



Canada Unsafe for Indians & Hindus

Published May 15, 2024

Publication No. P0510-150524

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Executive Summary

1. Canada's reputation as an inclusive country is being called into question because of an increase in hate crimes and violence against Indians and Hindus, despite the country historically being regarded as a safe haven for immigrants.
2. Incidents, ranging from physical assaults to threats and attacks motivated by Hinduphobia, like 2017 Calgary attack, have brought attention to the severity of the problem and undermining the idea that Canada is a safe place for these communities.
3. Free operation of Khalistani extremists in Canada, intimidating Hindu minorities and causing damage to temples has raised concerns about the efficacy of Canadian law enforcement in dealing with such threats.
4. Decline in safety can be attributed to various factors such as hate speech on social media platforms, xenophobic discourse, and extreme ideology that inflame tensions and create a hostile environment for Indians and Hindus.
5. Extremist groups viz., Khalistanis and Jihadis, pose multidimensional dangers, including hate crimes, online harassment, protests, and pressure tactics that target people, organisations, and politicians that oppose extremism.
6. Canadian government's handling of protests by Khalistani terrorists has come under scrutiny, particularly in relation to its response to anti-Hindu and anti-India sentiments. This has raised doubts about the Canadian government's commitment to democracy and bilateral relations with India.
7. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has permitted rallies/gatherings by Khalistani radicals, drawing analogies to the deadly Kanishka bombing and drawing attention to potential

security dangers, despite requests from India and concerns about terrorism.

8. The situation is made worse by the growth in racist sentiments in the country, which calls for proactive steps to prevent hate crimes and promote diversity. These actions include intelligence sharing, teamwork on investigations, and diplomatic outreach to address shared concerns and advance global security.
9. Canada's reputation for tolerance and multiculturalism is damaged by its inaction on issues of discrimination and hate crimes against Indians and Hindus, which calls for proactive steps to combat racism and advance inclusivity.
10. Canada's firm stand against terrorism and extremism, in safeguarding people and diplomatic missions while promoting a safe and respectful environment for varied populations to defend its principles and guarantee protection of all residents is the need of the hour.

Introduction:

Recent years have posed significant challenges to Canada's reputation as a safe destination for immigrants, particularly for Indians. Nation's appeal as a place of opportunity and inclusivity notwithstanding, reports of hate crimes, violence against Indians, Hindus and racial prejudice have increased. This radicalism and governmental biases have mounted concerns regarding safety.

There are hate crimes committed against Indians at every instance in Canada. Numerous Indians and Hindus have been targets of threats and physical attacks in addition to Hinduphobic taunts. Are these attacks driven by politics, racism or terrorism? Seriousness of the issue reflected in instances like the one in Calgary. In 2017, on one fine day an Indian descent male was struck with a baseball bat while his attackers hurled abuses at him.

For about half a century, Khalistani extremists have been operating openly on Canadian soil with seemingly progressive slogans "freedom of expression" and "political advocacy." These zealots espoused the cause of illusive Khalistan, a separate land for Sikhs, garnered clout over the years. These subversives openly intimidated minority Hindus in Canada. Several instances of temple vandalism and defacement have been reported; one may recall vandalism of a Hindu temple in British Columbia, Canada, in January 2023 where pro-Khalistan posters were put up.¹

These violent crimes have not only taken lives but tarnished the perception that Canada is a secure place for Indians to study, research, take up jobs, move around in leisure, live in and prosper.

¹ <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/khalistanis-openly-threatening-hindus-in-canada-defacing-temples-sources-4423086>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/another-hindu-temple-vandalised-in-canada-with-khalistan-referendum-posters/article67190256.ece>

Safety conditions for Indians in Canada have deteriorated in last few years owing to vociferous minority Khalistanis. First, rise of xenophobic discourse and Jihadi ideology have fueled feelings of hatred and intolerance against immigrants and minority Hindus. Social media platforms have turned into safe havens for spread of hate speech, fake and misleading information that heightened tensions and fostered animosity towards Indians and Hindu minorities.

Second, lack of adequate action against racial prejudice and hate crimes encouraged criminals to feel free. When victims feel ignored and marginalized by law enforcement agencies owing tacit support from political leadership, it often leads to underreporting of crimes and a lower standard of accountability for offenders.

Indians and Hindus face challenges

Although Canada is widely commended for its diversity and tolerance, it is not impervious to acts of intolerance or extremism like other regions. Indians and minority Hindus in Canada have to deal with threats from Khalistani extremist & Jihadi organisations. Several incidents, warnings, and forms of coercion have been recorded:

1. Hate Crimes: Incidents of hate crimes against Hindus and Indians have been reported in Canada. These violations range from physical assaults to destruction of community centres and other places of worship. In Peel region of Ontario in 2017, there was rise in hate crimes committed against South Asian people, particularly Hindus.²

2. Khalistani Extremism: Threat posed by these radical groups is one of the biggest problems Indians in Canada face. A small number of people and organisations advocate Khalistan, an independent Sikh

² <https://www.peelpoliceboard.ca/en/board-meetings/resources/2017---Hate-Bias-Motivated-Crimes---Annual-Report.pdf>

state, and they resort to violence to achieve their goals. Threats and intimidation by Khalistani extremists have been reported by Indian diplomats and personnel stationed in Canada. Sikh for Justice (SFJ), a banned organization, put up a billboard with “Killers in Toronto” next to a picture of High Commissioner and Counsel General of India. This billboard claims that the terrorist organisation associated with Khalistani factions is called "Kill India."

