. The paintings were the love for Mughal rulers. The painting as traditional art of subcontinent occupies a prominent place in public of Pakistan. Famous personalities for paintings are Abdul Rehman Chughtai, Haji Mohammad Sharif and Jamil.

**Calligraphy;** The art of calligraphy was developed by Muslims. The important reason behind this was their love and affection with Holy Quran. Different types of calligraphy observed was observed in this era. The masterwork of calligraphy was observed in the mosques constructed during early and medieval periods of Islam.

**Music;** A great contribution to promote the Music was done by Mughals; inherited musical traditions in subcontinent has go far back in history. Actors, singers have same fame across the border.

**Architecture and Sculpture;** The architecture art of subcontinent is unique in its features. The architecture and all the miniature arts including carving, sculpture, mosaic works, tile works and paintings were called upon to build new building and government offices.

Despite the common past and traditional engagements Pakistan and India have a cluster of issues that hampered the mutual cooperation, such as Kashmir issue, border issues and security dilemma. National security issues dominate debates between policymakers on both sides and Kartarpur is not a panacea for hotly contested issues between these states. In fact, Sikh community has always insisted to reopening Kartarpur due to religious emotions. Particularly, in recent, Pakistan-India relations have gone through a turbulent period after India decided to remove Article 370&35-A from Jammu and Kashmir. In reaction, Islamabad has cutting back on diplomatic missions in New Delhi and shutting down train and bus services across the border. Earlier, two neighboring nuclear-armed countries took part in an air war in February. In the light of these crises, the construction and operation of the Kartarpur Corridor and the ability to cooperate on both sides should be seen as positive developments and aspirations.

The Kartarpur corridor have the potential to promote religious tourism, reduce mistrust between the two sides, encourage non-governmental contacts, effective use of track two diplomacy and resolve disputes by dialogue. It shows that both sides can sometimes put aside their differences and serve the wider interests of both peoples. This is a commendable achievement for South Asia's two neighbors.

It could be found that India and Pakistan were struggling with the complexity created by the borders in 1947. Not only socio-cultural alignments remain unfold, it continued to shed light on the reality of the common past and provided new ways for both countries to resolve these crises by dialogue. Although the Kashmir issue may seem complicated, the two countries can reach a compromise, build trust, and move towards greater stability in areas of mutual interest.

### **2.3 Attachment of Sikh's Religious Sentiments to Pakistan**

One of the most difficult consequences of the partition of India and consequently Pakistan, is that many religious sites for three major regional religions lie on the other side of international border. In this situation a serious tension created between the religious communities of both countries. This is a particular problem for Sikh believers. For the Sikhs, the partition of India makes them very difficult. The Sikhs choose India as the best country to protect their interests in the newly formed Pakistan (there are about 20,000 Sikhs in Pakistan as compared to about 21 million in India). By making this choice, however, the Sikhs separated themselves from the many holy places and their former cultural and political capital, Lahore. The border is just as steep, which society in the West regrets. Although Sri Harmandir Sahib (or Golden Temple) in Amritsar, India is still the most important religious site of Sikhism but the following three places closely associated with

the life and death of Guru Nanak are Gurdwara Aston in West Lahore (Nankana) is the birthplace of Guru, handwriting on the ground stone in the town of Hasan Abdul is considered that belongs to Guru Nanak and the Kartarpur, where founder of religion spent 18 years of his life. Furthermore, tomb of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh is also an important place for Sikhism but the Kartarpur was most emotionally attached with their religious emotions. The first Sikh town was laid on the bank of River Ravi by Guru Nanak in 1504 A.D and named it Kartarpur. The institution of Sangat, Pangat and Langar were established here at first Sikh place of worship. He taught his followers the fundamentals of Sikhism: Naam Japo, Kirt karo, wand kay chhako.<sup>46</sup> Guru Nanak preached his message in entire Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan, Middle east, Sri Lanka and Tibet parts of China. Gurdwara Darbar Kartarpur Sahib is just 4 km from the border, where he spent the last days of his life. Just as a house holder he lived at Kartarpur with his wife and two sons. A great importance carried by this fact for future. In the compositions of Guru Nanak there are verses which can be interpreted as supporting (Udasi) and he himself travelled widely, leaving his family behind. Therefore, it was an important decision to return to the life of house holder. This shows his basic ideal that true denial consisted in living pure amidst the impurities of attachment. The Guru Nanak's followers at Kartarpur and elsewhere pursued honest occupations for livelihood.<sup>47</sup> Before the construction of Corridor, Due to emotional appeal of the site an erected viewing platform was been set up on the Indian border where people can view the temple using binoculars. [Everyone was emotional as a JCB machine brought down a 3.5-meter-high platform constructed in 2008 for viewing through](#)

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<sup>46</sup> Jagral Singh, *"A complete Guide to Sikhism,"* (Chandigarh, India, Unistar Books Pvt Ltd, 2009): 261

<sup>47</sup> J.S Grewal, *"The Sikhs of the Punjab"* (Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1990): 66

binoculars the historic Kartarpur gurdwara across the border.<sup>48</sup> India and Pakistan have reached an agreement that provides a framework for resolving the crisis between both of states. Moreover, India also has many important shrines for Sufi Islam, and Pakistan's Hindus and Indian Muslims also rely on cross-border pilgrimage agreements. The protocol of 1974 admit that the region has a deep common history, cultural and religious needs of its respective citizens must be respected and the strategic animosity between the two countries must be overcome.

Gurdwara Darbar Kartarpur Sahib's also provides an opportunity to build a more effective structure for the rights of visitors and provide protection to religious shrines. Furthermore, background of the Kartarpur Temple from the time of Guru Nanak in 16th century to the present shows that as a religious shrine it remains very important for Sikh community. With the passage of time, the political scenario of India-Pakistan has moved towards the development of the Kartarpur route. Extensive media coverage of the Kartarpur Corridor has prompted former Indian Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sadhu and Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan to help, preserve and open up Sikh historical religious sites in Pakistan.

#### **2.4 Effects of Corridor on Pakistani Society**

The Sikh's Cultural influence have various themes and meanings in the context of Pakistani society. Pakistani society had changed a lot since its independence and the process is still ongoing. The Major role was played by Islamic ideology, norms and culture. Secondly Pakistani society has undergone major changes since the early 1990s under the shadow of

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<sup>48</sup> Ravi dhalawal, "Platform for Kartarpur Shrine View Is History," *Tribuneindia News Service*, May 7, 2021,

westernization. After the Cold War era, an independent and open world emerged. The main economic policy in this period was the privatization and liberalization of the domestic and commercial markets, which enabled the growth of the banking sector specially. **The young generation of Pakistan is adopting the western culture and preferred to work in multinational companies in the West or in developed states.** Due to differences in economic and technological opportunities of states, there is no equality in any society in the world. Economic factors are the main cause of changes in people's life. It determines social and political conditions and social power of the communities. It was assumed that after the development of this corridor the two nations will come closer and reduce the intolerance between two hostile nations. The corridor opens economic doors for India and Pakistan respectively merchants and businessmen on limited scale. The corridor gave new lines of thinking to cooperate and enhance border communication. This corridor will also promote import and export goods like sugar, vegetables, wheat, fruits etc. The new opportunity for tourism industry, open doors for economic development and to promote trades between the two countries.<sup>49</sup> Some communities have more resources and advancement than others and may have a greater impact on other. In the Backdrop of Kartarpur corridor, the community's interaction across the border will have multiple meanings. This interaction will have long lasting impact on each other, positively and vice-versa.

#### **2.4.1 Expanding the Scope of Knowledge of Pakistani Society**

Pakistan-India relations, in context of Kartarpur corridor, the interaction among the communities will be greater and open new fields to be exploring. Both of community's interaction will explore the different ways of knowledge especially in the field of medical,

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<sup>49</sup>Abid Hussain, "Kartarpur -A peace Gesture," Centre for Study of Intelligence operations (March, 2020) Kartarpur-A peace Gesture comments



acting, construction, information technology and science. In current age the rapid spread of ideas and information is boundless because of increasing role of social media, sophistication and digital media which have created complex, fast-paced, and information-laden environment. In the age of this greater flow of information and ideas means acceptance greater openness at a time when there is an increased pace of globalization<sup>50</sup>.

