

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.
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. The visit 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. Both Prime Ministers had informally interacted (*pull aside*) during G-7 Summit at Biarritz, France on 26 August 2019. PM Modi sent a letter of congratulations to PM Trudeau on the success achieved in the federal elections held on 21 October 2019.

Other High-level Exchanges

4. Other High-level Exchanges: There have been a series of high-level visits and meetings of bilateral mechanisms. Since 2019,
 - i. 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*).
 - ii. Mr. Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Trade and Export Development, Minister of Immigration and Career Training of Saskatchewan visited India with a trade delegation (*18-22 November 2019*).
 - iii. Mr. Victor Fedeli, Ontario Minister for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade visited India (*November 16-23, 2019*).
5. 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. During his visit, he met PM Trudeau, Foreign Minister, François-Philippe Champagne and Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Mary Mg.

Parliamentary Exchanges

6. 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. On the margins of CSPOC, Speaker met Canadian Senate Speaker George J. Furey and Speaker of the House of Commons, Anthony Rota.

7. As Westminster style democracies, India and Canada share commonalities in Parliamentary structure and procedures. After general election in October 2019, Mr. Raj Saini, MP from the House of Common has been appointed as the Chair of the Canada-India Parliamentary Association.

Bilateral Mechanisms

8. Both sides pursue bilateral relations through the dialogue mechanisms such as Ministerial level- Strategic, Trade and Energy dialogues; Foreign Office Consultations; and other sector specific joint working groups (JWG). Since 2019, Joint Working Group (JWG) on Higher Education (26-28 February 2019); 16th JWG on Counter Terrorism (26-27 March 2019); Joint Committee Meeting on Civil Nuclear (6-7 June 2019); and Inaugural edition of Consular Dialogue with Canada (30 September -1 October 2019) were held.

9. **India-Canada Strategic Dialogue** co-chaired by former EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj and her Canadian counterpart Chrystia Freeland was held on 22 February 2018 on the sidelines of PM Trudeau's visit.

People-to-People

10. 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 commendably well in every sector in Canada. In the field of politics, in particular, the present House of Common (*total strength of 338*) has 22 Members of Parliament of Indian-origin.

11. Air India has started its direct flight Amritsar-Delhi-Toronto from 27 September 2019. Air Canada operates direct flight to Mumbai from Toronto in addition to Delhi-Toronto and Delhi-Vancouver non-stop flights.

Economic Relations

12. Bilateral trade amounted to USD 6.3 billion in 2018-19 (*as per DOC*). Canadian Pension Funds have invested around US\$22 billion in India till now. Canadian Pension Funds cumulatively pledged to invest

around US\$ 42.5 billion in India and are increasingly viewing India as an attractive destination for investments.

13. 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. Notable Indian companies which have invested in Canada include ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Mahindra Tractors, Tata Steel Minerals Canada, Tata Consultancy Services, Jaguar Land Rover, Tata Communications, Zee Group, Aditya Birla Group, Jubilant Life Sciences, Infosys Technologies Limited, Tech Mahindra, ESSAR Steel Algoma Inc., IFFCO Canada Enterprise Ltd., Abellon Energy Inc., Wipro Technologies, Prime Focus World and Polaris Financial Technologies.

14. India and Canada are discussing Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and Bilateral Investment Promotion and Partnership Agreement (BIPPA/FIPA). The 4th Annual Trade Ministerial Dialogue was held on 13 November 2017 in New Delhi.

Energy Cooperation

15. Energy has been a primary area of our focus in the relations. The last India and Canada Ministerial level Energy Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 8 September 2016 and in February 2018, the scope of the Energy Dialogue was expanded to additionally include electricity, energy efficiency and renewable. India Oil Corporation has a 10% participating interest in a Liquid Natural Gas project in British Columbia.

