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Diplomacy amid the India-Canada relations and the Khalistan Challenge

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ABSTRACT

India and Canada share strong bilateral relations in trade, education, and vibrant cultural exchange. The sizable Indian diaspora in Canada, rooted in shared democratic values and Commonwealth ties, has helped sustain a cooperative relationship. However, the emergence of the Khalistan movement—radicalized during the violent unrest in Punjab in the 1980s—has significantly strained bilateral ties, particularly during Prime Minister Trudeau's tenure. Previous governments have contributed to turbulence at multiple levels, complicating diplomatic engagements between the two countries. The evolving dynamics of the Khalistan movement reflect divergent national priorities, which have increasingly shaped bilateral interactions. This paper attempts to trace the historical roots of the separatist ideology advocating for a sovereign Punjab in India. It also examines the movement's contemporary manifestations within Canada's multicultural framework, which have placed additional strain on its relationship with India. The study analyses how Canada's commitment to free speech and political activism has enabled pro-Khalistan sentiments to thrive among segments of the Indian diaspora, India, in contrast, views such activities as threats to its sovereignty and national security, with pro-Khalistan actors often labelled as extremists or even terrorists. The paper argues that the Khalistan issue presents a formidable challenge to India-Canada relations. At the same time, it emphasizes opportunities for constructive dialogue, stronger economic cooperation, cultural exchange, and mutual respect for sovereignty. The study also offers recommendations for easing tensions, balancing domestic political pressures with the broader goal of strengthening bilateral ties.

Keywords: Indian diaspora, Khalistani movement, Sovereignty, National Security.

Introduction

India and Canada, despite their distant geographical boundaries shares connections in terms of their social diversity, democracy and multiculturalism. Both nations own a wealth of cultural traditions and have unswervingly embraced multiculturalism as a fundamental principle of their existence. Individually India and Canada possess parliamentary democratic systems and semi-federal structures that strive to accommodate social diversities, minority

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groups and a large emigrant population (Thakur & Bhatia, 2025). Multiculturalism suggests a prevailing political culture which should recognise and respect cultural, ethnic and religious differences within a country (Kymlicka, 1995). A state ensures the acceptance and credits diversity by establishing a constitutional framework which allows free existence and independent expression of rights for minority group members (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013). It addresses the presence of cultural diversity in modern democracies and serves as a method for redressing the exclusion, prejudice and oppression experienced by different cultural groups. Although recognition of the rights of minorities and the provision of free spaces to them were the major challenges of the democracies in the 19th and 20th centuries (Taylor, 1994). The idea drew more attention during the socio-cultural eruptions and demands of nationalist forces for secession in the 1950's and 1960's in several states in the West (Modood, 2007). States were forced to recalibrate their organisational structures in consonance with the idea of multiculturalism, which implied independent coexistence with the dominant culture of a state (Parekh, 2000). India and Canada, the two vibrant democracies, have periodic tension in their bilateral ties as they have been shadowed intermittently by the Khalistan question (Tatla, 1999). The Khalistan Movement which sought to establish sovereign Sikh state acquired significant influence in the 1980's mostly affecting the Punjab state of India. While the movement has significantly declined in India, there are still pockets of support among the worldwide Sikh diaspora, particularly in Canada, where there is a substantial Sikh population. The presence of Overseas Indian has substantial Sikh community in Canada, some of whom support the Khalistan Movement which has impacted the India-Canada bond (Thakur, 2024, p. 23). Recent events included assaults on the Indian embassy in Canada and referendums related to the Khalistan Movement, have further strained India-Canada ties. These occurrences have exaggerated diplomatic relations and sparked significant concerns about security and diplomatic post-safeguarding. The Indian government has raised apprehensions over pro-Khalistan actions in Canada, stating that incidents pose a significant risk to India's sovereignty and security. Consequently, India has been lobbying Canada to adopt more robust measures against pro-Khalistan factions (Thakur & Bhatia, 2025). These developments have tested the resilience of India-Canada ties, raising questions about the ability of both nations to navigate sensitive political issues while preserving mutual interests. This research paper explores the complexities of India-Canada relations and challenges of the Khalistan movement, examining the historical context and its implications on diplomacy. By analysing the diaspora politics, national policies and international relations, the study highlights pathway for constructive engagement that strengthen bilateral ties while minimising Khalistani propaganda. In Canada, the Khalistani incendiaries are responsible for disturbing the long-standing friendly Indo-Canadian connection, causing terror among Indians, and disturbing the calm in their nation. The prime minister of Canada, who is targeting the Sikh vote bank in the 2025 federal elections to hold onto power since their strength has been growing quickly over the past three decades, indirectly backed their wicked activities (Nambiar, 2025).

Population of Overseas Indians (Ministry of External Affairs, n.d.)

