

## Government of India Foreign Interference Activities in the 2021 General Election

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## SUMMARY

1. Foreign Interference (FI) activity can begin before the formal writ period with candidate nomination races at the party level, and through the individual electoral district campaigns.
2. The Government of India (GoI) had intent to interfere and likely conducted clandestine activities. GoI's FI activities during the 44<sup>th</sup> General Election in Canada in 2021 (GE44) were centred on a small number of electoral districts. Some were of interest to the GoI owing to the GoI perception that a portion of Indo-Canadian voters were sympathetic to the Khalistani movement or pro-Pakistan political stances.
3. A body of intelligence indicates that GoI proxy agent<sup>1</sup> 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. Any such financial contribution could have remained unknown to the candidate.
4. In March 2023, a coalition of Canadian Gurdwaras released a public report, which used publicly available information to outline GoI FI activities in Canada. The report notes that the community assess the GoI is covertly attempting to infiltrate and undermine democratic processes and repress criticism of the GoI in Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> Proxy agent: For the purpose of this summary, a proxy agent 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.