

# In thaw after Modi-Carney meeting, India & Canada appoint new envoys

## Delhi & Ottawa Also Considering Restarting Talks For A Trade Deal

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**New Delhi:** After an ugly diplomatic spat over the killing of a Khalistan separatist that saw bilateral ties hit rock bottom last year, India and Canada took a significant step forward Thursday to normalise the relationship as they announced appointments of high commissioners in each other's capitals. This followed the agreement in June, when PM Narendra Modi met his counterpart Mark Carney, to take "calibrated and constructive" steps to stabilise ties.

India announced the appointment of senior diplomat Dinesh Patnaik as the new high commissioner to Canada. Patnaik is presently India's ambassador to Spain and is expected to take up his new assignment shortly, according to the ministry of external affairs. Shortly after that,

Canadian foreign minister Anita Anand announced the name of veteran diplomat Christopher Cooter, who has experience of having served in India earlier, as the new high commissioner to India.

Modi had met Carney on the margins of the G7 summit in Alberta in June, agreeing to take steps to rebuild the relationship based on shared democratic values, respect for the rule of law, and commitment to upholding the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The two sides had then agreed to pursue a balanced partnership grounded in "mutual respect for concerns and sensitivities, strong people-to-people ties, and growing economic complementarities". Official sources said India will continue to pursue with Canadian authorities the need to act against Khalistan separatists who seek



PM Modi with Canada's Mark Carney in June. India will continue to pursue with Canadian authorities the need to act against Khalistan separatists who seek to hurt Indian interests, official sources said

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India had expelled dozens of diplomats earlier, as the relationship took a nosedive over the killing of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar for which Ottawa blamed the Indian govt. India always maintained that the govt led by Carney's predecessor Justin Trudeau never provided any evidence to back its claim. While Canada expelled Indian high commissioner Sanjay Verma and five other Indian diplomats accusing

them of running a campaign of violence in Oct last year. India had said Verma and others were withdrawn because Canadian authorities had failed to ensure security for him and other Indian diplomats in an "atmosphere of extremism and violence".

Ottawa Thursday described the fresh appointments as an important step towards restoring necessary diplomatic services to citizens and businesses in both countries.

"The appointment of a

new high commissioner reflects Canada's step-by-step approach to deepening diplomatic engagement and advancing bilateral cooperation with India. This appointment is an important development toward restoring services for Canadians while strengthening the bilateral relationship to support Canada's economy," said Anand. In line with the understanding reached in the Modi-Carney meeting, the two sides are also considering restarting talks for Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA) that could clear the path for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

According to Canada, Cooter has 35 years of diplomatic experience, having served most recently as Canada's charge d'affaires to Israel and as Canada's high commissioner to South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Mauritius and Madagascar. He has also served as first secretary in the Canadian high commission to India, Nepal and Bhutan, in New Delhi, from 1996 to 2000.

## UK, France & Germany begin UN sanctions process against Iran, drawing Tehran ire

France, Germany and the UK moved Thursday to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme, further isolating Tehran after its atomic sites were repeatedly bombed during a 12-day war with Israel.

The process, termed a "snapback" by the diplomats who negotiated it into Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, was designed to be veto-proof at the UN and could take effect as soon as Oct. It would again freeze Iranian assets abroad, halt arms deals with Tehran and penalise any development of its ballistic missile programme, among other measures, further squeezing the country's reeling economy.

The move starts a 30-day

clock for the sanctions to return, a period that likely will see intensified diplomacy from Iran, whose refusal to cooperate with inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, started the crisis. Iran will also probably emerge as a top focus of the UN General Assembly when it meets next month in New York.

The British, French and German foreign ministers suggested that they viewed the snapback as a way to spur negotiations with Tehran. "This measure does not signal the end of diplomacy: we are determined to make the most of the 30-day period that is now opening to engage in dialogue with Iran," French

foreign minister Jean-Noël Barrot wrote on the social platform X.

Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said he decried the move as "unjustified, illegal and lacking any legal basis" in a call with his European counterparts. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will respond appropriately to this unlawful and unwarranted measure," he said, without elaborating.

US secretary of state Marco Rubio praised the Europeans' decision and said America "remains available for direct engagement with Iran." "Snapback does not contradict our earnest readiness for diplomacy; it only enhances it," Rubio said in a statement. AP

# Bangladesh poll body unveils roadmap for general elections

Dhaka: Bangladesh's top electoral body Thursday unveiled a roadmap for general election to be held in Feb next year, saying the poll schedule would be announced at least 60 days before the voting date.

"The chief adviser's office has asked us to hold the election before Ramzan. If I am not mistaken, Ramzan will begin on Feb 17 or 18. From this, you can calculate the probable election date," election commission's senior secretary Akhtar Ahmed said.

He said under the roadmap, discussions with political parties and other stakeholders would be held by the end of Sept and "it may take one to one and a half months" to complete the process. The roadmap expected that the EC could announce the schedule in the second or third week of Dec. The student-led National Citizen Party said roadmap suggested interim govt's "breach of promise". PTI

# India's industrial growth rises to 4 month high of 3.5% in July

NEW DELHI, Aug 28 (IANS)

INDIA'S industrial growth, based on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), rose to a four-month high of 3.5 per cent in July, driven by a strong performance in the manufacturing sector, according to data released by the Ministry of Statistics on Thursday.

The industrial growth rate has accelerated in July from 1.5 per cent in June. The data showed that the manufacturing sector, which provides quality jobs for the young graduates passing out of the country's universities and engineering institutes, registered a robust 5.4 per cent growth in July this year over the same month of the previous year.

Electricity generation recorded a marginal 0.6 per cent growth. However, the mining sector proved to be a laggard with a (-) 7.2 per cent contraction in output during the month due to the heavy monsoon rains, which affected

production.

Within the manufacturing sector, 14 out of 23 industry groups recorded a positive growth in July compared to the same month of the previous year.

The top three positive contributors during the month are "Manufacture of basic metals", such as steel products, recorded a 12.7 per cent growth, the "Manufacture of electrical equipment" such as switchgear, circuit breakers, control panels and transformers, registered a

15.9 per cent growth while the third group of "Manufacture of other nonmetallic mineral products", which includes cement, clocked a 9.5 per cent growth.

The figures on use-based classification show that the production of capital goods, which comprise machines used in factories, went up by a robust 5 per cent in July.