#### **2.4.2 Cementing the Fraternity**

The Kartarpur Corridor will play an important role for strengthen the ties among communities in Pakistan as well as communities beyond the border. The progress in relationship between India and Pakistan was always observed at a glacial pace and often face reversion, while the Kartarpur corridor initiative was rapidly moved and completed successfully. This project is a new beginning in Pakistan- India relations and indicating the positive signs of reducing the tension among both of states. **Kartarpur initiative will further cementing the ties among different religious groups in Pakistan. The religious harmony and minorities rights will strengthen nation binding and ultimately loyalty to state.** Moreover, the region is overwhelmed with challenges of illiteracy, poverty and gender discrimination which should be addressed urgently. The public of subcontinent want peace and economic development, both states should work in that way. Vice President of India at the occasion of foundation stone for Kartarpur Sahib corridor said “we are going to create history together, history that will make both of states and the entire world a more peaceful place for our children and grandchildren to live and grow together”<sup>51</sup>. As the interaction

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<sup>50</sup>Fatima Salman, “Evolving News Media Landscapes in India and Pakistan: Implications for regional peace and stability,” *Atlantic Council South Asia Centre*, (March 2020)

<sup>51</sup> M. Venkaiah Naidu, “Vice President of India,” *the foundation stone for Kartarpur Sahib corridor*, (November 26, 2018)

among states will be greater the greater chance of learning and jobs will be available. These will further enhance the relations and opportunities will be available across the border

### **2.4.3 Social Equality**

Awareness of across the border culture is beneficial to the Pakistani society. The societies expanded than ever before in modern era. By promoting the narrative of equality for all citizen, social equality and harmony will be greater than ever before. Protection of minorities rights and their promotion will also be greater. The cross-border culture especially Punjab is always transformed and now interaction among society will further enhanced the fraternity and idea of coexistence. The opportunities will be available from education sectors to multinational companies. Corridor will open the window of opportunities for women from handicraft, education to jobs, serving and business across the border.

## **2.5 Negative Impacts**

### **2.5.1 Raising the Power of languages**

With the development of Nation state system across the globe, now many states all over the world are facing the rising challenges from different ethnic communities. These voices are also based on sects, tribes and religion. Both, Pakistan and India are also facing such vibes in respective states based on ethnic diversity. Moreover, Pakistan had already faced such an issue in context of Bangladesh. In the studies curriculum of Pakistan, courses included such as Pakistan studies, religion and regional languages. The major ethnic languages in Pakistan are such as Urdu, Sindhi, Pashtu, Punjabi or Balochi. The ethnic tendency due to opening of Kartarpur corridor especially East Punjab (Indian Punjab) and West Punjab (Pakistani Punjab) can be further raised among ethnic communities. Indians'

Sikh movement of Khalistan are already a threat to Indian internal stability and they also have same motives for west Punjab (Pakistan). So, the opening of kartarpur corridor can may be a startup for confidence building measure (CBM) between both of States.

### **2.5.2 Creating Cultural Gaps in Society**

The wealthy Pakistani often go western countries because of their social ability to adopt that life. It also reflects the acceptance of western fashion in society, People who cannot adopt that way of life are different and their attitudes are also different. Given the traditional differences (language, clothing, food, style) between the same groups in the same area or state, this situation weakens individual relationships and leads to social inequality. Many factors like civilization, religion and history influence the society. The traditional values of Pakistani and Sikh society are mostly accepted but not by all. The situation in the Kartarpur Corridor border region obviously makes sense here. Sikhism is a strong structure of state actors. When people of a community are attracted to external influences, accepting foreign culture and values, that can lead to chaos and uncertainty. In Pakistani society, communities have confusion over their identity and social inclination. In Pakistani society, the process of separating ethnic, religious and sectarian entities is becoming increasingly apparent. The population is often divided into socio-economic groups based on their household incomes.<sup>52</sup> The higher layer becomes completely westerner and others try to imitate it. Moreover, the top layer is completely different from the other layers. Analyzing the two rich generations of the upper classes, their social life is completely different from the lives of ordinary people in society, living in the villages. Adopted the best of Western

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<sup>52</sup> Anil Vritika, "Difference between Lower, Middle, and Upper Class," Difference between Lower, Middle, and Upper Class | Lower Class vs Middle Class vs Upper Class, September 23, 2015.

life, fashion, clothing, food, education and personal relationships, they created their own world and put it in the local environment. Insufficient participation of upper classes in social life will ultimately create social disparities that will have an impact on the development of education and the public sector.

Sikhism is the smallest monotheistic religion, Sikhism originated in Punjab (Subcontinent) in the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, the mostly teachings of Sikhism come from Hinduism, it is unique in understanding God, the universe, and human nature. Guru Nanak is considered as the founder of the Sikh religion but nine other masters (spiritual missionaries) had also played an important role. The word Sikhism comes from the Sanskrit word learn, which means that students want religious knowledge. In his first teachings, Guru Nanak tried to eliminate all religious based differences among community. Guru Nanak taught that there is one God who has many names and that all the people before him are equal. It was a revolutionary ideology that attacks the foundations of the Hindu caste system specially. Sikhism promotes an honest and reasonable life, protects the independence of the families, prohibits beggars, teaches respect for others, promotes equality and brotherhood among people, and emphasizes the importance of social cohesion and service to others. Originally, Sikhism is a partial union and combination of Hinduism and Islam, but it is fundamentally different from both. The key differences between Sikhism and Muslim are: religious culture, acceptance of holy books, people equality believe. Nanak's teachings of Sikhism are quite different from Islam. In Islamic teachings people become brothers and sisters by faith, irrespective of their origins and social status in society. The true principle of equality introduced by Islamic culture between men & women, rich & poor, not just literally. In addition, one of its main objectives of Islamic

ideology is to bring the support of brotherhood, personal freedom and equality in all community.

Punjab culture and ethnic traditions are common to some extent across the border. Pakistani community can be divided into major five different ethnic groups, Pashtuns, Punjabi, Sindhis, Balochis and Kashmiris. The communities of Punjabi, Sindhi and Kashmiri are culturally and ethnically closely related to the Northern and Western part of India. Both have the same traditions, local heroes, kings and villains. On other hand northern Indians are much different from people in the south India. The only common thing will be the traditions and rituals they share via Hinduism. Moreover, the Hinduism practiced in southern India is much different from the north and west India. The commonality based only on the common cause and freedom struggle against the British Raj **for independence**. By excluding the Punjabi, Sindhi, and Kashmiri culture Pashtun-Baloch and North Pakistani cultural identities are much different from India. It is difficult to define the social and behavioral differences of Pashtuns community from Indians. If we analyze it's surprising that the culture and politics of the families at the micro level and the state at the macro level influenced **by** upbringing and behavior.

## **2.6 Deep Analysis; Sikhs a Nation on the Border**

After independence from British rule, a small number of Sikhs began to have an influence on politics, economy and military in India, where as the Indian Sikhs political parties have a strong nationalist nuance. The subcontinent division was a tragedy for Sikh community. **Subcontinent** was divided on the basis of two nation theory into India and Pakistan. Sikhs

were considered as part of Hindus along with Jains and Buddhists.<sup>53</sup> The unity of native Punjab destroyed, results in tens of thousands of casualties, while more than two million were forced to migrate from Pakistan to India. They abandon their whole properties and left many places of great value to Sikhs, such as the provincial capital Lahore and the hometown and the tomb of Guru Nanak outside independent India. The holy city of Amritsar was left in India by the new border. The division of the region and the resulting forced migration of millions of Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus irretrievably destroyed Punjab's multiculturalism<sup>54</sup>. Moreover, the Indian authorities carried out administrative reforms in 1966 across the state and divided the Indian Punjab into Himachal Pradesh and Haryana. [The new Punjab state created new problems because of the way in which it was formed.](#)<sup>55</sup>

The further division of Punjab was the reason of an extremist separatist movement that seeks independence of the Sikh region and establishes a Sikh based state. In 1947, the idea of creating a special Sikh state was firstly surfaced right after the end of British rule, inspired by political and religious movements of subcontinent. In the early 1980s, the issue became prominent mainly due to growing dissatisfaction with the Punjab government. The escalating aggression between Hindus and Sikhs caused further casualties. As Indian authorities couldn't fulfill the conditions for Punjab autonomy because it is attached to the border of Pakistan. As a result, emergency declared by Indian government in province on June, 1984. The army launched Operation "Blue Star" by order of Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi. At that time, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was the head of separatist forces

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<sup>53</sup> Singh Hardev, "Failure of Sikhs to gain an Independent State during Partition of India" *Asia Samachar* (September 10, 2020)

<sup>54</sup> Marek Barwiński and Łukasz Musiaka, "The Sikhs – religion and nation," *The Nation* (March 2020)

<sup>55</sup> Grewal, J. S., ed. 1991. "In the New Punjab State (1966–1984)." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1991.

of Khalistan. In revenge for desecration and disrespect of the Golden Temple, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two Sikh security personnel in 1984. After his death, there were unfortunate incidents against Sikhs in most of India. It is the worst form of violence since India's independence, killing nearly 3,000 people.

Rajiv Gandhi came to power after the death of Indira Gandhi and the situation in Punjab destabilized the domestic situation. Despite the blockade of Amritsar, the original supporters of independent Khalistan resorted to violent and terrorist tactics. Indian representatives also claimed that the Sikhs supported the intelligence services in order to maintain India's reunification. Consequently, war spread beyond Punjab area, including Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Victims' numbers on both sides increased from year to year. 1949 civilians were killed in Punjab in 1988. This war was more related to politics than religion. The emergency was lifted up in late 1990s. After that the social, political, religious and economic situation of the Sikhs in India began to improve. The appointment of Sikh Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014 was a political sign of normalcy.

