

**RESEARCH PAPER****“Bridges of Peace” between India and Pakistan: A Case Study of Kartarpur Corridor****<sup>1</sup>Um-E-Habiba Saeed\* and <sup>2</sup>Muhammad Muzaffar and <sup>3</sup>Zahid Yaseen**

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**\*Corresponding Author:** [imumehabiba01@gmail.com](mailto:imumehabiba01@gmail.com)**ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this study is to explore the Kartarpur corridor as a bridge of peace between India and Pakistan. The shrine of Dera Baba Nanak in India and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan are connected by a physical corridor, which is a landmark. In this study, a qualitative methodology has been used in which its impact on Pakistan's economy and the theory of the contact hypothesis, promotes unity and mutual understanding through shared cultural experiences in a region defined by complex historical narratives. This study shows that kartarpur corridor has served as bridge of peace between India and Pakistan to a very vast extent but on the other hand it is also challenging for both states. This study recommends, if this corridor creates a bridge of peace among both states then in future Hindu pilgrims visiting Kartasraj temples and other historical and spiritual sites in Pakistan.

**KEYWORDS:** Bridge Of Peace, Shrine, Kartarpur Corridor, Kartasraj Temple, Sikh**Introduction**

Since 1947, Pakistan-India ties have experienced a number of fluctuations. There have been Wars and disputes, but the two nations have a history of returning to the negotiating table after every setback. However, both countries have failed to transfer their desire for peaceful cohabitation into long-term peace and collaboration. But recently, both countries signed an agreement for the "Peace of the bridge," which is the Kartarpur Corridor.

The Kartarpur Corridor, located in Shakargarh Tehsil, Narowal District, Punjab Pakistan, is a significant religious and historical linkage for the Sikh faith. It provides direct access to one of the most holy places in the Sikh faith, Kartarpur. The project was considered multiple times between India and Pakistan but was never completed due to political concerns and terrorist activity. In 2018, Pakistan announced plans to open the corridor to Sikh pilgrims. In 2019, India and Pakistan signed an agreement, and Prime Minister Imran Khan unveiled the Kartarpur Cross-Border Corridor, connecting the holy Sikh shrines of Dera Baba Nanak Sahib in India to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan (Gulf News, 2019).

If the issue of Kartarpur Corridor is not resolved, it could increase the diplomatic tension and the chances of cooperation between Pakistan and India could end. A prolonged stalemate, however, could exacerbate pre-existing mistrust, sour religious sentiments, and prevent progress in other areas. And could reduce opportunities for cooperation.

The Kartarpur Corridor, an example of peace in Indo-Pak ties, has an opportunity to change the long-standing antagonism between India and Pakistan. The corridor, a unique path for devotees and pilgrims, provides a rare opportunity for collaboration and diplomacy. This case study investigate the corridor's significance as a catalyst for revolutionary shifts in the Indo-Pak interaction, including its complexity and opportunities. In this context, the Theory of Contact Hypothesis could be applied, which proposes that increased contact among diverse groups can reduce prejudice and enhance intergroup relations. The corridor's inauguration facilitates direct communication and exchange between Sikh pilgrims from India and the local Pakistani community. The paper seeks to examine if the corridor may help to foster a more cooperative and stable relationship between the two South Asian neighbors, so altering the narrative of antagonism.

The road represents a major attempt to heal the emotional wounds caused by Partition in Sikh remembrance. It gives us a great chance to mend South Asia's severely damaged past (Sharma, 2019). Opening the Kartarpur corridor to Sikh visitors might promote healing and strengthen cultural as well as historical ties. In the future, similar arrangements might be made for Hindu pilgrims visiting Katas Raj Temples and other historic and spiritual places.

### **Literature Review**

The Kartarpur Corridor, a 2.5-mile section that links the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan to the Darbar Baba Nanak shrine. An agreement signed between the governments of India and Pakistan is set to open this corridor. Indian pilgrims visiting the sacred spot in Pakistan are assured entry without a visa thanks to the deal and the Kartarpur Corridor may serve as a confidence-boosting step in India-Pakistan ties (Shah, 2019).

