

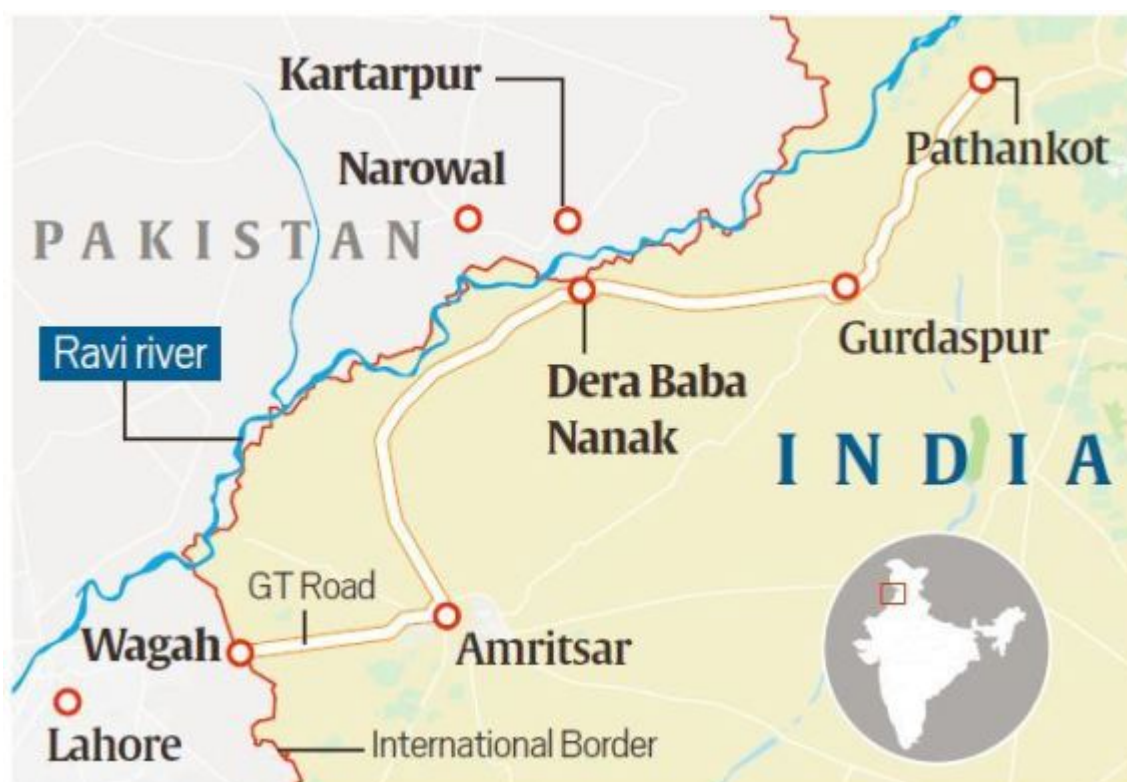
Cancellation of Kartarpur Corridor Talks - India-Pakistan

Why in news?

The second round of talks between India and Pakistan on Kartarpur corridor was cancelled as India called it off. Click [here](#) to know more on the corridor.

What is the corridor for?

- India and Pakistan agreed in 2018 to set up a border crossing.
- It was to link Gurudwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur to the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in India's Gurdaspur district.
- Gurudwara Darbar Sahib is the final resting place of Sikh faith's founder Guru Nanak Dev.
- Kartarpur Sahib is located in Pakistan's Narowal district across the river Ravi, about 4 km from the Dera Baba Nanak shrine.



Why was the talk cancelled?

- **Differences** - The first round of talks took place in the shadow of the [Pulwama terror attack](#).
- It had revealed divergences between the two sides on all aspects of the

pilgrimage corridor, which included -

- i. number of pilgrims to be accommodated
 - ii. the security restrictions
 - iii. documentation
 - iv. mode of transport to be used by pilgrims
- Moreover, Pakistan PM Imran Khan's administration feels it should be given more credit for having cleared the Kartarpur proposal.
 - It's because Indian Sikh pilgrims have demanded it ever since the Radcliffe Line left the sacred shrine on the other side of the border.
 - But New Delhi refuses to acknowledge this demand.
 - India has made it clear the corridor will have no connection with furthering bilateral talks on other issues.
 - **Attacks** - At the base of the differences is the deep distrust between the two governments.
 - Especially, the gulf has deepened in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and the [Balakot strike](#).
 - **Security** - Security agencies have cautioned of Pakistan's military establishment using the corridor to fuel separatist Khalistani sentiment.
 - [Khalistan movement is a Sikh separatist movement seeking to create a separate country called Khalistan in Punjab, as a homeland for Sikhs.]
 - Reportedly, the Pakistani Cabinet constituted a ten-member Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (PSGPC).
 - This is to facilitate Sikh pilgrims after opening of Kartarpur Corridor.
 - Worryingly, the team is said to be formed with some known pro-Khalistan leaders within the Sikh community.
 - The Ministry of External Affairs summoned Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner, seeking clarifications on the "controversial elements" on the committee.
 - However, Pakistan did not name the members of the committee.
 - Indian government's decision now to postpone the next round of technical talks is driven mainly by these concerns.
 - India said the next meeting would only be held after it receives Pakistan's response.

What could have been done?

- The cancellation of the talks reflects the distrust between the two countries.
- Pakistan's support to separatist Sikh groups goes back several decades, for which India must work to secure its border from the threat.
- But alongside, India should have opened the gates for thousands of pilgrims to travel to Pakistan.

- Modalities and technical issues, such as on the numbers, eligibility and identity proof required, should be resolved by both governments.
- Putting off meetings is hardly a constructive solution, given the proposed opening of the corridor by November to mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.

Source: Indian Express, The Hindu

