India-Canada Bilateral Relations

Overview

1. India-Canada bilateral ties are underpinned by shared values of democracy, pluralism, expanding economic engagement, regular high level interactions and long-standing people-to-people ties. India and Canada collaborate closely in international fora, particularly through the UN, Commonwealth and G-20.

2. Prime Minister (PM) Modi's visit to Canada in April 2015 elevated the bilateral relation to a strategic partnership. PM Justin Trudeau paid his first State Visit to India from 18 to 24 February 2018. Both Prime Ministers had interacted on side-lines of (pull aside) G-7 Summit at Biarritz, France on 26 August 2019. The visits and meetings reaffirmed the breadth and scope of Canada-India relations, based on the fundamental principle of respect for sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the two countries.

3. In 2020, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, both Prime Ministers spoke twice on April 28 and June 16, 2020, to discuss regional and global issues, COVID-19 and evacuation of stranded Indians and Canadians.

4. On October 8, 2020, Prime Minister Modi delivered an inaugural address at virtual Invest India 2020 Conference in Canada.

High-level Exchanges

From Canada,

i. Mr. Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan and Mr. Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Trade and Export Development of Saskatchewan visited India with a trade delegation (18-22 November 2019);

ii. Mr. Victor Fedeli, Ontario Minister for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade visited India (November 16-23, 2019);

iii. Former PM Stephen Harper visited India (6-13 January 2019 & 8-17 January 2020) for Raisina Dialogue and as a part of trade delegation of Saskatchewan, Canada (18-20 November 2019).

From India,

i. Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (IC) of the Ministry of Civil Aviation visited Montreal from 24 September to 4 October 2019 to attend 40th Session of International Civil Aviation Organisation

ii. Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister (EAM) visited Ottawa on 19-20 December 2019.

iii. Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal spoke to his Canadian counterpart on 29 March, 9 April and 28 July 2020 to discuss maintenance of global supply chains, pharmaceuticals products availability, G-20 cooperation and issues related to bilateral trade.

Parliamentary Exchanges

5. Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri Om Birla visited Canada from 5-12 January 2020 to participate in the 25th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Commonwealth (CSPOC) held in Ottawa. Canadian Senate Speaker George J. Furey invited by LS Speaker, visited India from 8-15 February 2020. Mr. Raj Saini, MP from the House of Common is the Chair of the Canada-India Parliamentary Association.
Cooperation in COVID-19 Pandemic

6. **Repatriation flights:** Special charter flights of Canada were facilitated by India to evacuate stranded Canadian nationals from India. Since May 2020 Air India and Air Canada (since August 2020) operated non-scheduled flights for evacuation.

7. **Supply of medicines:** India exported paracetamol tablets, Hydroxychloroquine tablets and Hydroxychloroquine Sulfate USP (API) to Canada, during COVID-19.

Bilateral Mechanisms

8. Both sides engage in bilateral dialogues through Ministerial level- Strategic, Trade and Energy dialogues; Foreign Office Consultations; and other sector specific Joint Working Groups (JWG). The following bilateral dialogue mechanisms have met since 2018-19:

   a. Foreign Minister level Strategic Dialogue (22 February 2018);
   b. Joint Working Group (JWG) on Higher Education (26-28 February 2019);
   c. 16th JWG on Counter Terrorism (26-27 March 2019);
   d. Joint Committee Meeting on Civil Nuclear (6-7 June 2019);
   e. Inaugural edition of Consular Dialogue with Canada (30 September -1 October 2019)

Economic Relations


   Major items of India's exports: Gems, jewelry and precious stones, pharmaceutical products, ready-made garments, mechanical appliances, organic chemicals, light engineering goods, iron & steel articles, etc.

   India’s imports from Canada: Pulses, roots & tubers, newsprint, wood pulp, asbestos, potash, iron scrap, copper, minerals and industrial chemicals, etc.

10. Canadian Pension Funds have invested around US$ 32.6 billion in India till 2020. Pension Funds and other major investment firms have pledged portfolio investments of over US$ 55 billion in India.

11. More than 400 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 the field such as Information Technology, software, steel, natural resources and banking sectors.

12. India and Canada are discussing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and Bilateral Investment Promotion and Partnership Agreement (BIPPA/FIPA).

13. **Agriculture** - The bilateral MoU on agriculture cooperation was signed in 2009.