The Kartarpur Corridor is an ancient gurdwara that connects Pakistan with India, has been dubbed a "Corridor of Hope" between the two nations. Author explore the corridor's past, present, and future while highlighting the many goals and efforts made by Sikhs living abroad to preserve the location. It also draws attention to the continuing political hostilities between the two countries, which have made it impossible for the Sikh population to visit places of worship (Bainiwal, 2020).

The Kartarpur Corridor, connecting Gurdwara Darbar Sahib to the Indian border, has become accessible without a visa for the Sikh community due to Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's border opening. The \$20 fee for Sikh members to enter the holy place aims to boost commerce and money influx between Pakistani Punjab and India. The initiative is expected to attract investors and fund the first stage of a \$500 million fund for the Sikh society in Pakistan (Ahmed, 2019).

The Kartarpur Corridor Project (KCP), a joint Pakistan-India endeavor, improves connection between both geographically separated states. The KCP strives to reduce tensions and biases and is considered as a constructive step forward in Pakistan and India's conflict-ridden relationship. KCP provides Indian and Pakistani visitors with an engaging platform (Yousaf, 2021).

During British India's 1947 division, Sikh places of worship, like Guru Nanak's birthplace, were placed on opposite sides of the Pakistan-India border. This led to declining relations, making it difficult for Indian nationals to reach Kartarpur. Negotiations to create a visa-free pilgrim corridor began in the late 1990s, led by Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Party in 2018. The Kartarpur Corridor was officially opened in November 2019, three days before Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary (Bochkovskaya, 2021).

Punjab, a nation with a rich history of religious and cultural institutions, is home to Guru Nanak Dev's Sukhham and Kartarpur Sahib. The Kartarpur Corridor, a revolutionary initiative, could significantly influence Pakistani society and Indian politics. However, India's monitoring of India's border with Pakistan and Pakistan's credit for the corridor could potentially undermine the initiative, endangering Pakistan's international and domestic success (Sandhu, 2019).

India and Pakistan have long been at odds due to political and propaganda issues, but they have decided to open the Kartarpur Corridor. Sikhs see this as a potential soft power bridge, allowing them to visit Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan. This study evaluates the potential and value of collaboration between Pakistan and India through this corridor, focusing on religious diplomacy as an instrument of soft power and India's domestic politics surrounding the corridor (Kalim et al , 2022).

Read various articles and research papers about Kartarpur Corridor in this article. Authors discuss the Kartarpur Corridor in different ways. Such as confidence-building step in India-Pakistan reconciliation, corridor of hope, soft power bridge, its history, its impact on economy, political benefits etc. After reviewing the previous literature, I gained a lot of knowledge because everyone wrote in a unique and very good way. But there are gaps that is how the Kartarpur corridor plays an important role in grassroots relations. How the corridor impacts local economies, encourages people-to-people contacts, and creates an understanding of shared cultural legacy at the communal level. As well, how has the electronic media depicted the Kartarpur Corridor?

### **Material and Methods**

This study focuses "Bridge of peace" in India Pakistan: A case study of Kartarpur Corridor therefore the qualitative method was adopted. A qualitative analysis describe the importance of this corridor, its impact on Pakistan's economy and the theory of the contact hypothesis, promotes unity and mutual understanding through shared cultural experiences in a region defined by complex historical narratives. This study is descriptive and explanatory in which analyzing data from various sources, including books, articles, and electronic media.

### **Results and Discussion**

India and Pakistan have a long-standing relationship, having fought three main wars and numerous border conflicts since 1947. The division of the Indian subcontinent led to tensions between the two countries, with the violence of millions of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs crossing new boundaries (Malik, 2019).

The 1947 war on Kashmir escalated tensions and geopolitical instability, leading to the signing of the Shimla Agreement in 1972. Nuclear tests in 1998 further strained relations, with international efforts from the US helping de-escalate the situation. The Kargil conflict in 1999 resulted in a brief battle, and the Agra Summit in 2001 failed to resolve remaining issues. The Mumbai terrorist attacks in 2008 further strained relations, as India accused Pakistani militants of carrying out the attacks (Hashim, 2019).