16. 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. During PM Modi's visit to Canada (*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

17. Indo-Canadian Science and Technology cooperation has been primarily focussed on promoting Industrial R&D which has potential for application through development of new IP, processes, prototypes or products. Canada was a partner country for the Technology Summit 2017, held in New Delhi on 14-15 November 2017. The 6th Meeting of Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee was held in New Delhi on 15 November 2017. Both side reviewed the status of ongoing activities and finalized the Action Plan for 2017-18 which envisages

collaboration in the emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Nano-technology, 3D printing, etc.

18. Department of Biotechnology under IC-IMPACTS program implements joint research projects in health care, agri-biotech and waste management. Department of Earth Science and Polar Canada have started a programme for exchange of knowledge and scientific research on Cold Climate (Arctic) Studies.

Information Technology

19. A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology and Electronics (ICTE) was signed in 2012 for 5 years. A JWG on ICTE was set up and the last meeting held in October 2015. The MoU in ICTE was revived during the visit of PM Trudeau in February 2018.

Space

20. India and Canada are pursuing successful cooperative and commercial relations in the field of 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. Recently India became the top source of foreign students with 203000 Indian students studying in Canada. The MoU on Higher Education (2010) with Canada was renewed in February 2018. Under this MoU, both side met in February 2019 in Ottawa to oversee and implement the MoU. Both side agreed to expand the collaboration in the areas of student and faculty mobility.

22. 69 reputed Canadian faculty members have visited India, so far under the Global Initiative of Academic Works (GIAN) programme for teaching assignments in Indian institutions. Canada is one of the 28 countries covered under the Scheme for promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC), an initiative aiming to improve research ecosystems in India's higher education institutions.

23. 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.

24. **Chair on Guru Nanak Devji in Canadian University:** As part of commemoration of 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji, it was decided by GOI to set up a Chair on Guru Nanak Devji in a Canadian University.

Security and Defence

25. India and Canada collaborate closely in international fora, particularly through the UN, Commonwealth and G-20. Defence ties have been expanding with mutual ship visits. There is robust cooperation on counter terrorism issues particularly through the framework of the JWG on Counter Terrorism. 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.

Agriculture

26. The bilateral MoU on agriculture cooperation was signed at the federal level in 2009. A JWG has been set up under the MoU. The first meeting of the JWG was held in New Delhi in 2010, which led to the creation of three sub-groups on knowledge exchange in emerging technologies; animal development and agricultural marketing. The fifth (5) round of JWG on Agriculture was held on 13-14 November 2017. A Joint Working Group for Pulses has been set up separately.

FSI-CFSI Cooperation

27. The cooperation between Foreign Service Institutes of both countries has seen positive momentum with Canada's Foreign Service Institute (CFSI) trainers imparting three days training program in Bilateral & Multilateral Negotiation and Diplomacy and Global Affairs including Canada's Foreign Policy Approach to Indian diplomats at FSI, New Delhi from 20-23 January 2020.

Consular Access

28. Recognizing the dynamic role of people-to-people ties in the India-Canada partnership, both sides agreed to address consular issues of mutual concern through discussion during PM Trudeau's visit to India. The first India-Canada Consular Dialogue was held in Ottawa on 30 September & 01 October 2019.

India-Canada Track 1.5 Dialogue

29. India-Canada has established a Track 1.5 Dialogue on involving experts, government officials and business leaders from both sides to explore the possibility of future cooperation. The first round was held in 29-30 October 2018 at Ottawa, Canada. The second round was held on 22 November 2019 in Mumbai.

Cultural Exchanges

30. Given that people-to-people ties form the bedrock of the India-Canada relationship, cultural exchanges remain vital. 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. For the first time, 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. The 19th Diwali on Hill event in October 2019 was attended by more than 400 persons including Mr. Andrew Scheer, Leader of Opposition and 8 Members of Parliament.

31. A number of events to mark the celebration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi are being held since October 2018 and will continue till October 2020. Mayor of Ottawa has proclaimed 02 October as Gandhi Day. A number of activities to mark the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji were also held in November 2019.

February 2020