

600 Indian Sikh devotees reach Pakistan for 'Jor Mela'

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Lahore: More than 600 Indian Sikh devotees arrived in Pakistan today to observe the 409th death anniversary of fifth Sikh Guru Arjan Dev on June 16.

The pilgrims were received at the Wagah Border by Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) chairman Siddiqui Farooq and officials of Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

"Some 613 Indian Sikhs arrived here on Saturday to take part in festivities of Jore Mela," ETPB deputy director Fraz Abbas told PTI. According to Sikhism, the event is also called Shaheedi Jor Mela or Shaheedi Purab of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

Abbas said police officials and rangers have been deployed for their security.

During their stay in Pakistan, the devotees are scheduled to visit and pay obeisance at various Sikh shrines. On Saturday, they left for Nankana Sahib where they will stay for a day and perform rituals.

They will visit Gurdwara Sucha Sauda Farooqabad and Gurdwara Punja Sahib Hassanabad on Sunday. Then, they will visit Gurdwara Dera Sahib in Lahore on Jun 15 and attend the main function on Jun 16.

The Indian Sikh devotees will return home on June 18. Farooq said Pakistan would extend hospitality and facilitate the visiting pilgrims.

To a question about a dispute regarding Nanak Shahi Calendar among sikh community, he urged all sikh leaders to sit-together at Janam Asthan (birth place) of Guru Nanak Sahib and resolve the issue through dialogue.