Although occasional conflicts, both nations took part in diplomatic endeavors and confidence-building initiatives. At the Line of Control (LOC), cease-fire agreements were often ignored. Yet The Kartarpur Corridor was launched in 2019, giving a unique opportunity for people-to-people communication and religious diplomacy. While this was a beneficial step, overall political ties remained complicated.

Punjab, despite lacking strong armament, is a land of prowess and courage, with rare instances of anti-British drive and the emergence of new faiths and political

groups. One of the famous people the Punjabi soil gave birth to was Guru Nanak Dev who was the founder of Sikhism. (Sandhu, 2019) Guru Nanak Ji (1469-1539) was first Guru of Sikhs. He was born in "Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi" on April 15, 1469, in Nankana Sahib, Pakistan. He was the first Guru of Sikhs and believed in divine soul peace and devotion. His unique messages and messages were revered by all religions (Vedantu, 2023) Nanak was a brilliant intellectual, proficient in spiritual subjects, and moved to Sultanpur. He believed in neither Hindu nor Muslim God, leading him to question social customs and religious offerings. Despite his modest upbringing, Nanak's intellectual curiosity led him to question the holy thread used in the "Upanayana ritual." He traveled extensively, spending 24 years on four spiritual journeys, covering 28,000 kilometers and using regional languages. (Cultural India, n.d). He travelled extensively, spending 24 years on four spiritual journeys, covering 28,000 kilometres and using regional languages. (Vedantu, 2023).

Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasized spirituality, giving, and abstaining from deception. Sikhism's three pillars, Naam Japna, Kirat Karni, and Vand Chakna, are named after him. Naam Japna involves repeating God's name, Kirat Karni encourages hard work, and Vand Chakna promotes communal consumption. Guru Nanak Dev Ji coined the term "Ik Onkar" to signify "there is only one God" and advocated for equality across genders, castes, and faiths (Srivastava, 2021).

Guru Nanak, after settling in Punjab, founded Kartarpur and devoted remaining 18 years of his life to agriculture. He oversaw the formation of the first Langarkhana and Gurdwara and nominated Guru Angad for communal leadership. After his death at 70, people flocked around him, with Muslims wanting to grave him as a saint and Hindus wanting to burn his body. Nanak instructed them to cover his body with flowers, but no dead body was found. This led to the use of flowers in funeral customs, with Muslims interred and Sikhs and Hindus burning him. Today, a Gurdwara remains at the Kartarpur Corridor site in Pakistan, considered sacred by everyone, particularly Sikhs.

Kartarpur, located near the Indo-Pakistan border, was once part of the Gurdaspur District India and was home to notable figures like Sir Fazl-i-Husain, Barkat Ram Zaman, The name "Kartar" means "Creator" or "Lord of Creation," and "Pur" means "City." Kartarpur was the site of the Guru's Bani and a significant holy location for the Sikh community. The first well-established Sikh community was established in Kartarpur, but faced territorial issues. The Waqf Act of 1861 allowed the British government to transfer gurdwara management to non-Sikhs, allowing Hindus and Muslims to maintain their worship sites. After the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925, Sikhs regained control of Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur, and other gurdwaras. Gurdwaras in Punjab and Kartarpur remain significant pilgrimage destinations for Sikhs, with over 21 million people currently living in India (Bochkovskaya, 2021).

### **The Political Tussle behind Kartarpur Corridor**

The 1947 partition of India severely affected Sikhs, losing access to over 75% of their historically important gurdwaras, including the birthplace of Guru Nanak and the origins of the Sikh faith (Bainiwal, 2020). Kartarpur Gurdwara, located near Pakistani and Indian troops, closed due to its strategic location and government neglect. Despite the destruction, the site remained intact due to Muslims' reverence for Guru Nanak Dev. Jatts, particularly the Randhawa clan, preserved the structure's dignity and cleanliness. (Sandhu, 2019). In 1948, the Shiromani Akali Dal of Punjab requested the purchase of Nankana Sahib and Kartarpur Sahib. (Sharma, 2019). In the 1950s, Sikhs began Ardas, praying daily for an opportunity to visit important Sikh sites in Pakistan. The 1955 Pant-Mirza Agreement, signed to prevent border incidents and safeguard sites of worship, neglected the Sikhs' predicament, making sovereignty of historical gurdwaras a contentious issue (Pannu, 2019).