The decision to open Kartarpur corridor is considered as an important positive step in the history of Pakistan-India relations and to defuse political tensions. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears behind the Indian side of the border, other key Indian officials have been seen at the border including former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and CM Punjab Amarinder Singh, which needed to be considered. He said "I thank Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Niazi for understanding, respecting and acting on India's sentiments regarding the Kartarpur Corridor."<sup>56</sup> Official Pakistani video of

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<sup>56</sup> K.L Maniwal, "PM Modi Opens Historic Pilgrimage to Kartarpur Corridor," Hindustan Times, November 11, 2019, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/pm-modi-opens-historic-pilgrimage-to-kartarpur-corridor/story-S9aO9boQpWfleCUo9TJJpK.html>.

Kartarpur corridor showing General Singh Banderwanel and his military adviser Shabeej Singh, who were known as Punjab's terrorist criminals in the 1980s. Naturally a little frustrated, It is clear that political institutions in India and Pakistan, including the Pakistan Army, are politicizing the so-called Kartarpur corridor, said Professor Palkar Singh, a Sikh educator and director of the Punjab University's Global Punjab Center. The security agencies of India are pointing the voices of Khalistan while some elements in Pakistan are also trying to create problems. Propaganda, as we have stated above, will certainly temporarily increase the possibility of Catalan separatism, but it will not weaken the capacity for debate. So, Both Islamabad and New Delhi will do well, although in fact the corridor is considered a major achievement.

Kartarpur corridor faces all kinds of challenges and is a political mystery. Some see it as a beacon of hope in the darkness surrounding India-Pakistan relations. For others, it's part of the problem that affects relationships, political differences. For former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, crossing the border may be a sign of improving relations between Delhi and Islamabad. Contrary, his party ally and Punjab chief minister, Amrinder Singh, has repeatedly hinted that the initiative may be part of Pakistan's long-term interest in supporting separatist movement. As far as Delhi is concerned, it has provided strong support for the construction of Corridor. However, it was not prudent to hide Pakistan's sudden interest in the corridors of India's security. There are also different opinions in Pakistan, although Prime Minister Imran Khan and Pakistan Army are interesting to promote construction of corridor, army also opposed Khan's claim that Sikh pilgrims could enter the border without a passport. Some Islamic leaders in Pakistan also criticized the corridor for violating the country's national sovereignty. Although there has been a lot of



criticism from both sides of border and after some difficult talks between Delhi and Islamabad, the corridor is now open. While the world welcomes this, it cannot escape the fact that the corridor is a significant exception between India and Pakistan. Both States did not hold formal talks due to February terrorist attacks in Kashmir. India's response for bombing of the Balakot terrorist training camp, the subsequent airstrikes and decision to change the Jammu constitution, sparked Pakistan's anger, political and military tensions.

For a long time, the Kashmir issue has dominated the regional pattern of relations between India-Pakistan. The unforgettable nature of the struggle has cast a shadow over pessimism in the region. In recent years, Punjab has often demonstrated the potential for variable progress in bilateral relations. Unlike the Kashmir states that come together, Punjab is a common geographical and cultural place across the border. If by the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all parts of Kashmir had been marginalized by the geopolitical development of the Indian subcontinent, then Punjab has always been the center of historical process and the roots of Indian dynasties. Like Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab also share racial, linguistic and cultural characteristics. This shared identity has been saved from the unforgettable tragedy that divided the province. It has the cultural ties and shared sorrow that made the Indian subcontinent desire for India-Pakistan settlement.

There are also controversies, some people in Rawalpindi may change the Kartarpur route to Khalistan, Delhi should focus on strengthening its ability. Rawalpindi seems to turn the plug every time which could mean that the prospects for further collaboration between both Punjab's are limited. Punjab CM Amarinder Singh called out the "hidden agenda" of Pakistan, sources in the Narendra Modi government were quoted as saying that "powers

larger than the civil government of Pakistan are pushing the project”.<sup>57</sup> Although Imran Khan hailed the transit as a new beginning for bilateral relations, he stressed that resolving the Kashmir issue is necessary for the normalization of relations between the two states.

Since the 1990s, the Government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh in Delhi, the Congress and Akali governments have been actively promoting economic and cultural cooperation and development efforts along the Radcliffe Line. These creations in the last two decades seem ready to bear fruit. Plans include expanding underground trade along the Attari-Wagah border, expanding hydrocarbon and electricity exports from Punjab, India to Pakistan and enhancing cultural ties. Although the traditional reason for Pakistan to kartaipur Corridor is understandable, in order relations with India. This fact would encourage Delhi to reconsider its initiatives to enhance cooperation on the borders. More importantly, Delhi must go beyond official talks with Islamabad and the quasi-diplomatic relations between Chandigarh and Lahore.

Delhi needs to realize that the sign of Punjab and its people extended beyond India and Pakistan, and have a great influence on many other parts of the world. Narendra Modi (Narendra Modi) can add a new dimension to his NRI diplomacy if he promotes the celebration of the Punjab Festival. This can help out to overcome the Kartaipur mystery and simplify long-term collective thinking on the Indian subcontinent to bridge current differences.

Hence the kartaipur corridor is a new opening among the old socially and culturally linked communities. The corridor gave a new opportunity for further engagement and

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<sup>57</sup> Chari Seshadri, “Kartaipur and Khalistan: Why Pakistan Army has been so eager to open corridor with India” The Print, November,8,2019.

collaboration. This idea will reform the other sectors of society i.e., sports, cultural festivals, showbiz and religious community. The cross-border relations of different segment of societies will also affects the state-to-state relations. The political set up and leadership have to think on new lines of engagements and discourage old hostile mindset. This will change the mindset of security think tanks and foreign policy orientation of both states may not short but in long term.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

#### 3.1 Religious Economy; Kartarpur as an Opportunity

Pakistan and India were agreed for the project of Kartarpur corridor with limited pilgrims. According to agreement, the Indian government has to give the visitors list to Pakistan three days before visit. During their stay in Pakistan visitors will eat nothing except Parshad. Apparently, it looks awkward that pilgrims are not allowed to buy something and forced to move out of the holy shrine. If the project proved fruitful, both of the states can facilitate the pilgrims in future. According to new visa policy of Pakistan, American and Canadian Sikhs can apply for on the arrival visa at airports. "I assure that you will be issued multiple visas... This is our responsibility. We will facilitate you rather will give you visas at airport," Imran khan assured at inauguration ceremony.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, this religious shrine will also be able to secure the same status as other religious sites have across the world. Therefore, both of the States would get economic benefits from corridor, Pakistan will secure more benefits and opportunities than India. Moreover, Indian Hindu community had also written a letter to former PM Imran khan to open the Sharada Peth temple for pilgrimage, in Neelum Valley Kashmir. These religious visitors will play a significant role in State economy, when they will move to Pakistan across the world, they have to stay, eat, travel, and buy from these holy religious places. The situation of host will be impacted due to the visitors contact with the religious shrines directly and economy and society of host indirectly. The First apparent impact of pilgrimage tourism is due to the visits the religious site and the visitor's connection with the holy religious place. Moreover, religious

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<sup>58</sup> Ahmed Siddique, "Pakistan PM assures multiple on-arrival visas for Sikhs" *Golf Today*, September 2019

institutions and holy sites are surrounded by related businesses. As travel agents, souvenir stalls, hotels and hospitals are providing a source of employment for the host state. Especially religious items as souvenir, sacred water, candles and icons or other related religious items brings a considerable revenue. For example, Muslims states Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran earn a lot from the religious tourism and those benefits are not limited to commercial benefits relating to stay, travel, food, and taxes but they also secure sympathies and favors of minds which further improve people to people contacts. These religious attachments have directly impacted on the foreign policy of states. A good example of pilgrimage tourism is the site Lourdes related to Catholic pilgrimage. This site receives about 6 million pilgrims every year from 140 different states across the world, a constant population growth observed since the beginning as a pilgrimage place in 1858.<sup>59</sup> Same as Czestochowa a town in Poland having a total population about 250,000 attracts 4.5 million pilgrims every year. According to media reports, more than 300 million people travel for religious obligations across the world.

Moreover, an important issue in Indian Punjab is bilateral trade between India and Pakistan, especially during state and national elections. All the political parties in the Punjab have supported the narrative of bilateral trade and opening of more border crossings. Indian Punjab is also pushing for restoration of bilateral trade through Attari -Wagah border. Now the voices are more vocal for porous border and to enhance the bilateral trade and setup of special economic zones on border. At the event of inauguration ceremony, the important point was raised by Navjot Singh Sadhu to enhance trade links between India and Pakistan

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<sup>59</sup>S. Vijayawada, "SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS IN PILGRIMAGE TOURISM," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 2, no:1 (January 2018): 355

in general and the two Punjab's in particular. He stated that "I have a dream that a trader from Amritsar should start journey after having breakfast in the morning and come to Lahore and have *biryani* there, do his business and in the evening go back to Amritsar,"<sup>60</sup>.

**Sadhu**, a friend of Prime Minister Imran Khan credited by many (especially by Sikh diaspora) for giving a stimulus to opening the corridor. Sadhu urged Pakistani prime minister during his speech to liberalize trade and porous border.