14. **Energy Cooperation** - Energy is an important area of focus of India-Canada bilateral relations. The last India and Canada Ministerial level Energy Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 8 September 2016. During the visit of PMJT in February 2018, the Energy Dialogue was expanded to electricity, energy efficiency
and renewable. India Oil Corporation has a 10% participating interest in a Liquid Natural Gas project in British Columbia.

15. **Nuclear Cooperation** - A Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) with Canada was signed in June 2010 and came into force in September 2013. The Appropriate Arrangement (AA) for the NCA was signed in March 2013, under which a Joint Committee on Civil Nuclear Cooperation was constituted. In April 2015, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and M/S CAMECO Inc. signed an agreement for supply of uranium ore concentrate to India in 2015-2020.

### Science and Technology

16. Science and Technology cooperation is focused on Industrial R&D. Canada was a partner country for the Technology Summit 2017, in New Delhi.

17. Department of Biotechnology under IC-IMPACTS program implements joint research projects in health care, agri-biotech and waste management. The Annual Conference of IC-IMPACTS was held on 6-7 August 2020.

18. Department of Earth Science and Polar Canada exchange knowledge and scientific research on Cold Climate (Arctic) Studies. Scientists from National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa visited Canada’s Arctic Research Station, Cambridge Bay in September-October 2019. A Memorandum of Cooperation between NCPOR and POLAR, Canada was signed on 26 February 2020.

19. **Information Technology** – An MoU on Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology and Electronics (ICTE) was signed in 2012 for 5 years and was revived during the visit of PM Trudeau in February 2018.

20. **Space** - India and Canada are pursuing successful cooperative and commercial relations in Space since 1990s mainly on space science, earth observation, satellite launch services and ground support for space missions. ISRO and Canadian Space Agency (CSA) have signed two MOUs in the field of exploration and utilisation of outer space in October 1996 and March 2003. ANTRIX, the Commercial arm of ISRO, has launched several nanosatellites from Canada. ISRO in its 100th Satellite PSLV launched on 12 January 2018, also flew Canadian first LEO satellite, from Indian spaceport Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

### Education

21. Education is a key area of mutual interest. India is the top source country for foreign students studying in Canada. The MoU on Higher Education (2010) with Canada was renewed in February 2018. Under this MoU, both sides met in February 2019 in Ottawa to oversee and implement the MoU.

22. The **Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI)** is a unique bi-national organization fostering, since 1968, education and cultural cooperation and collaboration between India and Canada.

23. **Chair on Guru Nanak Devji in Canadian University**: As part of commemoration of 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji, we announced in December 2020 that GOI would set up a Chair on Guru Nanak Devji in a Canadian University.

### Security and Defence
24. Counter Terrorism is ongoing cooperation through the framework of the JWG. The security cooperation was further enhanced with the Framework for Cooperation between India and Canada on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism signed by the National Security Advisor of India and the National Security and Intelligence Advisor of Canada on 14 February 2018.

25. The 16th JWG on Counter-Terrorism was held in Ottawa from 26-27 March 2019.

People-to-People

26. Canada hosts one of the largest Indian Diasporas in the world, numbering 1.6 million (PIOs and NRIs) which account for more than 3% of its total population. The diaspora has done well in the field of politics, in particular. The present House of Commons (total strength of 338) has 22 Members of Parliament of Indian-origin.

27. The first India-Canada Consular Dialogue was held in Ottawa on 30 September & 01 October 2019.

28. India-Canada Track 1.5 Dialogue - India-Canada has established a Track 1.5 Dialogue on involving experts from Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations and the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), government officials and business leaders from both sides to explore the possibility of future cooperation. The third dialogue was held virtually on November 17, 2020.

29. Cultural Exchanges - Canada was the Country of Focus at the 48th International Film Festival of India held in Goa in November 2017. There is also an India-Canada Co-production Agreement in films.

30. Canada Post and India Post joined hands to issue a commemorative stamp on Diwali in 2017. Diwali has been celebrated on the Parliament Hill for the last 18 years.

31. Events to mark the celebration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi were held from October 2018 to 2020 in Canada. Mayor of Ottawa proclaimed 02 October as Gandhi Day. Many activities to mark the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji were also held in November 2019. Mayor of Halifax proclaimed August 2020 as “Indian Independence Month”.

January 2021

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