During the 1965 war between Pakistan and India, the Ravi River Bridge was demolished. In 1969, Indira Gandhi agreed to land swap with Pakistan for Kartarpur. In 1971, a missile attacked Darbar Sahib, a gurdwara ensemble in Pakistan. The Indian Air Force saved the gurdwara, but the Pakistani government used it to promote Sikh community. The Sri Nankana Sahib Foundation sought free access and preservation of gurdwaras, but the Indian government refused (Rizwan, 2018).

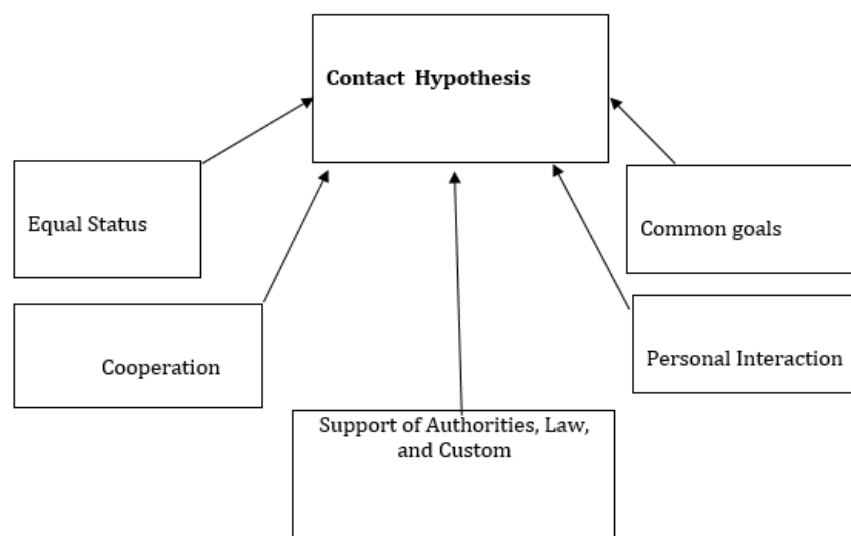
The Gurdwara Sahib in Narowal, Pakistan, was granted entry to many Sikhs during the Sikh fight for Khalistan in the 1980s. Narowal was separated from Sialkot and established as an autonomous district in 1991. During peace talks between Pakistan and India in 1998-99, the Pakistani government restored the Sahib. However, agreements on highways and railway lines were not implemented. In 2008, an elevated platform was constructed near Dera Baba Nanak, allowing pilgrims to observe the sacred site (Sharma, 2019).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Theory of Contact Hypothesis was introduced by Gordon W. Allport, an American psychologist, in his influential book "The Nature of Prejudice" published in 1954. Allport proposed that under certain conditions, contact between different groups can reduce prejudice and foster positive intergroup relations. The theory has since been expanded upon and studied by various researchers in the field of social psychology.

According to Allport, interaction among groups is most likely to lessen prejudice if all criteria listed below are fulfilled:

- Members of both groups enjoy equal standing. Allport argued that engagement in which members of one group were regarded as subordinates would not diminish prejudice and would instead exacerbate it.
- The members of both groups have common aims.
- The members of both groups collaborate. As Allport put it, "Only the type of contact that leads people to do things together is likely to result in changed attitudes."
- There is administrative support for the connection (Hopper, 2019).



The Theory of Contact Hypothesis envisions the Kartarpur Corridor as a bridge of peace between India and Pakistan. According to this idea, increasing contact and interaction among various groups might lessen prejudice and improve intergroup relations. The Kartarpur Corridor's inauguration allows for direct communication and

exchange between Sikh pilgrims from Indian and the local Pakistani community. By encouraging this engagement, the corridor encourages understanding, empathy, and the removal of historical obstacles between the two nations. It acts as a concrete bridge to peace, building healthy relationships and setting the path for future communication and collaboration.