Sr.	Country	Non-Resident	Persons of Indian	Overseas
No.		Indians (NRIs)	Origin (PIOs)	Indian
1.	Canada	1016274	1859680	2875954

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, GOI (Page last updated on: 27/03/2025)

As per data maintained by Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India the population of Overseas Indian have been gown-up to 2.87million. The Sikh population has grown significantly since 1991. Though the Indian government succeeded in controlling the Khalistan militancy in those days, it has been raising its head very often in India as well as in several other countries, especially in Canada (Thakur, 2025). Presently, India is also the largest source of immigrants to Canada across all categories which includes study permits. The role of the Indian diaspora in Canada and the various challenges that both countries face in managing diversity and promoting inclusion, including issues related to identity politics, discrimination, and social inequality. Beyond the politics of policies on migration in receiving countries at the national level, the reality of the permanence of migrants means that countries are becoming increasingly multicultural (Bhatia & Verma, 2025).

The rise of Khalistan and its repercussions

Soon after India's independence, Tara Singh, in 1948, called for the establishment of a Punjabi-speaking autonomous Sikh state. Tara Singh (1885– 1967) was a "Sikh leader known chiefly for his advocacy of an autonomous Punjabi-speaking Sikh nation in the Punjab region. He was a champion of Sikh rights against the dominant Hindus, Muslims, and British" (Britannica, 2023). Punjab came into existence in 1966. The Khalistan Movement was started about five decades back in the state of Punjab. "The Khalistan movement emerged in the 1970s and early 1980s, advocates for the creation of a separate homeland for Sikhs in India. While the government had previously suppressed the movement, it has recently gained momentum, particularly led by few Sikh diaspora based in Canada" (Frontline, 2023). The term 'Khalistan' was popularised in 1960's which means 'Land of the Pure' in the Punjabi language. Its demand represents desire of a small group in Sikh community in the state of Punjab for an 'independent Sikh homeland'. The idea gained momentum in the 1980s for a variety of socio-political factors like a strong religious and cultural identity, language, historical grievances, electoral failures, feelings of persecution and human rights denial, coupled with a desire for more autonomy. Keeping in view the prevalent diversities India went for a semi-federal democratic organisation of its states and territories at independence from British rule, and this gradually evolved into a 'checks and balances system of federal management'. After the partition of India in 1947 the Sikhs settled for a separate state of Punjab within

the Indian Union and continued with the demand for devolution of more powers and a separate Punjabi Suba on the basis of language. State politics remained divided between Akalis and the Congress who shared power alternately (Thakur, 2024).

The failure of a few separatist leaders in state elections, along with the electoral rivalry between Akali Dal and Congress, created an opportunity for Khalistani voices to demand secession from India. According to Atul Kohli, "The repeated failure of the Akali to wrest power from Congress had left open a political space for those who argued that increased militancy was the only means for protecting Sikh interests [A charismatic preacher, Jarnail Singh] Bhindranwale stepped into that space" (Kohli, 1991). The International campaigns and so-called referendums, mainly driven by some segments of the Sikh diaspora around the world. This renewed push for Khalistan has been particularly evident in countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Thakur, 2024).

Key challenges to bilateral relations and recent developments

The relationship between India and Canada, historically characterized by strong economic and cultural ties, has been strained recently due to various political, diplomatic, and social issues. The Khalistan Movement and Extremism, which advocates for a separate Sikh state in India, has been a major point of contention. India views these groups as a threat to its national security and accuses Canada of not taking sufficient action against them. Allegations of a safe haven for extremists have exacerbated tensions, leading to diplomatic protests from India. The assassination of Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, a Canadian Sikh leader, and espionage allegations against each other have further strained diplomatic relations and undermined trust between the two governments. Diplomatic and political disputes have resulted in senior diplomats being expelled and travel advisories issued for citizens (Bloomberg, 2023). This has seriously impacted their economic ties too. India and Canada have experienced substantial growth in bilateral trade in recent years, with trade volume hitting \$8.16 billion in the fiscal year 2022—23. India's exports to Canada, valued at \$4.1 billion, consist of pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, textiles, and machinery. On the other hand, Canada's exports to India, worth \$4.06 billion, comprise of pulses, lumber, pulp and paper, and mining goods. India and Canada share a robust education collaboration. There are over 200 educational partnerships between Indian and Canadian institutions. In addition, over 3,19,000 Indian students are enrolled in Canadian institutions, making them the largest international student cohort in Canada, according to GTRI. Indian students contributed USD 4.9 billion to the Canadian economy in 2021 (Economic Times, 2023). However, there has been significant drop in number of new admissions of Indian students in Canada. Trade and economic ties have been stalled, and economic uncertainty has affected bilateral trade and investment flows. Community tensions, particularly within the Sikh community in Canada, have led to public protests and rallies. The international community has expressed concern over the escalating tensions, and the strained bilateral relations can impact cooperation in international forums such as the United Nations and G20 (Thakur, 2025).

