

Country Summary: India

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- **Summary may be incomplete:** *The summary summarizes some, but not necessarily all, the intelligence information on this topic that is available to the Government of Canada's national security and intelligence community. For example, it only contains relevant information that can be appropriately sanitized for public release.*
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- **Summary does not indicate corroboration or lack of corroboration:** *The summary does not indicate whether other information exists that may corroborate the summarized information, or, alternatively, whether there is no such corroborating information.*
- **Summary does not analyze information:** *This document is a summary of intelligence; it is not an analysis of the overall import, meaning, or strength of intelligence.*

The Commission has been provided with all relevant intelligence and assessments, which indicates information on reliability and corroboration of the information contained therein.

WHAT

This summary has as its focus activities related to foreign interference related to elections and democratic institutions, per the mandate of the Commission. It does not address the full range of foreign interference activities observed in Canada, including transnational repression.

Government of India (GoI) officials, including their Canada-based proxy agents¹, engage in a range of activities, that seek to influence Canadian communities and politicians. Where these activities include deceptive, clandestine or threatening activities, they are deemed to be foreign interference. These activities attempt to align Canada's positions with India's interests on key issues, particularly with respect to how the GoI perceives Canada-based supporters of an independent Sikh homeland that they refer to as Khalistan. This includes foreign interference (FI) activities the GoI directed against the 43rd and 44th General Elections.

WHY

India takes a significant interest in Canada because of the large South Asian communities. The GoI, views parts of Indo-Canadian-communities as fostering 'anti-India' sentiment, and thus as a threat to stability and national security in India.

Mainly in response to this issue, the GoI engages in FI activities, to influence Canadians who hold prominent positions in society. In Canada, there are two main motivations for GoI FI.

First, to attempt to align Canadian politicians and decision-makers with pro-GoI positions and policies. This serves to advance a positive image of India.

Second, to counter and suppress perceived threats to India's domestic stability emanating from Canada. The GoI does not differentiate between lawful pro-Khalistan political advocacy and the relatively small Canada-based Khalistani violent extremism, - it perceives anyone engaged in Khalistani separatism as a seditious threat to India.

WHO

A body of intelligence indicates that GoI proxy agents may have attempted to interfere in democratic processes, reportedly including through the clandestine provision of illicit financial support to various Canadian politicians as a means of attempting to secure the election of pro-GoI candidates or gaining influence over candidates who take office. In some instances, the candidates may never know their campaigns received illicit funds.

¹ Proxy: For the purpose of this summary, a proxy is a specific individual who takes explicit and/or implicit direction from a foreign state while obfuscating the link between influence activities and a foreign state. Proxy agents are witting participants in furthering the objective of the foreign state in specific circumstances. A proxy is a Canada-based individual (Canadian citizen, Canadian Permanent Resident, etc.) who may/may not belong to a specific diaspora community.

Indian FI in Canada is aimed primarily at Canadian politicians and Canadian democratic processes at all levels of government.

Targets of Indian FI are often members of the Indo-Canadian communities, but prominent non-Indo-Canadians are also subject to the GoI's FI activities.

HOW

Indian officials in Canada have increasingly relied on Canadian and Canada-based proxies and the contacts in their networks to conduct FI-related activities. This tactic obfuscates any explicit link between the GoI and its FI activities. Proxies liaise and work with Indian intelligence officials in India and Canada, taking both explicit and implicit direction from them.