

### 3. India-Canada Ties – International Relations

India, Canada agrees to restore High Commissioners, trade talks, and other dialogues snapped over Nijjar killing. India and Canada are resuming high-level security talks to mend relations strained by the Khalistani separatist issue. While the countries cooperate in areas like trade and space, the future of the relationship depends on Canada addressing India's security concerns.

#### India and Canada Resume High-Level Security Dialogue

National Security Advisors (NSAs) and security teams from India and Canada recently held high-level talks aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation on security matters.

**Significance of the Meeting** – The dialogue marks a crucial step towards normalizing relations, coming nearly two years after diplomatic ties were severely strained by Canadian allegations over the killing of a Khalistani separatist. It is the first major engagement between the two countries' security establishments since both sides appointed new High Commissioners, signaling a mutual intent to re-engage.

**Key Agenda of the Talks** – The primary focus was on improving information sharing and strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation. India also reiterated its long-standing requests for the extradition of several Khalistani activists wanted for cases in India.

#### Overview of India-Canada Relations – Cooperation vs Friction

The relationship between India and Canada is multifaceted, characterized by strong foundational ties in some areas and persistent friction in others.

Areas of Cooperation & Shared Interests	Areas of Differences & Friction
<b>Historical Relations &amp; Shared Values</b> – Diplomatic relations were established in 1947. The relationship is underpinned by shared democratic values and membership in the Commonwealth.	<b>Historical Friction</b> – Relations were historically strained following India's nuclear tests in 1974 and 1998 due to Canada's strong non-proliferation stance.
<b>Economic Cooperation</b> – Total bilateral trade in goods in 2024 amounted to USD 8.55 billion (India's exports – USD 5.22 billion; imports – USD 3.33 billion). Negotiations are ongoing for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA).	<b>Khalistani Extremism</b> – India has repeatedly raised serious concerns over pro-Khalistan activities on Canadian soil, including hate speech, glorification of violence, and attacks on Indian diplomatic missions.
<b>Civil Nuclear Cooperation</b> – A landmark Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) was signed in 2010 and has been operational since 2013, enabling cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.	<b>Political Differences</b> – Statements by some Canadian political leaders that are perceived as sympathetic to separatist groups have created recurring diplomatic friction and are seen by India as interference.
<b>Space Cooperation</b> – ISRO and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) have MoUs (1996, 2003) for cooperation in satellite tracking, space astronomy, and commercial launches. ISRO's commercial arm, ANTRIX, has launched multiple Canadian nanosatellites.	<b>Trade and Investment Uncertainty</b> – Talks on the Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA), a precursor to the CEPA, were paused by Canada in 2023 amid the heightened political tensions, slowing down economic engagement.
<b>Science and Technology</b> – There is an active program for knowledge exchange on Cold Climate (Arctic) Studies between India's Department of Earth Science and Polar Canada. An MoU exists between NCPOR and POLAR Canada.	<b>Differing Geopolitical Outlooks</b> – While India seeks robust cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, Canada's approach to the region is often viewed by India as inconsistent and heavily influenced by its domestic political considerations rather than a clear strategic vision.
<b>People-to-People Links</b> – The Indian diaspora is a significant bridge, with around 1.8 million Indo-	

Canadians and 1 million non-resident Indians in Canada, making up over 3% of its population. India is the largest source of international students for Canada, accounting for around 40% of that group.	
<b>Multilateral Cooperation</b> – Both countries cooperate in various international forums, including the G20, Commonwealth, United Nations, and the International Solar Alliance.	

## Conclusion

**Strong Foundations, Fragile Ties** – The India-Canada relationship is built on strong foundations, particularly in trade, education, and clean energy, and has significant untapped potential. However, the bilateral ties remain fragile.

**Key Irritants** – Political and security concerns, especially related to Khalistani extremism, act as the primary irritants that prevent the relationship from achieving its full potential.

**Future Outlook** – The future of the relationship hinges on the ability of both nations to effectively manage these critical differences while continuing to build on their shared interests and strong people-to-people connections.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-canada-agree-to-designate-new-high-commissioners/article69707286.ece>