### **Equal Status**

The Kartarpur Corridor promotes Sikh pilgrims' transit from India to Pakistan and vice versa, establishing a sense of equality in terms of religious pilgrimage.

### **Common Goals**

The corridor's principal purpose is to allow Sikh pilgrims to access the sacred Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur. This common religious desire generates a common goal for the two countries.

### **Cooperation**

Cooperation between India and Pakistan is necessary for the corridor's construction and upkeep, demonstrating a certain degree of cooperative conduct.

### **Support of Authorities, Law, and Custom**

Authorities in both nations endorsed the corridor, demonstrating institutional support and popular approval.

### **Personal Interaction**

The Kartarpur Corridor facilitates intimate, one-to-one interactions between individuals from India and Pakistan, fostering chances for understanding and constructive engagement, even if the exchanges are predominantly religious in nature.

### **Kartarpur's Geographical location**

The Kartarpur Corridor, a project that aims to connect Pakistan's historic Darbar Sahib with Punjab's Dera Baba Nanak shrine, gained significant attention after the first stone was laid on the border of the two countries in November 2018. This move led to diplomatic negotiations and agreements on visa-free travel and the protection of pilgrims. The Gurdwara Kartarpur complex was built on about 4 km, and the Government of Pakistan allocated 408 ESR for the project. The 42-acre expansion of the Gurdwara Temple has cost around Rs 13 billion and includes border terminal buildings, langar, Khana, Gurdwara complex and a bridge over the Ravi River. The corridor concept is based on the cultural concept of Punjab's diverse religious and spiritual heritage (Datta, 2019).

### **Complex construction of shrine**

The Kartarpur Temple Complex, built by Pakistan's Federal Works Organization (FWO) between December 2018 and October 2019, features renovated temples, a large hall accommodating thousands of pilgrims, a historic Khuu Sahib, a Baradari, Diwan Isthana, and Angetha Sahib, a holy Granthi house, lodging for 700 Yatrees, and administrative offices. Phase 2 aims to construct 10,000 Yatree lodging units, retail centers, and five- and seven-star hotels. The project is located near Dera Baba Nanak Gurdaspur, 4.5 kilometers from the Indian border and 6.8 kilometers from the Shakargarh-Narowal route. The complex is connected to a registration center, border

crossing, medical facilities, entry without a visa, and a pilgrim bus shuttle service. Future expansion involves the acquisition of an additional 871 acres of land by FWO and the Punjab Government. (Roy& Shaukat 2020).

### **Requirements for Pilgrims Visiting Kartarpur Corridor**

Indian Sikh visitors can enter the Guru Nanak Shrine of Pakistan without a visa for \$20 via the Kartarpur Corridor, bypassing political and geographical restrictions. The Bilateral Treaty allows Pakistani pilgrims to visit the shrine, the Kartarpur Sahib, and the Passenger Terminal. A Gurdwara near the entrance serves street cuisine and langar, but guests must provide their CNIC. The Gurdwara is open to Pakistani visitors, but fees may apply. The best time to visit is before 1:00 p.m., with a two-hour entrance and 1.5-hour tour. Guests must have a COVID-19 test with a COVID-negative RTPCR result no older than 72 hours. The Pakistan-India accord offers religious pilgrimage options and improves bilateral political relations. The Passenger Terminal Building (PTB) is designed for passenger convenience, but Indian pilgrims must follow specific criteria, avoid going alone with children under 13 or elderly people over 75, and carry eco-friendly items.

### **Guidelines for Indian pilgrims**

Indian pilgrims are required to adhere to strict guidelines during their tour, including avoiding drinking, smoking, and being alert. They are also prohibited from touching unclaimed items, reporting suspicious incidents, taking pictures without permission, and using loud music to maintain peace and sanctity.

