

Brief on India-Canada Bilateral Relations

(Nov 2024)

India-Canada bilateral ties are underpinned by shared values of democracy, cultural diversity, expanding economic engagement and long-standing people-to-people ties.

Developments since Sep 2023:

2. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made a statement in the House of Commons of Canada (later also by Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly to the media) on September 18, 2023 which were rejected by India on September 19. On September 20, an advisory for Indian nationals and Indian students in Canada was issued. On September 21, visa services for Canadian nationals were suspended. On October 26, visa services in four categories were resumed. On November 22, 2023 e-visas for Canadian nationals in certain categories were resumed.

3. On October 14, 2024, three Press Releases were issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, including which stated that India was withdrawing 6 of its diplomats due to their safety being endangered in Canada. Following Canadian responses, 6 Canadian diplomats were expelled from India. India has also rejected all allegations made by the Government of Canada in the period including those made during proceedings of the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Previous High-Level Exchanges

4. During Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Canada from April 14-16, 2015, he visited Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver; held extensive discussions with Canada's political, business and academic leaders and also addressed a gathering of around 10,000 diaspora and friends of India. Several Agreements/MoUs were also signed.

5. Canadian Prime Minister Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, accompanied by 6 Federal Ministers and 13 Parliamentarians, paid a State Visit to India from February 18-24, 2018, at the invitation of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. During the visit, India and Canada signed six Agreements/MoUs to increase cooperation in areas such as education, sport, intellectual property, information and communication technology, science and innovation and civil nuclear cooperation.

6. During COVID-19 pandemic, the two Prime Ministers spoke three times telephonically and discussed, inter alia, collaborations in research and technology for vaccines, medicine supply from India, evacuation of stranded Indians and Canada's requirement of COVID vaccines from India.

7. The two Prime Ministers met on the sidelines of G-7 Summit at Elmau (Germany) on June 27, 2022 and discussed ways to further strengthen the India-Canada relations across various sectors.

8. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau attended the G-20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi from September 08-10, 2023. He met Hon'ble PM of India on the margins of the G20 Summit on September 10, 2023.

9. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau attended a virtual G-20 Leaders' Summit hosted by India on November 22, 2023. The two leaders also met briefly on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit on June 14, 2024 in Fasano (Italy).

10. There have been other high-level exchanges starting 2023:

- i. The Canadian Foreign Minister (FM) Mélanie Joly visited India and held India-Canada Strategic Dialogue with Hon'ble EAM on February 06, 2023. She visited India again to attend G-20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (March 01-02, 2023) and Raisina Dialogue (March 03, 2023). EAM met FM Joly in Jakarta on July 14, 2023 on the margins of 30th ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting and later at the Munich Security Conference on February 17, 2024.
- ii. Canadian DPM and Finance Minister, Chrystia Freeland visited Bengaluru from February 23- 25, 2023 to participate in the G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting. Hon'ble Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman met DPM again on April 14, 2023 in Washington DC on the sidelines of the Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank Group. Both the Finance Ministers met again on July 16, 2023 in Gandhinagar on the sidelines of another G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting.

- iii. Hon'ble Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had a telephonic conversation with the then Canadian Minister of National Defence Anita Anand on April 19, 2023.
- iv. Hon'ble CIM Piyush Goyal visited Canada from May 07-11, 2023 and co-chaired with Canadian Minister for International Trade Mary Ng the 6th Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment (MDTI) held in Ottawa on May 08, 2023. He also visited Toronto and held business meetings.
- v. The then Canadian Minister for International Development, Harjeet Sajjan visited India to participate in G-20 Development Minister's Meeting in Varanasi on June 11-13, 2023.
- vi. Ms. Marie-Claude Bibeau, then Minister of Agriculture of Canada visited India to attend G-20 Agriculture Ministers Meeting in Hyderabad from June 15-17, 2023.
- vii. Mr. Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada visited India to attend G-20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Ministers Meeting in Chennai on July 28, 2023.
- viii. Canadian Minister for International Trade Mary Ng attended the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting in Jaipur on 24-25 August 2023.
- ix. Mr. Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan Province of Canada visited India with a trade delegation from February 26-March 03, 2023. He led a similar delegation to India from February 20-23, 2024.
- x. Mr. Ranj Pillai, Premier of the Yukon Province of Canada, along with a business delegation, paid an official visit to India from 13-16 September 2023. During his visit, he, inter alia, met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala.
- xi. Secretary Mines led an Indian delegation to PDAC 2024 in Toronto from 3-6 March, 2024.
- xii. An official Indian delegation participated in the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in September, 2024.

Parliamentary Exchanges

11. Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla, alongwith a Parliamentary delegation comprising six Hon'ble MPs, visited Canada to attend 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference organised by Canada CPA Branch in Halifax from 20-26 August 2022. On the sidelines of 65th CPC, the Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha met, inter alia, then Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada, Anthony Rota and then Speaker of Senate of Canada, George J. Furey.

Bilateral Mechanisms

12. Both sides have dialogue mechanisms such as Ministerial level- Strategic, Trade and Energy dialogues; Foreign Office Consultations; Joint Committee Meeting on Environment and other sector specific joint working groups (JWG).