Pakistani government has put in place some plans to protect Sikh holy sites. The formation of the new government and the announcement of soft power approach started a new era of democracy in Pakistan. Pilgrims allowed to visit free of charge. so, a plan announced and in the first phase the Kartarpur opened to the Sikh community. Many people from Sikh communities from all over the world participated in this event. Prime Minister Imran Khan emphasized the importance of promoting tourism in country. Kartarpur Gurdwara Sahib is a valid place for promoting religious tourism in country.

### **3.2 Tourism**

The word tourism had no place in English language and literature until the last century. Then describe it as an individual or group trip that uses their precious time to enjoy. Gradually, it became an industry, and the government began to grow tourism as a source of economic benefit. In the Middle Ages, people living in agricultural societies rarely had to leave their villages or local lands. Even at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was very slow. The term is defined by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO); Tourism is a cultural, social and economic

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<sup>60</sup>CHITLEEN K SETHI, "Sidhu's Kartarpur speech has not only gone viral, it just resurrected his political career," *The Print*, November 14, 2019.

phenomenon which involves the movement of people to the places outside their typical environment for personal or business/professional purposes. Those peoples are called visitors (which may be either tourists, residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure<sup>61</sup>. **Tourism industry has economic significance in modern era, a valuable source of earnings is secured by many states both developed and developing.** Without affecting wages and employment opportunities in the State, visitors spendings provide income to both sectors, public as well as private. It offers more earnings than other primary products. The tourism is providing high income than export production in many states especially in low industrial dependency states. There are many types of tourism in these days. Varieties, such as international, domestic, long distance and short distance. It can be divided into eight other categories, and religious tourism is one of them.

### **3.3 Relationship between Religion and Tourism**

Religion and tourism are deeply intertwined historically. Pilgrims are mainly belonging to Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and sisterhood. A large number of followers of these religions visit places and attend religious ceremonies every year. **The religious leaders preached their beliefs** and some were buried in these areas after their deaths. Later, followers visited his cemetery and it gradually developed into a religious tourist attraction. Gradually, Small towns were appeared in these areas where locals started buying and selling. This ultimately promotes the economic development of the local community, as tourists buy daily necessities such as food and shelter from there. These

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<sup>61</sup>Skripak and Stephen J., "Hospitality and Tourism", *Fundamentals of Business*, 2017

activities were also considered by modern countries and helped tourists to visit their holy places by providing visa, transport and accommodation facilities.

Although the modern tourism is regarded as a comparatively new phenomenon but it is clear that it has origins rooted in the age-old phenomenon of pilgrimage<sup>62</sup>. Religious tourism is now growing worldwide, the World Tourism Organization estimated that about 330 million tourists visit holy religious sites each year. This also included missionary trips for tourists, return to monasteries, religious conferences and seminars across the globe. The characteristics of religious tourism are, to perform pilgrimage as an act of worship, to express gratitude, confess sin and to perform a vow, to achieve social and spiritual salvation, to commemorate and celebrate certain religious events, to enhance one's knowledge, communication, to develop special interest in the tourism products, to generate employment and socio-economic benefits, to ensure authenticity and original character of the religious place and to ensure peace and harmony.<sup>63</sup> These tourists travel to fulfill their religious desires. Modern States rely heavily on tourism, to attract international tourists from all over the world, these countries declared them as a tourism state. Developed economies also plans to develop their ancient civilizations and places of worship to attract the tourist. Previous Government of PTI planned to promote tourism industry for economic stability.

Kartarpur Corridor was opened on November 9, 2019 in Kartarpur. About 1,000 devotees attended the ceremony. It is estimated that 5000 Sikh pilgrims from India will visit

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<sup>62</sup> Noga Collins Kreiner, "The Changing World Religion Map: Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics, New York, 2015

<sup>63</sup> Dr. Kapur Radhika, "The Significance of Religious Tourism," *Research Gate*, (July 2018)



Gurdwara Sahib without visa every day. There is no doubt that it will grow over time and provide excellent support to strengthen the country's tourism-based economy.

### **3.4 Importance of Religious Tourism for Economic Development in Pakistan**

The world's major emerging markets are Iran, Nigeria, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Russia and Thailand. Many Asian states by following the developed states have seen a significant increase in the adoption of new strategies. For example, Nepal and the Philippines are focusing more on tourism. In the first half of 2019, Philippines has earned a huge amount approximately Rs 5.245 billion from international tourists whereas Nepal's received Rs 47.471 billion from international tourists every year. Pakistan is a developing country that needs significant economic growth. It has to repay its debts to International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to create the basic necessities, health, education. To **Search and find new aspects of economic growth are necessary to fulfill these promises. The new democratic government created a new economic policy, with a focus on curbing** foreign debt. The government is much confident that tourism will boost the economy by Rs 1 trillion by 2025 approximately. The state has carefully implemented the National Action Plan (NAP), which helps in eradicating terrorism and extremism in Pakistan and the tourism industry is advancing from the current situation. With the improvement in the security situation of the country, the proportion of tourists per year has increased. Pakistan is amazing with its beautiful scenery, rich culture and historical places.

### **3.5 National Tourism Strategy (2020)**

Tourism is one of the main strategic plans and the latest 10-year roadmap of GOP aimed at reviving the tourism industry. **A ten-year road map is being developed to revitalize tourism. For decades, the tourism industry has worked to ensure that its vast resources are**

used to the maximum to achieve sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty and reduce social inequality.<sup>64</sup> The new PTI government directed the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) to recognize the potential of the sector through multilateralism. A National Tourism Strategy (NTS) was developed by PTDC after several consultation meetings with tourism experts from public and private organizations. The strategic plan is guided by Vision (2020-2030), a sustainable tourism industry that provides people a better life by providing positive social interaction and economic growth and contributes to the country's economic growth. It will also help to improve industry competitiveness and maximize the use of natural, cultural, historical and geographical locations.

### **3.6 Economic Importance and Functional Spillover of Kartarpur Corridor**

Article 36 of the 1973 constitution strongly supports the granting of religious rights to minorities as well as representation in Provincial and Federal Assemblies. This article defined that the State of Pakistan will protect the interests and rights of ethnic minorities including political rights in federal and state institutions. The Kartarpur Corridor has also been expanded to encourage religious freedom for ethnic minorities. **Every year, Sikh pilgrims from India and around the world came to Pakistan to perform their religious obligations.** Pakistan willfully sought to provide Sikh communities with access to places of worship, residence, and religious ceremonies. Pakistan has always been sought

Pakistan is a growing economy and is looking for new ways to strengthen its economy. The initiative of Kartarpur corridor is expected to support Pakistan's trade and foreign exchange reserves. It is estimated that up to 565,000 people can be obtained from tourists.

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<sup>64</sup> Ghani Saba, "National Tourism Strategy 2020," *Pakistan Tours*, (January 2020)

Pakistan and India signed an historic agreement allowing tourists to cross the border between the two countries. Online Portal has been launched, within three to four working days as their visit is confirmed and registered, they will be updated via SMS or email. Approximately 5,000 pilgrims allowed to visit the gurdwara every day and the number of visitors could increase at special occasions. The pass will be open to pilgrims throughout the year. They can visit for free in groups or in person.

The inherited unstable political relations of Pakistan and India halt the trade between these neighbors since independence. During times of peace and stability trade via borders and sea routes remained continue. Functional Spill over is the idea that the larger regional cooperation takes place when cooperation in one area of interest within a region influence and paving way for cooperation in other areas. Considering the Pakistan-India relations the economic and trade ties remained hostage in the crucial environments. Relations between both of states improved in 2000s, after given the status to Pakistan as best country (MFN). In 1947, among the 25 founding members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade both Pakistan & India were also included. The most preferred-nation clause is the basic principle of the GATT, according to which any trade concession granted to GATT members should be prolonged to all the members. India granted the MFN status to Pakistan in 1996. India also urges Pakistan to provide India with the most preferred national treatment as this situation will ease the restrictions and flow of quality and quantity of goods between both states.

