

Indian Sikh pilgrims arrive in Pakistan

Over 2,500 Sikh pilgrims from India have arrived in Lahore to participate in religious rituals to mark the 547th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

From Lahore the pilgrims left for Hasan Abdal town in Attock district to visit the temple of Panja Sahib under strict security arrangements, Dawn online reported.

"We respect Pakistan, in general, and Punjab, in particular, as it is the soil of our gurus (spiritual leaders)," group leader Rumeet Singh said at Wagah railway station.

"Our top spiritual leader Guru Nanak Dev Ji has given a message about humanity, peace and love," he added.

The pilgrims thanked Pakistani government for the arrangements during their 10-day tour to the country.

"It reflects pilgrims' satisfaction on Pakistan's arrangements," Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Chairman Siddiqui Farooq said while receiving the pilgrims at Wagah station.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wants to have good relations with India, Farooq added.

Rumeet Singh said he was grateful to the Pakistan high commissioner to India and the Indian high commissioner to Pakistan for ensuring the arrival of Sikhs.

"On Thursday, the Pakistan high commission in New Delhi had issued visas to 3,000 pilgrims. Of them over 2,500 arrived in the country," he said.

The pilgrims will stay in Hasan Abdal till November 22 and will depart for Nankana Sahib on the same day.

On November 24, they will proceed for Farooqabad (Sacha Soda) and will return back to Nankana Sahib on November 25.

On November 26 and 27, they will stay in Lahore at the temple of Dera Nawab Sahib. On Nov 28, the pilgrims will visit Darbar Sahib temple in Narowal and will return back to India on November 29.