

India Canada Relations

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Why in news?

- The two countries, India and Canada, are learnt to have paused their negotiations on a bilateral free trade agreement.
- This was days after PM Modi expressed concern over anti-India activities of extremist elements in Canada, at his meeting with Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau on the sidelines of the G20 Summit.

India-Canada Relations

Background:

- Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1947.
- Bilateral relation was elevated to a strategic partnership during PM Modi's visit to Canada in 2015.

Commercial relations between India and Canada

• **Bilateral Trade Relation**

- India was Canada's 10th largest trading partner.
 - **India's total exports to Canada** added up to US\$ 4.10 billion in 2022-23, up from US\$ 3.76 billion in 2021-22.
 - **India's imports from Canada** added up to US\$ 4.05 billion in 2022-23, up from US\$ 3.13 billion in 2021-22.

• **Export/import items**

- Major items of exports to Canada include gems, jewellery and precious stones, pharmaceutical products, ready-made garments, etc.
- On the other hand, India imports pulses, newsprint, wood pulp, asbestos, potash, iron scrap, copper, minerals and industrial chemicals from Canada.

• **Investment**

- Canadian Pension Funds have cumulatively invested around US\$ 55 billion in India. Cumulative FDI from Canada since 2000 is about US\$ 4.07 billion.

• **CEPA/EPTA negotiations**

- In March 2022, the two countries had agreed to re-launch the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations.
- Both the countries also decided to have an interim agreement or Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA) that could bring commercial gains to both.
- Negotiations on CEPA/ EPTA resumed in April 2022; nine rounds of talks were held till July this year.

Development cooperation between India and Canada

- After 55 years of bilateral programming in India totaling \$2.39 billion, Canada's bilateral development assistance program came to an end in 2006.
 - This was following a change in Indian government policy regarding aid.
- Canada supports various projects in India via Grand Challenges Canada.
 - The main programming sector of the Partnerships for Development Innovation Branch is maternal, newborn and child health, which includes support to early childhood development.

Nuclear Cooperation between India and Canada

- Canadian aid to India in the nuclear field begun in 1956. However, this relationship deteriorated in 1974 after India conducted **Smiling Buddha nuclear test**.
 - Canada was among the first countries to participate in India's nuclear power program.
 - CIRUS, the first research reactor to be built in India, was built with the help of Canada.
- Later, in June 2010, the nuclear cooperation was restored when a Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA) with Canada was signed.

Cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Canada

- Canada was a partner country for the Technology Summit 2017.
- 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.

Cooperation in Space between India and Canada

- 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.

Cooperation in Indo-Pacific between India and Canada

- In November 2022, **Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy was released**.
 - Canada, 20 per cent of whose population originates in the Indo-Pacific region, is the last G7 nation to embrace the concept of the Indo-Pacific.
- The Canadian strategy document contains sharp words on China's coercive challenge to the international rules-based order and on human rights.
- On the other hand, this document highlights India's strategic importance and asked Canada to work closely with India.

People-to-People contact between India and Canada

- Canada hosts one of the largest Indian diasporas in the world, numbering 1.6 million (PIOs and NRIs) which account for more than 4% of its total population.
 - In the field of politics, in particular, the present House of Commons (total strength of 338) has 22 Members of Parliament of Indian-origin.
- 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.

Challenges in India-Canada relationship

- **Separatist Khalistani groups**

- Canada has been providing a safe haven for separatist Khalistani groups, which New Delhi sees as the Liberal Party's pandering to these groups for votes.
 - Diaspora Sikhs are well represented in the Trudeau government. Some of them are politically supported by pro-Khalistan groups.
 - Jagmeet 'Jimmy' Dhaliwal, whose New Democratic Party supports Trudeau's minority government in Parliament, is viewed with suspicion by the Indian establishment.
- Last year, New Delhi objected to Canada permitting a Khalistani secessionist referendum in the Sikh diaspora.
- **Canada is slow to act against anti-India elements on its soil**
- Recently, a Hindu temple near Toronto was vandalised and defaced with anti-India graffiti.
- Concerns that Canada is slow to act against anti-India elements on its soil have been a constant irritant in the relationship.
- **Other irritants include**
- Attacks on Indian-origin people;
- Canadian comments over India's farmer protests and India's cancellation of diplomatic talks in response.

News Summary: India, Canada hit pause on FTA talks

- The talks between India and Canada on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) were paused due to the political differences.
- The talks are expected to resume after the resolution of the issues between the two countries.

Possible reasons behind this pause

- **Strained relationship over the activities of pro-Khalistan groups in Canada**
- Ties between the two countries have been strained over the activities of pro-Khalistan groups in Canada.
- In July, India had summoned the Canadian envoy and issued a demarche, days after posters naming senior Indian diplomats posted in Canada came up in some areas there.
- **Strongly-worded statement by India**
 - Following a meeting between Modi and Trudeau on the sidelines of the **G20 Summit**, India issued a strongly-worded statement.

Q1) What are the top 5 Canadian lakes?

Aside from the ascents and descents, Canada is also world-famous for its lakes with five, in particular (Erie, Superior, Huron, Ontario and Michigan), making up what is commonly known as the country's Great Lakes system.

Q2) What is the geographical location of Canada?

Canada is located in the northern part of North America. It is bordered by the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and 12 states of the United States to the south. Canada also borders Alaska to the northwest.

Source:

- India, Canada hit pause on FTA talks amid strain in ties after Trudeau visit
- MEA
- Government of Canada

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/india-canada-relations/>

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