### **Routes of kartarpur Corridor**

The Kartarpur Corridor has two main entry points: Dera Baba Nanak in India and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan. Indian visitors can reach Dera Baba Nanak via Amritsar International Airport, which is easily accessible via taxis and local buses. To visit Gurdwara in Pakistan without a visa, Indian pilgrims need a special permit supported by the Indian government. After obtaining permission, they can proceed to the Integrated Check Post at Dera Baba Nanak for immigration and security inspections.

Pakistanis and Diaspora pilgrims can reach Gurdwara Darbar Sahib through the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway, which runs 120 kilometers from Lahore to Narowal (MORA, 2019).

### **Impact on Pakistan Economy**

Pakistan charges a modest USD 20 to every Sikh member who wants to visit the Gurdwara, allowing 5,000 visits annually and 10,000 on important occasions. (Hanif, 2019). This presents an opportunity for investors to invest in Pakistan and strengthens the country's international image. Sikhism, the world's fifth-largest religion, has over 27 million devotees, accounting for 0.39% of the sector's population. The 2011 Indian census reported around 28 million Sikhs, with 16 million living in the north province of Punjab. Over 200,000 Sikhs live in Indian regions and union territories, and over 200,000 Sikhs live in British Columbia, Canada. Investors are also expected to contribute to the development of infrastructure projects, particularly the construction of rest homes along the Kartarpur corridor and Nankana Sahib (Shah, 2019).

A World Bank analysis suggests that religious tourism could reach 300,000 people yearly and bring up to USD 300 million in benefits if appropriate facilities are provided and promotion measures are undertaken. Pakistan could extend this effort and grant visas to Sikh pilgrims residing in other regions to boost its standing in global circles (Ahmed, 2019)

## **Kartarpur corridor as a bridge of peace between India and Pakistan**

### **Impact on Bilateral Relations**

The Kartarpur Corridor has significantly affected India-Pakistan relations, demonstrating the power of social and hard strategy in creating goodwill between the countries. By working with individuals, it can create understanding and empathy, which is important for building cohesion. After winning the election, Imran Khan said that Pakistan had promised to take "two steps" for every "one step" taken by India to improve relations, demonstrating unity among all ideological groups, the military and organizations (Bochkovskaya, 2021).

### **People-to-People Contact**

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi pledged to improve relations between Pakistan and India through the Kartarpur project. The project aims to address the political and military conflicts that have dominated the narrative for decades. Qureshi believes that meeting more people will help them understand each other's similarities and differences. Kartarpur Corridor on the other hand emphasizes the common cultural and religious heritage. Travelers from India who visit Kartarpur will return with positive experiences and shared respect, examining the generalizations and prejudices that are rooted in a long history of hostility (Datta, 2019).

### **Social and Economic Advantages**

The Kartarpur Corridor not only fosters goodwill, but it also contributes to the region's economic and social well-being. Local economies benefit from the influx of pilgrims, providing opportunities for tourism-related businesses and small businesses. In addition, the corridor's success may serve as an inspiration for other initiatives that encourage cross-border trade and collaboration in other fields (Ahmed, 2019).

### **Geopolitical Implications**

The Kartarpur Corridor, despite its reputation for trust, is a complex international issue rooted in India and Pakistan's long-standing conflict over Kashmir. Despite the positive gathering of the corridor, fundamental pressures persist, including occasional escalations in violence and strategic disagreements. While the corridor is a step forward, it cannot solve these issues alone. (Roy& Shaukat 2020).

### **Challenges and Limitations**

The Kartarpur corridor faces few difficulties and constraints that could influence it drawn out viability as an extension of harmony.

### **Security Issues**

India and Pakistan face security concerns due to their history of terrorism and insurgency. Ensuring the safety of explorers and preventing passage abuse is a sensitive task. Enhancing security measures and intelligence agency cooperation are necessary to mitigate these issues. (Roy& Shaukat 2020).

### **Political Will and Commitment**

The Kartarpur Corridor's success was a result of active diplomatic relations, but the coherence of such initiatives can be influenced by changing political elements,



domestic tensions, and external influences. Ensuring the corridor remains a necessity despite these vacillations is crucial for its prosperity.