The evolution and modifications that took place in dynamics, it is necessary to understand that economic integration and mutual **interests leads** to strengthening of political relations. Economic interests and goals bound the state's political leaderships and public in an unbreakable bond which makes it compulsion to associate their political goals with

economics. Thus, the prospects of regional cooperation in **South Asian region in context of Kartarpur Corridor**, the economic interests of states bind regions and cultures together and makes their linkages vital for the progress. It is almost like a symbiotic relationship but the volatility of relations in South Asian neighbors, trade and economic integration is difficult to reach its full execution. Nevertheless, the initiative of Kartarpur Corridor opened a door on the basis of religious cooperation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

#### 4.1 Political Significance of Project

The construction of the Kartarpur Corridor has been widely hailed for the opening of a new chapter in India-Pakistan relations. Many hopes that the goodwill produced by Kartarpur corridor will enhance the people-to-people contact and it could further lead to improve the diplomatic relations between the two States. Prime Minister Imran Khan has suggested that the corridor could mark the first step towards greater economic bonds between the two states. 1st Joint Press Statement on Kartarpur Corridor talks issued by MEA stated that “Both sides held detailed and constructive discussions on various aspects and provisions of the proposed agreement and agreed to work towards expeditiously operationalizing the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor.”<sup>65</sup> The initiative of kartarpur corridor widely appreciated worldwide, also by Pakistani and Indian political leadership. At the event of ground breaking ceremony of Kartarpur corridor, Prime Minister Khan called for futuristic approach to solve all the bilateral issues between Pakistan and India. A new era of Pakistan-India relations will be started with a hope that people to people contact will enhance with the construction of Kartarpur Corridor. Further the good will gesture and the better diplomatic relations are believed in fourth coming. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan highlighted to fighting against poverty, ignorance, and hunger in South Asia and assured to get forward two steps if India takes One.<sup>66</sup> So, the Kartarpur can be 1<sup>st</sup> drop of rain

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<sup>65</sup> The Asian Age, “India-Pakistan Held Detailed, Constructive Talks on Kartarpur Corridor” (March14,2019)

<sup>66</sup> Muhammad Iqbal Roy, “Kartarpur Corridor: A Gate Way to Peace in South Asia (Evolution, Development, Prospects & Implications),” *Journal of Politics and International Studies* 6, no:1 (June, 2020):124

towards peace between India and Pakistan. The development of corridor has proved that despite difficulty, political intent, willingness and constructive action can pave the way for meaningful academic exchanges between Indian and Pakistani historian communities and institutions<sup>67</sup>. Contrary the symbolic importance of the Kartarpur Corridor aside, there are a number of issues that may stymie its long-term impact. Furthermore, there are a number of modalities relating to the corridor itself that have not been spelt out as of yet.

#### **4.1.1 Role of Political Communication and Religious Harmony**

Franklin defined the following broad and detailed definition of political communication:

The political communication included studies the interaction of local, national and international media and political systems. Franklin believes political communication emphases on the political content of the media, the participants and institutions involved in the production of content and the impact of political media content on audiences. This is also influences on the political system. To achieve the desired goals, the Kartarpur corridor initiative provide an opportunity to both of states to communicate itself. There is a famous proverb that action speaks louder than words. In this matter Pakistan and India communicated the peaceful intentions although hesitating, as terms of sound action.

The role of religious-political parties is usually criticized especially due to against the minority rights but world has witnessed that neither religious community nor religions based political parties opposed the Corridor especially in Pakistan at any level. Although, actions of Hindu community and government of India in J&K are not encouraging but the initiative especially influenced the narratives of Sikh-Muslim communities. **Now, the entire Sikh community can visit the holy shrine without a difficult visas process.** Pakistan

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<sup>67</sup>HEMANT RAJOPADHYE, "India-Pakistan Peacemaking: Beyond Populist Religious Diplomacy," *Observer Research Foundation* 343, ( March, 2020)

allowed world community to look at the whole event in perspective of political and intra-religion harmony.

#### **4.1.2 Political image building among Sikhs and Globally**

Image-building is neither an automatic process nor does it occur in segregation from the happenings around the globe. Image is never acquired by merely sitting and desiring to be like a particular role model; instead, one has to earn the image through hard work.<sup>68</sup> In the history of Pakistan-India relations, it was a pivotal moment which received a significant public attention. Across the border intellectuals' politicians and people of all colors and religions are always eager to know more about the other side of the border. Kartarpur Shrine is an important memorial and famous ancient shrines for Sikh community. Kartarpur is the third oldest worship built by Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion. When COAS assured to Sadhu for opening the Kartarpur, he claimed in a presser that government of Pakistan had decided to open the Kartarpur corridor. As the news run on media channels the whole Sikh community across the world welcomed the long demanding initiative. Furthermore, on the day of inauguration the Kartarpur Corridor the State Department stated "It is a step towards promoting greater religious freedom. Best wishes to the pilgrims making the crossing for the 550th anniversary of Guru Nanak's birth."<sup>69</sup> Dedicate the intention to reconciliation, it has also damaged India's current negative political structure. The rigid bureaucratic structure created by the former colonial ideologies is also an obstacle to reconciliation efforts. Opening the Kartarpur route for Sikh community is a small step towards reconciliation and strengthen common cultural ties. Similar arrangements may be

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<sup>68</sup> Areeja Syed and Shabnam Gul, "Pakistan's International Image and Need for Public Diplomacy," *Global Social Sciences Review* 5, no:2 (spring, 2020): 462

<sup>69</sup> Raniv singh, "Kartarpur Corridor Inauguration Live: Opening of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor Has Brought Us Immense Happiness, Says PM Modi," *The Times of India*, (November 9, 2019)

made in future for Hindu pilgrims, wishes to visit the Katas Raj Temple and other significant spiritual monuments. Imran Khan's government made great strides in its efforts to create a long-term friendly environment with all its neighboring states. The first speech made after his election victory also raised hopes because he has a deep understanding of Pakistan and its regional norms, especially in terms of peace with India and Afghanistan. The way to Globalization passes through roads of regionalization, the political future of world revolves around globalization. Global peace and security will be ensured by regional peace.

One of the biggest challenges to security of South Asia is the rivalry between Pakistan and India. The security phenomenon has undermined the development and sustainable growth throughout the region. The friendly relations between both states can provide opportunities for social, political development and trade relations that could be beneficial for entire SAARC region.

#### **4.1.3 Corridor Construction Policy and Significance**

Sikhs suffered the most from the 1947 division of British India, because their spiritual and material states were divided into India and Pakistan. The hostile relations and environment of distrust was so much abundant that any peaceful move by any actor was also taken with suspicious step. In such situations the Kartarpur corridor initiative should be taken as historically landmark step towards peace and harmony. Pakistan is also benefiting from its geostrategic location and economic corridor with China is already in progress, many more opportunities are still existed and state actors are focused. In the dynamics of global politics, politics and economics of seas is getting more complex with focus on commercial and economic activities. [Restoring historical Afghanistan-Pakistan-India-Bangladesh-Myanmar \(APIBM\) Corridor can be the road of shared prosperity for South Asia and](#)



creating the required interdependence for keeping peace all around.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, Pakistan has opportunity to develop transit economy due to its geographical location. Afghanistan, India and CARS (Central Asian Republics) are seeking for trade through Pakistani territory.

The idea to construct the Kartarpur corridor has been surfaced for decades. In 1999, the former Prime Minister of India Atal Behari Vajpayee during his to Lahore called on the Prime Minister of Pakistan to work together to construct the Kartarpur corridor. On inauguration ceremony of former PM Imran Khan, a new stimulus to this idea was surfaced again. India and Pakistan not only praised this ideological progress, but also quickly took steps to establish this ideology in their respective territories. In India, the National Congress Party and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) all claims to build this corridor. All three parties are looking forward to the next national elections and hope that their cooperation with this initiative will increase the number of Sikh votes. The central ruling Party BJP and its ally claim that they are at the center of every event in corridor despite that Congress Party is in power in Punjab.

For instance, a leading figure from the Akali Dal, Harsimrat Kaur Badal, was sent to Pakistan to represent the Indian government at the groundbreaking ceremony. The Akali Dal is a Punjab centered political party that has traditionally relied upon the support of Sikh agriculturalists. Over the past three years, the party has lost ground amongst sections of the Sikh community due to allegations that it failed to take action over the reported desecration of Sikh religious texts and former protest against policies of central government.

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<sup>70</sup> Khuram Amin et al., "Pakistan's Strategic Corridors and Projects," Stratagem, April 8, 2016, <https://stratagem.pk/strategic-pulse/pakistans-strategic-corridors-projects/>.

The opening of the Kartarpur corridor provides an opportunity to Imran Khan government to show that it has political will to backing its demands to develop good relations with India. [The Government of Pakistan is using religious harmony, track two diplomacy and religious tourism as tool to normalize relations with India.](#) Imran Khan said at the event of groundbreaking ceremony that corridor opening will be an opportunity for both Pakistan and India to open a new way of friendship, peace and trade. It is significant that General Bajwa was also along with Imran Khan during the inauguration ceremony. Khan stressed that his government, all political parties, army and all Pakistani institutions are on the same page and that he is committed to establishing new relationship with India.

## **4.2 Varying Interpretation from Both Sides**

The history of Indo-Pak relations is mostly full of hostility and mistrust. Healthy or serious developments are also looking by suspicious lenses across the border. Mostly security think tanks and political leadership views are not in positive manners. The initiative of Kartarpur corridor is also have the implications for entire political landscape and internal set ups of India and Pakistan. This will not only revive the negative views but also an opportunity to think along the new positive manners.