13. India-Canada Foreign Office Consultations were held in Ottawa on April 11, 2023.

Security Cooperation

14. There is engagement on counter terrorism issues particularly through the framework of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism set up in 1997. The security cooperation was further enhanced with the Framework for Cooperation between India and Canada on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism signed in February, 2018.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

15. A Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) with Canada was signed in June 2010 and came into force in September 2013. During Indian Prime Minister's visit to Canada (April 2015), Department of Atomic Energy and M/s CAMECO Inc. signed an agreement for supply of uranium ore concentrate to India in 2015-2020. Under the Agreement signed between India and Canada for "Cooperation in Peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy" in 2010, a Joint Committee to oversee the implementation of the agreement was constituted.

16. India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) signed an Arrangement with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) in September, 2015 to exchange experiences in nuclear safety and regulatory issues. An MOU between the Department of Atomic

Energy, India and the Department of Natural Resources of Canada concerning cooperation in the fields of Science, Technology and Innovation was signed during the visit of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in February 2018.

Energy Cooperation

17. An India and Canada Ministerial level Energy Dialogue was held in September, 2016. During the visit of Canadian Prime Minister to India in February 2018, the scope of the Energy Dialogue was expanded to additionally include electricity, energy efficiency and renewables.

18. Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India participated at the World Petroleum Congress 2023 in Calgary, Canada, from September 17-20, 2023.

Space

19. ISRO and Canadian Space Agency (CSA) signed two MoUs in the field of exploration and utilisation of outer space in October 1996 and March 2003, under which two implementing Arrangements regarding satellite tracking and space astronomy were signed. ANTRIX, the Commercial arm of ISRO, has launched several nanosatellites from Canada. ISRO in its 100th Satellite PSLV launched in January 2018, also flew Canadian first LEO satellite.

Economic Relations

20. India's exports to Canada in 2023 were worth USD 7.53 billion and imports from Canada were worth CAD 5.12 billion. Total bilateral trade in goods between India and Canada was worth CAD 12.65 billion in 2023. In 2024 (January – August), total bilateral trade in goods amounted to CAD 8.55 billion (India's exports: CAD 5.22 billion and India's imports: CAD 3.33 billion).

21. In 2023, India's bilateral services trade with Canada stood at CAD 13.49 billion in 2023 with exports worth CAD 3.36 billion and imports worth CAD 10.13 billion. In 2024 (January – June), total bilateral trade in services amounted to CAD 7.85 billion (India's exports: CAD 1.78 billion and India's imports: CAD 6.07 billion).

22. Canadian pension funds have estimated cumulatively invested over CAD 75 billion in India, underscoring their interest in India as a favourable investment destination. More than 600 Canadian companies have a presence in India, and more than 1,000 companies are actively pursuing business in the Indian market. Indian companies in Canada are

active in various sectors, including IT (Information Technology), banking, pulp and fiber, natural resources, health science, and financial services, among others.

23. Major items of India's exports to Canada include pharmaceutical products, electronic goods, jewelry, gems and precious stones, seafood (shrimps), engineering goods, and auto parts. India's major imports from Canada include minerals, pulses, potash, newsprint, iron and aluminum scrap, industrial chemicals, and gemstones.

Science and Technology

24. Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, India led a delegation to Ottawa for the 7th India-Canada Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC), which he co- chaired with Deputy Minister of International Trade at Global Affairs Canada in May 2022. On the sidelines of the JSTCC, an MoU on Cooperation in industrial research, Development & Innovation, between DST and the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) was signed. Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology also signed an MoU with Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) for cooperation in Science and Technology.

25. Department of Earth Science and Polar Canada have started a programme for exchange of knowledge and scientific research on Cold Climate (Arctic) Studies. A Memorandum of Cooperation between NCPOR and POLAR Canada was signed in February 2020.

26. Department of Biotechnology (DBT) under IC-IMPACTS program implements joint research projects in health care, agri-biotech and waste management. Under "Mission Innovation" program, India is collaborating with Canada in various activities in the areas of Sustainable Biofuels (IC4).

Education

27. An estimated 427,000 Indian students are studying in Canada. The MoU on Higher Education (2010) with Canada was renewed in February 2018. Under this MoU, a Joint Working Group oversees and implements the MoU.

28. The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) is a bi-national organization fostering, education and cultural cooperation and collaboration between India and Canada including through consortium of 120 Universities and institutions of higher learning and research.

Consular Matters

29. Both sides agreed to address consular issues of mutual concern through discussion during Prime Minister Trudeau's visit to India in 2018. The India-Canada Consular Dialogue has been instituted under this (last meeting in November 2022).

30. The two countries have signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in 1994 (operationalised in 1998) and an Extradition Treaty in 1987.

People-to-People Relations

31. With nearly 1.8 million Indo-Canadians and another 1 million non resident Indians, Canada hosts one of the largest Indian Diaspora abroad, which account for more than 3% of its total population. The diaspora, whose main concentration is in the Greater Toronto Area, the Greater Vancouver area, Montreal (Quebec), Calgary and Edmonton (Alberta), Ottawa (Ontario) and Winnipeg (Manitoba) have contributed significantly to the Canadian economy & society.

32. There are numerous business and Diaspora organisations, supporting enhanced bilateral relations between the two countries.

Cultural Exchanges

33. There is an India - Canada Co-production Agreement in films. Canada Post and India Post joined hands to issue a commemorative stamp in 2020 and 2021.

34. ICCR chairs have been established at the following Universities :- McGill, Alberta, SFU, Calgary and Guelph.

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