### **Public Perception and Media Influence**

The media significantly influences public perception, with positive media coverage potentially increasing the impact of a corridor and promoting cooperation and peace. However, dramatic or one-sided detailing can sabotage its true capacity, leading to generalizations and doubts. Capable news coverage and adjusted detailing are crucial (Sharma, 2019).

### **Potential for Broader Peace Initiatives**

The Kartarpur Corridor serves as a model for achieving peace between India and Pakistan, demonstrating social and strict tact in overcoming political boundaries. Expanding on this success, the two nations can explore collaboration in natural preservation, exchange, and medical services, fostering harmony and making interdependencies less attractive (Shah, 2019).

### **Environmental Conservation**

The subcontinent faces shared natural difficulties, including water shortage, contamination, and environmental change. Joint drives to resolve these issues can advance territorial solidness and participation. Water management, pollution control, and sustainable development can all benefit from international cooperation to reduce environmental risks and build trust between nations (Ahmed, 2019).

### **Economic and Trade Collaboration**

Financial reliance is a strong hindrance to struggle. Peaceful relations can be made more desirable by expanding economic and trade cooperation between both side. The progress of the Kartarpur Corridor can motivate comparative cross-line exchange passages, working with the progression of labor and products and helping provincial thriving (Ahmed, 2019).

### **Healthcare Collaboration**

Public health presents significant potential for collaboration, as joint efforts to combat infectious diseases, enhance medical services, and conduct direct clinical examinations can improve the well-being of populations on both sides, fostering trust and demonstrating the significant benefits of participation (Sharma, 2019).

### **Conclusion**

The Kartarpur Corridor, which inaugurated in 2019, marks a significant milestone in the relationship between India and Pakistan by establishing physical connectivity between the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in India and the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur, Pakistan. Within a backdrop of violence and diplomatic tension, the corridor emerges as a good diplomatic endeavor, a bridge of peace that promotes religious pilgrimage and cultural interactions. The intricate diplomatic procedure that led to its formation highlighted the general acknowledgment of its historical and spiritual significance, but its influence on larger geopolitical disputes was minor. The corridor, which facilitates cross-border tourism, religious pilgrimage, and cultural encounters, is critical for strengthening grassroots connections and boosting people-to-people ties. Despite the continuous political strife between the two nations, the Kartarpur Corridor serves as a symbol of goodwill, crossing political boundaries and generating economic prospects in the Kartarpur area. Its geographic position, complicated shrine design, and unique visitor requirements highlight critical aspects of regulating religious tourism

across historically contentious borders. The Kartarpur Corridor represents the theory of Contact Hypothesis, which promotes unity and mutual understanding via shared cultural experiences in an area defined by complicated historical narratives.

### **Recommendations**

- Extend visa-free entry to include Sikh pilgrims, tourists, and cultural and religious enthusiasts.
- Implement efficient online operations for pilgrims and tourists, including streamlined application procedures and speedy visa processing.
- Invest in infrastructure development along the corridor for better transportation, alternative accommodation, and safe travel facilities.
- Promote educational and cultural projects to increase knowledge of Sikh history and culture.
- Establish a framework for regular diplomatic engagement on the corridor.
- Collaborate on tourism promotion initiatives to bring global audiences to the corridor.
- Explore international trade activities through the corridor for economic benefits and regional development.
- Implement environmental sustainability efforts, including waste management and conservation of natural resources.
- Strengthen coordinated security measures to protect visitors and tourists.
- Encourage inclusive dialogue among diverse stakeholders to ensure the benefits of the Kartarpur Corridor are widely spread.

With the implementation of these amendments and adjustments, the Kartarpur Corridor will not only serve as a symbol of peace and unity, but will also have a more beneficial impact on cultural exchange, economic development and diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan. If this corridor works as a bridge to long-term peace, similar arrangements can be made in future for Hindu pilgrims visiting Katasraj temples and other historical and spiritual sites.

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