### **4.2.1 Implications for Political Landscape**

States integration strengthened the hope of economic prosperity by discouraging their political issues and promotion of cordiality and peace. In current era States are acting as global actors and difficult to afford isolation. Kartarpur Corridor Project is the milestones in the backdrop of Pak-India conflictual relations, such initiatives are very rare in history. The direct impact of Kartarpur Corridor on Pak-Indian relations cannot be ignored, moreover it will have an impact on Indian domestic politics and social trends, particularly

in the Punjab. The history of Indian elections confirms that the party in government is always using anti-Pakistan campaign to win the elections. The Kartarpur corridor will erode the traditional propaganda strategy in India. We see that the confused BJP sometimes opposes Pakistan and sometimes tries to earn respect for the Kartarpur Corridor. In the case of Kartarpur corridor, it should be noted that India has lost the diplomatic war and Pakistan has grab the opportunity. So, the hostile political thinking and security think tanks will have to consider new dimensions to engagement. **Different groups of publics such as civil society, business community, religious minorities, showbiz and sports are in favor of mutual cooperation.** The tension between both states **may not be over by Kartarpur corridor** but it can be a conducive in orienting the balance in favor of economic and social relations over security in the region.

#### **4.2.2 Implications for Internal stability in Pakistan**

Opening of Kartarpur corridor provide confidence to the ethnic minorities in Pakistan. Kartarpur Corridor initiative and development thwarted anti-Pakistan propaganda. The steps taken by **Government** of Pakistan rejected Indian claim that Sikhs had been misled into believing that Pakistan and Muslims did not respect the sacred Sikh holy places. Historically Sikhs were ideologically deceived into believing that Pakistan's gurdwara were destroyed by government. A powerful lobby was creating unrest about the status of Pakistani minorities, but now the world is beginning to understand the reality. With this wise move and the accomplishment of the Kartarpur Corridor, extremism will be crushed and if such facilities exist the frustrations of Sikhs will be resolved.

#### **4.2.3 Implications for the Internal Situation of India**

The Kartarpur Corridor was initiated by the Pakistan as a political strategy. Initially, approval of the Kartarpur corridor was not on the agenda of the Indian Cabinet meeting,

but later it was included in the main objectives to counter Pakistani actions. The BJP had intended not to agree to the cross but his refusal could lead to the destruction of the BJP and its ally Akali dal politics in Punjab. Therefore, the hatred policy of BJP's failed to penetrate further into Punjab, and they approved the project. Pakistan's belief in Sikhism and its moral and political support for the Sikh community has earned the trust of the Sikhs. Sikh community is thankful to the courageous and pragmatic political approach shown by Sadhu, the Congress has gained prominence in Punjab. Sikhs believes that Sikhs are received in Pakistan as friends and it is believed that the players are always brave, so Imran Khan and Sadhu showed the same enthusiasm. Kartarpur Langa is a great achievement for Sadhu, it also affected the Akali Dal circle as many Akali leaders praised his bravery and accomplishments. Therefore, in the upcoming elections, the BJP will lose a large number of seats in Punjab and Parliament will come to a more influential position. In India's domestic politics both sides tried to portray the Kartarpur Pass as a success for them.

### **4.3 Communities Perspectives Across the Border**

The Kartarpur Corridor is considered as an international symbol of liberalism and Pakistan is recognized as a counter-terrorism and liberal country. **The initiative was responded with mixed views across the border but most of them were in favor of peace and harmony.** As, Indian Hindu community defined the step as move to support the Khalistan movement at the same time an echo was listen from Pakistan side regarding Qadiane, but were not so much loudly. At the same time, criticism came from PMLN and JUI, Ahsan Iqbal, Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman criticized and the same was adopted by some BJP leaders. The role of religious parties is often criticized, especially for the rights of minorities, but there are no clergy or religious parties in the world that oppose the Kartarpur Corridor and use religious

parties to oppose the rights of Sikhs. Therefore, this holy place regains the same dignity as other religious places in the world. **Both Pakistan and India will get economic benefits of this transition, especially Pakistan will secure more economic benefits than India.** Tourists across the world would travel, stay, eat and shopping in a holy country that will be important to boost the economy. As Iran and Saudi Arabia have many religious routes. They not only gain commercial advantages in the field of tourism, catering, accommodation, shopping, taxes, etc., but they also gain the favor of people.

At large, the Kartarpur Corridor is being looked to as a model for the facilitation of further religious travel between Pakistan and India. After groundbreaking ceremonies of Kartarpur corridor, Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir also demanded the governments of India and Pakistan to develop a same corridor for Hindu pilgrims to visit Sharda Peeth in AJK. Sharda Peeth is a Hindu temple dedicated to the goddess Sharda Devi, which now falls in the Pakistani side of the Line of Control. It was not included in the list of 1974 Protocol as a shrine to which pilgrimages are allowed. The opening of a religious corridor in Kashmir is being described by some as a means of expanding religious, cultural and intellectual exchanges, and enabling a solution to the crisis in Kashmir. Kashmir based Hindu community have written a letter to the Pakistani Prime Minister to personally intervene and allow to undertake pilgrimage to Sharda temple. They go on to state that such tours will play an important role to develop people to people relations that will lead to confidence building **Measures** (CBM) and for enduring peace in the subcontinent.

#### **4.4 Future Prospects**

While both India and Pakistan are trying to claim credit for the initiative, the crucial modalities **and technicalities regarding the future of project yet to be worked out.** These

have the potential to limit any lasting impact that the corridor may have on improving relations between the two states. The devil, as they say, lies in the details. Both sides have spoken in terms of visa-free travel but have not spelt out what sort of permits would be required by those seeking to travel across the corridor. Security agencies on both sides of the border will no doubt demand that a strict regime of permits, regulation and monitoring be put in place. Sections within India are already highlighting the potential threat of terrorist infiltration. An issue that is likely to pose a major stumbling block is whether India will be allowed to have consular access to the pilgrims. This is a controversial issue because Indian consular officials in Pakistan have complained about not being allowed to visit Sikh shrines and meet the pilgrims on at least three occasions in the past year itself. The issue of consular access is linked to concerns over support from the Pakistani establishment for Sikh separatists demanding an independent state of Khalistan. In the 1980s, India witnessed the rise of a militant movement to establish an independent Sikh state. Pakistan's premier intelligence service ISI has been accused of supporting the Khalistan militants. There is a concern in India that Pakistan continues to support attempts by segments of the Sikh diaspora to revive the demand for Khalistan. Such concerns have been accentuated by a grenade attack by suspected Khalistan militants in Amritsar, India, on 18 November 2018 that killed three people. Indian officials have raised concerns over the support for Khalistani propaganda in Pakistan and the influence this may have on visiting Sikh pilgrims. On 23 November 2018, India's Ministry of External Affairs gave a statement that demanded Pakistan to take measures to and not allow its territory to be used for any hostility and support for terrorist tendencies against India.

So, the Kartarpur corridor is in midst of political mistrust and opportunity, as ray of hope for future peace between Pakistan and India. The initiative of kartarpur was warmly

welcomed by civil societies and most of the political parties across the border. Furthermore, other segment of society also demanded the ease on their issues. The corridor opened a window for political leaderships across the border to take positive steps and decrease the surface tension step by step. In this regard the kartarpur corridor is major breakthrough which will improve states collaboration and policies.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### KARTARPUR AS AN OPPORTUNITY OF NEW OPENING FOR COGNITIVE VARIABLES

#### 5.1 Cognitive Variables attached to Kartarpur corridor

The historical pattern of rivalry between India and Pakistan the opening of Kartarpur corridor is the window of hope and peace for optimistic. The legacy of enmity since independence defeated and positive gesture of true humanity won. This chapter will answer the question concerning the cognitive variables (a mirror for theory of constructivism) linkage with kartarpur corridor. Shared ideas, beliefs, values and cultural linkages overcome the policy-oriented hostility among both states. Common roots can be found in pre-partition set of Common culture, occupations, folk stories and society mindset. The kartarpur Corridor is the fruit of ideas and belief that rights of a minority living in hostile state should not be violated. **The step taken by Pakistan appreciated not only by Sikh community but also by other socio-religious groups across the border.** Hindu community also demanded the same Corridor to visit the temple in AJK on other hand Muslims of Pakistan also demanded the ease in visa policy to visit the shrines in India. The business community are also demanding more porous borders. So, the step from the state on the bases of common culture outlook and minority rights encourage the other segment of society to demand more peaceful relations and ease in policies of States. This is the two-way impact; state policies to public mindset and public norms and ideas to state policies. The kartarpur corridor gave a new hope for positive thinking all the segment of society across the border; from showbiz to business community and religious to political community.



## 5.2 Pakistan's Interest in Kartarpur Corridor

After independence the legacy of border demarcation and clashes were inherited by India and Pakistan. With the passage time, these differences eventually escalated into an armed conflict leading to four wars. Regulating access to religious minority communities in other States and places of worship is an important especially when measuring Pakistan- India relations. Pakistan and India shared holy places of religious minorities such as the Sikh community, which eventually creates some problems for religious community. Treaties and protocols regulated formal arrangements for Pakistan-Indian nationals, immigrants and pilgrims from other countries. Pakistan granting the rights to Sikh community especially Indian based Sikh diaspora gain intentions of international actors. Pakistan has successfully defused the blame game about minorities rights and also gave a new insight to Kashmir issue [as India has revoked the special status of Kashmir valley in August, 2019](#). The Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan had wisely expressed the Kashmir issue at international platforms including in the UN General Assembly session. Imran Khan wants to resolve the Kashmir issue by diplomatic means rather than use of military force<sup>71</sup>. The symbolic importance of the corridor notwithstanding, there are a number of issues such as the Kashmir conflict, Pakistan policy of projection the soft image at international level, interfaith harmony, accusations of state support for terrorism and Pakistan's support for Sikh separatism that may have impact in future. Furthermore, there are a number of modalities relating to the corridor itself that have not been spelt out as of yet.