3. Online abuse and threats: With rise of social media, there has been a notable increase in online abuse and threats aimed at Indians and Hindus. Extremist groups regularly spread hate speech online and attack individuals based on ethnicity and or religion.

4. Protests and rallies: In reaction to diplomatic visits and Indian cultural events, extremist groups have planned & organized protests and rallies. These protests usually aim to disrupt proceedings and spread false information derogatory to India or Hinduness. Occasionally, these protests have become violent leading to altercations with police or other protestors.

5. Pressure strategies: To silence opponents or anyone who disagrees with their purpose, extremist groups employ pressure strategies such as threats against businesses, local authorities or politicians who oppose extremism or defend rights of Indian or Hindu communities.

‘Canadian Government turned anti-Hindu, anti-India’

Canadian government claims to be committed to upholding right to free speech, expression in addition to fostering a society devoid of bias, intolerance and extremism. On the contrary, there have been instances in Canada where anti-Hindu and anti-Indian speeches has emerged, raising questions over role played by local government in addressing these issues.

India has repeatedly urged other nations, individually and collectively, not to provide separatist movements a platform throughout the years, warning that such activities may damage bilateral relations. The fact that Canada allowed Khalistani extremist gatherings in spite of these pleas, citing their belief that freedom of speech is an essential right, begs the question of whether supporting democracy means allowing terrorists to stage protests. Is Canadian government intentionally allowing such anti-Indian activities, or is it blind to the terrorist activities carried out by Khalistani groups? Is it possible that Canada has conveniently forgotten the horrific Kanishka bombing, which claimed the lives of 268 Canadian citizens, many of whom were of Indian descent?

Terrorists from Khalistani have carried out multiple terrorist attacks both inside and outside of India. In accordance with the right to free speech, would Canada, therefore, let the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to hold nonviolent protests? They most definitely wouldn't!

Diplomatic ties between Canada and India stem from their common economic, cultural, and geopolitical interests. Canadian government has an obligation to ensure that none of its initiatives or policies put these ties in danger. In reaction to incidents of anti-Indian speech or actions that jeopardise diplomatic relations, Canadian government may decide to intervene diplomatically to resolve the matter and minimise any potential effects.

Monitoring events, demonstrations, and statements made in public that incite violence or hatred is part of tracking extremist/terrorist groups and individuals that spread anti-Hindu or anti-Indian propaganda. If it be found that an individual or organisation is disseminating hate speech or engaging in activities that jeopardise public safety and security, we

might wonder whether Canadian law enforcement officials are entitled to respond appropriately.

It is time for Justin Trudeau to choose between supporting international relations and terrorism in order to advance Canada and its citizens. Canadian government, if they are against terrorism, should collaborate with India to address common issues and exchange best practices for countering extremism, given the worldwide nature of hate speech and extremism. This cooperation may involve exchanging intelligence, cooperating on investigations, and using diplomacy to counteract transnational threats.

Concluding Observations

There is a discernible rise in racist and xenophobic sentiments in Canada, leading to acts of violence and prejudice against immigrants and other marginalised communities, including Hindus and Indians. Indians and Hindus in Canada have been the target of extremist groups, which can lead to problems like violence and discrimination. An increase in hate crimes involving verbal and physical assaults directed towards Indians and Hindus has compounded the uneasiness. The inability of Canadian law enforcement system to confront and deter hate crimes and discrimination has exacerbated the issue.

A feeling of unease is intensified by political turmoil or legal modifications that adversely affect minority communities. This could include discriminatory immigration restrictions, the undermining of civil liberties, or a lack of respect for multiculturalism.

Canada is on the verge of becoming a dangerous place for India and Hindus currently. To combat extremism and advance inclusivity and respect for all populations, it is imperative that Canadian authorities maintain their vigilance and adopt proactive actions. It is necessary to

adopt a balanced strategy that upholds the right to free speech while giving people's safety and security as well as diplomatic missions top priority. Permitting radical organisations to hold protests is an affront to democratic values and a misguided signal to those who engage in violent and radical acts. To ensure the safety of all people and diplomatic facilities, Canada must take a firm stand against terrorism and extreme ideology.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's indisputable association with anti-Indian groups poses a risk to bilateral relations and the international security environment. Terry Milewski, a seasoned journalist, undertook extensive research for his book "Khalistan: A Project of Pakistan," which clearly shows that the Khalistan movement is a serious threat to both India and Canada.

In conclusion, although Canada has long been seen as a model of tolerance and multiculturalism, the country's reputation as a safe and friendly destination is in jeopardy due to the surge in hate crimes and violent attacks against Indians. By addressing the underlying causes of racism and intolerance and adopting proactive steps to combat hate crimes, Canada can show its dedication to diversity and ensure a safe and respected environment for all its citizens.

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