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Canada investigates Indian government link to killing of Khalistani activist, expels Indian diplomat

Canadian PM Justin Trudeau told PM Modi at the G-20 that any Indian government involvement would be unacceptable and that he asked for cooperation in the investigation

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Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau rises to make a statement in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada September 18, 2023 | Photo Credit: Reuters

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said that Canada is investigating possible links between the Indian government and the assassination of Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) chief Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada. The Canadian government also said that it has expelled a top Indian diplomat as a consequence.

Mr. Trudeau said in Parliament Monday that Canadian intelligence agencies have been looking into the allegations after Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, was **gunned down on June 18** outside a Sikh cultural center in Surrey, British Columbia.

Mr. Trudeau told Parliament that he brought up the slaying **with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G-20** last week, that he told Mr. Modi that any Indian government involvement would be unacceptable and that he asked for cooperation in the investigation.

Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly said the head of Indian intelligence in Canada has been expelled as a consequence. "If **proven true this would be a great violation of our sovereignty and of the most basic rule of how countries deal with** each other," Joly said. "As a consequence we have expelled a top Indian diplomat."

"Over the past number of weeks Canadian security agencies have been actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar," Mr. Trudeau said.

Mr. Trudeau said Canada has declared its deep concerns to the Indian government.

"**Last week at the G-20 I brought them personally and directly to Prime Minister Modi in no uncertain terms,**" Mr. Trudeau said. "Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our **sovereignty.**"

Mr. Trudeau said his government has been working closely and coordinating with Canada's allies on the case.

"In the strongest possible terms I continue to urge the government of India to cooperate with Canada to get to the bottom of this matter," he said.

Mr. Trudeau said he knows there are some members of the Indo-Canadian community who feel angry or frightened, and he called for calm.

Opposition Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre said if the allegations are true they represent "an outrageous affront to our sovereignty".

The Khalistan movement is banned in India, where officials see it and affiliated groups as a national security threat. But the movement still has some support in north India, as well as beyond, in countries like Canada and the United Kingdom which are home to a sizable Sikh diaspora.



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