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<sup>71</sup> Rahat Shah, "Foreign policy of Pakistan under Imran Khan," *moderndiplomacy*, (february,2020)

### **5.2.1 Pakistan's Image as a Soft Power**

Sikhs holy religious shrines located in Pakistan have become more regular pilgrimage places from 1990. To some extent, these changes reflect the wider trend of global tourism, as in the age of Sikhs' cultural influence and cheap tourism, shrines have become popular pilgrimage sites. These trips have been advertised publicly in media and Pakistani travel agents have stepped up to promote the Sikh pilgrimage market. They provide special trips to public places for large gatherings. As, Pakistan facilitates Sikhs through visa facilitation, promote its cultural "soft power". Interest of Pakistan's are linked with cultural and religious heritage, soft image of Pakistan builds internationally. The present government in Pakistan used the multi-tracks via engaging nonofficial channels for promotion of peace and culture rich image of Pakistan across the globe. To promote the colorful and truthful diversity and natural landscape, Pakistan has also invited various bloggers and vloggers. Kartarpur corridor continues Pakistan's trend of "actively promoting its cultural soft power" by assisting religious minorities<sup>72</sup>. Pakistan is known as "religious home" of the Sikh community, A largescale pilgrimages are predictable from East Punjab. However, this may cause people to be concerned about the current approach and management system of the Sikh Holy Land, and to create new ideas about the Sikh "Holy Land" and "homeland".

### **5.2.2 A Catalyst for Interfaith harmony**

For Pakistan, this move is fully in line with its projection as "Islamic republic", promotion interfaith harmony and rights protection of religious minorities. Interfaith harmony is one of the main ideologies linked with the democratic country, Pakistan faces a lot of heat owing to some isolated incidents while country overall have a good level of religious

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<sup>72</sup>Tejpaul Singh Bainiwal, "Religious and Political Dimensions of the Kartarpur Corridor: Exploring the Global Politics Behind the Lost Heritage of the Darbar Sahib," *Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute* (October,2020)

tolerance. However, due to changing geostrategic dynamics in the region for the last decades, the world deprived by this knowledge about Pakistan. **The former Prime Minister Imran Khan took it upon himself to change the international narratives about Pakistan.** Opening the Kartarpur corridor is one of the many initiatives that will help the world understandings about Pakistan. **The former PM Imran Khan intimated his noble intentions behind the project when he said, If Mecca and Medina were 4KM away and Muslims couldn't visit, how would they feel? This is the same feeling Sikhs have for Kartarpur.**

### **5.3 Indian Counter Narrative**

The Kartarpur corridor initiative of Pakistan raise serious concern from Indian side and at the same time Government of India is taking the credit of this project. **The Government of India has blamed Pakistan for material, political support and armed violence in Punjab.** Not only did he support the rebels, but he also treated Sikh religious sentiments by promoting Sikh religious separatism. **The political scenario of India is also mixed-up, BJP has its government in center while Congress in Punjab.** The Kartarpur initiative was negotiated directly with Sadhu with limited interference of Modis government. So, the central Government show serious concerns over it. As a result, Indian foreign minister Sushma Suraj statement linked the further negotiation with Pakistan with cross border terrorism, at this event. Indian officials also blamed that Pakistan is using Kartarpur Corridor for provoking Khalistan movement. Furthermore, the implications of Kartarpur will also support Kashmir cause at international level and Pakistan is using it smartly. Similarly, the probable impact on the Sikhs electorate in the upcoming legislative elections in the state of Punjab is also a major concern for central government. Contrary, the major development regarding the ease of tension among communities by kartarpur corridor can be observed

by letter of Indian Hindu community to PM Imran Khan to opening the Hindu temple Sharda Peth in Azad Kashmir.

#### **5.4 A Balancing Approach**

In past years the improvement in foreign policy of Pakistan analyzed, the development of an economic corridor with China (CPEC) and "socio-religious" corridor against the enmity of India's along the Kartarpur. India has many issues relating to ethnicity and religion contrary Pakistan knows how to respect the religious minorities and identifies the need for religious freedom and equality. In Constitution of Pakistan the article 36 assured that the state has obligation to protect the rights and interests of religious and ethnic minorities in jurisdiction. To promote religious freedom and harmony of minorities, kartarpur corridor development is an icon project. The Pakistani government is promoting religious tourism across the world with shared messages of peace and harmony amongst all religions. PM Imran Khan in his speech stated that " happiness on the faces of Sikh pilgrims looks like that of Muslims, when they reach Mecca or Medina." Deploring the current scenario in Pakistan and India, he called on the two countries to establish "civil relations", solve the "Kashmir issue", and strengthen economic ties between neighboring countries in the Indian subcontinent. Interestingly, Khan emphasized that government, political parties and all Pakistani institutions are on one page. In response to Khan's remarks, Harsamrat Kaur Padal, Shiromani leader Akali Dal and Federal Cabinet Minister declared a historic day for Sikh community. The aspirations of millions of Sikhs across the world defined the initiative as a 'Peace Corridor', which could be a basis for a new start between Pakistan and India. It appears that process of constructing the corridor will return the old security structure to pilgrims for freedom of movement. In a document of 59 pages by Indian officials, Pakistani officials made 14 proposals, including establishing facilities and safety posts on both sides

of the corridor. Special Spectrum License for Visitors List of guests would send to Pakistan three days prior to the visit. All travelers would be required the security clearance from the Indian authorities. This project is highly appraised by international community USA, EU, UK and other international powers. Kartarpur commitments are in line with the enduring reality of India-Pakistan relations. Coordination is a very powerful word, the kartarpur Corridor initiative undoubtedly signaled an opportunity to reduce tensions between the two rival neighbors in South Asia. Although it has the ability to expand channels of trust, it also broadens channels of accountability. Given the long-term needs of Sikh pilgrims, the Kartarpur Pass was built despite New Delhi's concerns over the intentions of the Pakistani military to thwart any attempt to achieve regional coordination. As national security issues dominate the debate between senior policy officials in Pakistan and India, it is clear that resolving kartarpur is not the solution to all the deep issues between neighboring countries but a step towards peace and mutual dialogue should not overlooked. In addition, before a peacebuilding process can be organized, trust must be gained between the main political players. However, the initiative shows that India and Pakistan have the potential to bridge the gap for the sake of broader nation-state interests.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

It has been observed that kartarpur corridor revamped social and religious values, created a ray of hope for communities across the border. The opening of kartarpur corridor on the birthday of Guru Nanak will apostle of peace, harmony, social justice and equality, such occasions would be observed in the true spirit of amity and brotherhood. Both of communities can share each other's' joys by being part of the festivals, which forge the spirit of brotherhood, this spirit of inclusiveness would flourish leaps and bounds for bringing harmony and tranquility in the society. Pakistan has the policies to respect religions and ethnic minorities while Indian internal situation is completely different in this regard. For promotion of harmony and religious freedom of minorities kartarpur corridor is an icon effort. The Government of Pakistan promoted religious tourism with the message of peace and equality among all religions across the world.

Evaluating the event from political lenses, it seems that predominantly religious, social and cultural features worked as the background to set the stage for this event. Unexpectedly, it gives a new dimension to the political relations between the two neighbors. The media and analysts dealing with international relations in South Asian region closely followed the developments between both states related to the Kartarpur Corridor. The Kartarpur corridor and visa-free entry for pilgrimage to Sahib Gurudwara is an approach flowed out of the conventional paradigms of diplomacy. Measuring the event in political terms, it has given a new dimension to the politics of regional integration. The rational voices within South Asia hopes that kartarpur initiative will paves the way for a more harmonious bilateral relationship between Pakistan and India. Undoubtedly, the event gives a message by using

local and cultural support at the forefront to resolve the political issues can foster the political commitments for the enduring peace.

It would take decades to build image internationally; many aspects like personalities, past events, culture and customs are basis for image building of States. States are keen to build up their soft image worldwide because this reputation will produce the imprints of their ability of rising trade markets and entrepreneurs. Pakistan has been struggling hard from past many years to improve its image as wide-ranging terrorist attacks have exhausted impression globally. The initiative of Kartarpur Corridor has been taken as a liberal gesture at international level and Pakistan is being admired as a State of religious freedom and minorities rights. The soft image of Pakistan and her national branding has accelerated by introducing visa free visit to Sikh pilgrim and easy visa attainments for tourists. The international community, particularly UN, United States and China has highlighted the Pakistan's great efforts for the Kartarpur project; amidst the time of strained relations between the neighboring countries after the military escalation of Pulwama attack and Kashmir lockdown. Pakistan's decision of Kartarpur Corridor has earned gratitude from international community as well as from Indian citizens.

