



By: TA | AP Brief

Canada and India name new top envoys as they restore relations after a dispute



India and Canada named new high commissioners to each other's capitals as they restored relations 10 months after **expelling** the top envoys in a dispute over an alleged political assassination.

Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand said Christopher Cooter will be Canada's new high commissioner to India. India's foreign ministry said it will assign its current envoy to Spain, Dinesh Patnaik, to Ottawa "shortly."

Relations between Canada and India have been **strained** since Canadian police accused New Delhi of playing a role in the June 2023 assassination of a Canadian Sikh activist near Vancouver.

Police also have uncovered evidence of an intensifying **campaign** against Canadian citizens by agents of the Indian government.

Relations improved in June when Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney **invited** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the G7 summit in Alberta and both countries agreed to restore their top diplomats.

Nijjar, 45, was fatally shot in his pickup truck after he left the Sikh temple he led in Surrey, British Columbia.

An Indian-born citizen of Canada, he owned a plumbing business and was a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland.

Four Indian nationals living in Canada were charged with Nijjar's murder.

Canada's sovereignty

Former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau previously said Indian diplomats have been passing information about Canadians to the highest levels of the Indian government, and that Indian officials then shared that information with organized crime groups, resulting in violence against Canadians.

Trudeau said India violated Canada's

sovereignty. India rejected the accusations as absurd.

Canada is not the only country that has **accused** Indian officials of plotting an assassination on foreign soil.

Cooter will take on the role after 35 years as a diplomat

The U.S. Justice Department announced criminal charges last year against a Indian government official in connection with an alleged foiled plot to kill a Sikh separatist leader living in New York City.

India has repeatedly criticized Canada for being soft on supporters of the Khalistan movement who live in Canada.

The Khalistan movement is banned in India but has support among the Sikh diaspora, particularly in Canada. About 2% of Canada's population is Sikh.

Cooter will take on the role after 35 years as a diplomat, including postings in Israel and South Africa, as well as in New Delhi 25 years ago.