

# Hundreds Of Pilgrims Attend Kartarpur Ceremony

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countries," she said.

She said Guru Nanak had spread the message of his life by staying at Kartarpur. She said they had brought holy water from Darbar Sahib and also some soil. "This corridor will also bring all the religions together."

She urged Pakistan government to take decisions such as those taken by the Indian government including postage stamps and coins to mark 550th anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev and starting a train linking all places associated with Guru Nanak.

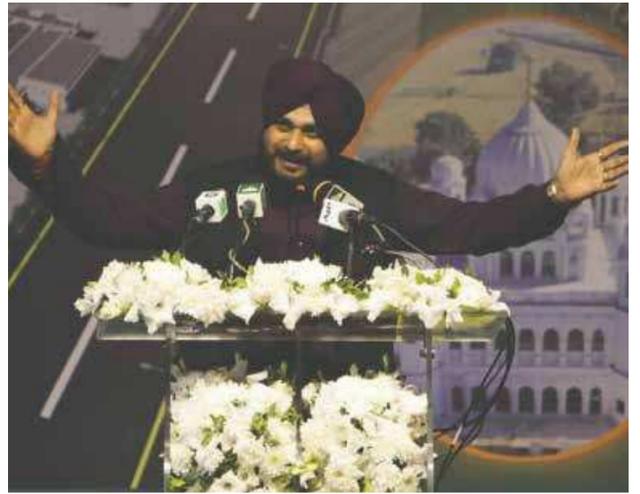
"I want to assure you on behalf of my prime minister that the whole world will celebrate the anniversary, there will be happiness and there will be improvement in ties and the corridor will be a message of peace," she said.

The crossing — known as the Kartarpur corridor — is a rare sign of co-operation between the rival nuclear-armed countries.

Imran Khan used the occasion to again call on India to work together to overcome the bitterness



**Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan at a ceremony in Kartarpur, Pakistan, Wednesday, Nov. 28, 2018. On right is Punjab minister and former cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu. (AP Photos/K.M. Chaudary)**



of the past and resolve issues through dialogue to eliminate poverty in both nations. India last week gave the green light for construction to begin.

Instead of visas, the pilgrims will be given special permits to access their shrines — the Dera Baba Nanak in India's Punjab province and the Gurdwara Dar-

bar Sahib in Pakistan's Narowal district in its Punjab province.

Wednesday's ceremony was attended by hundreds of Sikh pilgrims as well as two lawmakers from India and officials from both countries.

Pakistani army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa called the laying of the foundation for the

crossing a "step toward peace, which our region needs."

Citing examples of Germany and France after World War II, Khan said that if two European neighbours can live peacefully, why not India and Pakistan. India's own cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu said at the ceremony that he is grateful

to Khan and the government in New Delhi for taking "this positive step".

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the Kartarpur corridor will open next November, and will include a stretch of road 4 kilometres long, a bridge on a river and a border complex with all facilities.

## Complaints Against Canadian Telecom, TV Providers Soar 57%

OTTAWA: There has been a dramatic increase in the number of complaints raised against Canada's telecommunications providers, according to an annual tally released Tuesday by the private-sector body assigned to resolve disputes brought by customers who haven't been able to get satisfaction directly from their provider.

The 14,272 complaints raised by Canadian telecom and TV customers over the 2017-18 period was up 57 per cent from the previous year, while the total number of issues they raised rose 67 per cent to 30,734, the Commission for Complaints for Tele-

com-Television Services says in its report for the 12 months from Aug. 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018.

"With the addition of TV complaints to our mandate in September of 2017, we did anticipate an increase — but not the 57 per cent that we received," CCTS commissioner Howard Maker said in the report. But, Maker added, fewer than five per cent of the complaints related to TV alone.

"The increase was in the same types of issues that Canadians have complained about historically: sales transactions that go wrong, service that doesn't work as expected, and billing problems."

The CCTS is a decade-old independent industry-funded body that works under a mandate from Canada's federal regulator.

The dispute-resolution body was originally responsible for monitoring compliance with Canada's wireless code, which was updated last year by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, effective Dec. 1, 2017.

Wireless services continued to have the biggest number of identified issues by far, with 12,757 in 2017-18, up 49 per cent from last year's tally.

But issues with internet service rose even more quickly to 8,987,

up 56 per cent. Billing and contract disputes continued to be the two biggest issues identified in the CCTS report, regardless of type of service.

Bell Canada also continued to receive the biggest number of complaints, 4,734 or 33.2 per cent of the total — not counting 847 directed at its Virgin Mobile flanker brand or its Bell Aliant (229) and Bell MTS (135) regional affiliates.

Similarly Rogers received the second-largest number of complaints, 1,449 or 10.2 per cent of the total, followed by Telus at No. 3 with 944 or 6.6 per cent of the total, not counting their flanker

brands. But relative newcomer Freedom Mobile placed fourth in the tally, after complaints rose 185.3 per cent to 850. Freedom's corporate parent Shaw also saw complaints against it more than double, as did Videotron — Quebec's telecom division — Cogeco Connexion, Eastlink and TekSavvy, but the totals remained far behind the three national carriers.

The CCTS says 10,214 or 71.6 per cent of the complaints were resolved without having to move to a higher level of intervention. A further 1,935 complaints were resolved after investigation and 1,068 were closed with or without an investigation.

## Burnaby Will Be My Political Home: Jagmeet

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Early in the new year, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is expected to set an early February date for byelections in Burnaby South and at least two other vacant ridings. He could also add the now-vacant Brampton East to the roster.

Trudeau was criticized last month when he called one byelection in the eastern Ontario riding of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes for Dec. 3, while leaving three other ridings vacant.

Singh was particularly critical, accusing the prime minister of disrespecting some 300,000 people in the ridings of Burnaby South, where the NDP leader plans to run, the Montreal riding of Outremont and the Ontario riding of York-Simcoe.

Singh has struggled to find his groove since winning the NDP leadership a year ago and the party's fundraising and polling numbers have dropped. New Democrats suspect Trudeau has delayed calling the Burnaby South byelection to deprive Singh of greater visibility.

However, Liberals seem more concerned that Singh could lose the byelection, prompting the NDP to dump him and choose a potentially more appealing leader before next fall's general election. Insiders say the prime minister has decided the Liberals will run a candidate against Singh, rather than stand aside to give him a better shot at victory.

## Irregular Migrants Will Cost Us \$340M

OTTAWA: Canada's budget watchdog says asylum-seekers who entered Canada irregularly last year will cost federal organizations a total of \$340 million.

Parliamentary budget officer Yves Giroux says the average cost for migrants who entered the country between April 2017 and March 2018 is just over \$14,000, but this amount can vary based on how long they have to wait for their claims to be finalized. Conservative MP Larry Maguire asked Giroux to analyze the current and projected costs of dealing with an influx of irregular migrants who have been crossing the Canada-U.S. border since 2017.

The analysis — which calculated all costs from the moment the migrants arrive in Canada until decisions are reached on their claims — concluded costs will rise to \$396 million in 2019-2020.

These costs do not include those borne by provincial or municipal governments.



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