The economic importance of Kartarpur corridor can't be ignored. The window of opportunities is behind the opening of corridor. The idea of opening the more corridors and especially economic corridors is now surfaced. It's observed that foreign policy of Pakistan is being improved with changing scenario of world politics; furthermore, construction of China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) and now a socio-religious corridor with India. Kartarpur Corridor will further enhance economic connectivity and boost tourism industry. The mutual trade of agricultural rich both states will facilitate the public by timely

provision of food items. Finally, the kartarpur corridor and aspects related to it are win-win situation for both states.

The hostile relations between both states effected the whole region, destroyed multiple opportunities and socio-political developments for trade and economic relations between neighbors. Undoubtedly, there are the naysayers who have pointed to the security hazards of the corridor. In contrast, the political leaders, journalists and strategic analysts have expectations and opinions that Kartarpur Corridor will improve bilateral relations of both States. Both of the States are facing similar challenges: water scarcity, inequitable income distribution, environmental vulnerability, high unemployment and development disruption. Keeping in view the positive and meaningful dialogue, Pakistan may offer to India for CPEC partnership; by past differences and to move forward. It is believed by national security and political actors in both States that corridor is not a magical solution to solve all the issues between both like Kashmir and trade issues but Pakistan still offered politically-strained and historically-charged relationship with peace in the time of jingoism. It is a laudable achievement between both south Asian Pakistan and India to put the differences aside and serve the broader interests of public. Other than religious aspect, the Kartarpur corridor will play a vital role for Economic and Trade ties between both hostile states from seven decades. The strategic Importance of Kartarpur corridor can't be ignored, it can go a long way to bring both states closer to diplomatic dialogue since both countries may turn over a new leaf to build the strong ties and bury the past to spread love and peace in the whole region.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Religious harmony as diplomatic tool**

In changing dynamic political scenario of world, it's important to change the policies and narratives of the state accordingly. Pakistan is shifting its policy from geopolitics to geoeconomics. The government is psychologically prepared to respond the changing conditions. To check out broader importance of psychological repression, foreign offices can use available resources and diplomatic tools on global dialogues. The soft power image of Pakistan should be built up through proper use of foreign offices and ambassadors across the world, in this regard the Kartarpur corridor is the best example ever. The heritages Preservation and religious tolerance are key to regain the confidence of international community as well as pilgrim-tourists. The Government of Pakistan should take prime responsibility to realize the hopes of Sikhs and world community. This spirit can be supported by taking steps towards religious harmony, in true sense. The kartarpur corridor should not be politicized, neither by Indian nor by Pakistan. The potential of state in religious tourism and importance of historical religious sites should consider by Government of Pakistan. Hence religious harmony has proved as diplomatic tool to generate income and to build the soft image of the state.

### **Promotion of Awareness and Tourism among Public**

The notion of peace and harmony should be highlighted by think tanks and government agencies to enhance the new databases with upgraded literature. In this situation, the hatred policies and education system should be targeted which is a real threat for the future developments of peace between Pakistan and India. The reconciliation of intellectual and academic policies should adhere by Indian authorities especially in Punjab. By adopting

the channels of mass communications and academics, other choices and opportunities should be highlighted. These steps will promote public awareness and opinion for co-existence and importance of regional cooperation. By using the platform of Kartarpur Mutual historical events would promote the ideas of traditional regional cooperation. To promote regional cooperation, it could become a mini melting pot on different levels. The Indian response in opening of Kartarpur Corridor remained constantly evasive and critical towards the peace initiatives. It has been observed that visa politics always played a negative role in religious tourism, participation in academic conference as well as in sports events. Therefore, to promote tourism in neighboring states visa policies should be made flexible. The role of media is pivotal in order to resolve many issues such as to highlight different aspects and to discuss possible options of solutions. In order to secure the peace and harmony in south Asian region the major responsibility lie upon the shoulders of media of Pakistan and India.

### **Regular Meetings and Usage of Regional Forums to Resolve Issues and enhance Interaction**

It would be simplistic to view the Kartarpur Religious Corridor from the simple prism of South Asian geopolitics, and security issues. There are many other layers to be considered, includes the possible stimulus to religious tourism, closer linkages between the both Punjabis' and in the longer run more porous borders initiatives between India and Pakistan, especially in the context of economic and trade integration. Furthermore, political relations among the states strengthening by economic integration. It may be optimistic to expect much more from Kartarpur Corridor and to reach the conclusion but a positive role in promotion of peace and harmony could possible after having awareness of people about the disasters of war. It will be more beneficial that representatives of the governments

conduct regular meetings, analyze advantages, point out the differences and addresses them. The US, Russia and China should encourage Pakistan not to focus India in the events, where India shows reluctance to associate with bilateral meetings. To highlight the perspective of peaceful ties and mutual dialogue; Pakistani government should use an option with the US, China and Russia. Siachen and Sir Creek clashes should be fixed by Pakistan and India as a less contentious issues for discussion. These issues are approximately settled and their execution is absent around at that point. By applying the spirit of Indus water such issues can also be resolved. By putting all the efforts on the Kashmir issue; a framework of conflict resolution should introduce to discuss the issue in proper and peaceful way. Without stimulating the SAARC, any step to normalize relations between both states would be meaningless. As most of Sikh community lived in India, the Sikh community has gained reasonable acceptance in Pakistan by improving bilateral relations.

### **Promote Cultural Exchanges**

Pakistan-India shares common history of customs and culture in the field of sports like; tennis, hockey, polo, cricket, squash, football, volleyball, kabaddi and snooker that connect both states public and players. Pakistan-India attempts to augment areas of uniting interests for example shared characteristic of culture, shows, TV, language, theaters, films, narratives and entertainers. positive messages are passing through these amazing assets. To promote peace and defuse tension celebrities should use to build soft image and confidence building measures.

### **Utilizing the trade as a tool for peace, security and stability**

Governments of Pakistan and India must understand their important responsibilities in fulfilling the ambitions of communities across the borders. The spirit of the Pakistan-India cooperation can retain its original significance by taking steps related to religious harmony. Mutual trade has the possibility to promote harmony and dependability between Pakistan and India. Both governments should cost adequacy and relative options must be considered while discussing choices on trade matters.

**Kartarpur corridor has possibly long-term implications** for South Asian region. In this scenario Chinese projects of CPEC China Pakistan Economic Corridor and OBOR One Belt One Road shows significance as a symbol of regional cooperation and economic progress. Economic opportunities bind public and States in a permanent bond of cooperation which makes necessary for political leaderships and think tanks to link their political goals with economic. Hence in South Asia the futures opportunities of regional cooperation related to Kartarpur Corridor; the collective economic progress binds regions together to makes their ties indispensable for progress of each.

It is insufficient to talk about peace rather one must believe in it. Not enough to believe one should work for peace. To bridge gap between both of states inclusive society play the key role in order to bring regional peace and stability. The steps towards conducive environment should be appreciated and acknowledged. For achievement of peace, we should invest on it. The Pakistan has always appreciated the initiative regarding Kartarpur Corridor. It should be understood that due to animosity and mistrust gap becomes widen. So, the governments should realize the duty and obligation to fill this gap through positive steps. These all steps can be culminated into a positive outcome.

## Conclusion

As per the given research analysis, it is concluded that Kartarpur corridor **has significance** in south Asian region generally and Pakistan-India specifically. The Kartarpur corridor opening offers a beacon of hope in a conflict torn Pakistan-India relationship. It has bridged both nations, people to people contact, reducing tensions, beefing up the social contracts, halting the aggressive politico behaviors and smoothing the way for further glorious initiatives. In this research paper it has been analyzed that religious shrines and sites play a vital role to address the community's issues effectively. In order to keep caring of communities, it is the prime responsibility of every state to provide basics rights not only to its citizens but also across the border. Moreover, it has also been observed how such glorious project beef up the Interfaith Harmony among the communities, people to people contact, highlight cultural heritage, social relations and track two diplomacies. Furthermore, it has also strengthened economies by opening doors of religious tourism, exchanging ideas and political marketing. In political perspective it has observed, political commination, political concerns, religious harmonies would reduce political chaos. As a result, it will develop soft image internationally.

It is summarized that Kartarpur Corridor has religious importance for Sikh community but it has also the potential for minimizing the tensions between both South Asian states (by propelling greater bonhomie and economic integration between both States). Furthermore, it could pave the way for people-to-people contacts and trade between both states. Thus, the role of Kartarpur Corridor is not only a bridge-builder but as a facilitator of peace in region at a time when the hopes are dim. The Corridor is important, as it is an important component of Soft Power and also reiterates the relevance of what has been dubbed as

Faith Based Diplomacy. Hence a great initiative towards mutual interest, harmony and socio-political stability. A message communicated to international community that Pakistan has only given rights to its own state's minorities but also across the border. This mega project is appreciated by religious community as well as globally. It has been observed that such corridor of peace would cement the structure of state relations, modify the minds of political think tanks and sterilize complexations in the minds of people. It is, therefore, Kartarpur corridor decreases surface tensions by radiating positive energy to social and political communities.

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