In the trade and industry field, successive governments of India-Canada have made efforts to leverage diaspora ties to deepen the bilateral relationship. According to Bisaria (2018), Indian High Commissioner at Canada, "The Strategic India—Canada economic partnership was moving to the next level in business and political terms and often the business led the political side. We are working on trade agreements and having a conversation on investment protection agreement. There is a strong inflow of immigrants and students from India to Canada. India is investing in human capital in Canada and Canada is exporting financial capital to India" (Thakur 2019, p. 46). Canada is a sought—after choice for Indian students pursuing higher education, since thousands of them enroll in Canadian universities and colleges every year. They contributed about 4.9 billion to the Canadian economy in 2021. The Indian diaspora in Canada is dynamic and influential, enriching the heterogeneous fabric of Canadian society. India's cultural events, cinema, and cuisine are greatly celebrated.

India and Canada currently make substantial investments under their respective new administrations. The bilateral commerce between the two states has experienced a twofold increase over a span of six years, rising from \$3.21 billion in 2010 to around \$6.05 billion in 2016. Nevertheless, there is ample opportunity to increase commerce as India currently represents a mere 1.95per cent of Canada's overall worldwide trade. India's primary exports to Canada consist of diamonds, jewellery, and precious stones, pharmaceutical products, ready-made clothes, textiles, organic chemicals, light technical goods, iron and steel commodities, and other similar items. India imports a variety of goods from Canada, such as pulses, newspaper, wood pulp, asbestos, potash, iron scrap, copper, minerals, and industrial chemicals (MEA 2018). During the last 27 years the exports of India to Canada have increased at an annualized rate of 10.1per cent, from \$399M in 1995 to \$5.37B in 2022. During the same period the exports of Canada to India have increased at an annualized rate of 9.44per cent, from \$378M in 1995 to \$4.32B in 2022. In February 2024, India exported \$348M and imported \$492M from Canada, resulting in a negative trade balance of \$144M (OEC 2024). In 2016, the amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) from India in Canada was more than twice the amount of FDI from Canada in India. Specifically, India's FDI in Canada was \$2093.53 million, while Canada's FDI in India was \$901.16 million. Indian corporations have made significant investments, particularly in the fields of information technology, software development, steel production, and extraction of natural resources.

India and Canada have made a joint statement expressing their commitment to take particular actions, such as promptly completing the Bilateral Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA). The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the agreement on a road map aimed at

promptly finalising a progressive, balanced, and mutually advantageous Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was established by the UPA government in 2010 (Thakur 2019, p. 46).

Engaging the Indian diaspora in Canada seems a challenging ordeal for New Delhi, which wants to limit the influence of Canada-based Khalistan sympathizers. While Sikhs constitute a significant proportion of the Indian diaspora, they make up less than 1 per cent (a little over 5,00,000) of Canada's total population. Despite this, the Sikh diaspora commands a reasonable influence in Canada's federal politics, specifically in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario. The early Sikh immigrants to Canada faced anti-immigrant sentiments and discrimination, which led them to politically organize themselves. Social, economic, and political developments in India further fuelled their political drive, including the declaration of the Emergency in 1975, the rise of Sikh militancy in Punjab in the 1980s, Operation Blue Star in the Golden Temple (Amritsar) in 1983, and the 1984 riots that resulted in the deaths of almost 3,000 Sikhs (Singh and Singh, 2008: pp. 149–171). Such events have also informed Canada's political discourse.

The emergence of strong secessionist sentiments further created schisms within the community. While moderates view India favourably and oppose secessionist sentiments, the fundamentalist groups, such as the Babbar Khalsa, vehemently advocate for the Khalistan cause. Events such as the 1984 riots and the Golden Temple incident are frequently introduced in Canada's provincial legislatures, often in the form of petitions. This is due to the prominent involvement of Sikhs in Canada's politics and the regionalization of Indo-Canadian politics, whereby issues affecting the Sikh diaspora seem to dominate. In 2010, Liberal MPs Sukh Dhaliwal and Andrew Kania introduced a petition in the House of Commons, asking Ottawa to consider the 1984 riots as an act of genocide and discuss the issue with New Delhi. The members of other political parties have made similar demands. In 2012, the New Democratic Party (NDP) argued that, as a democratic nation. Canada must seek answers from India on behalf of its citizens. In 2017, Harinder Malhi of the Liberal Party moved a private motion in the Ontario assembly, describing the 1984 riots as genocide. Since 2014, Gurpanwant Singh Pannun, leader of the group Sikhs for Justice, has campaigned for a referendum in Punjab in 2020 and even presented a petition to Stephen Harper, asking him to share it with Narendra Modi during Modi's 2015 visit to Canada. In addition to these issues, the emergence of Jagmeet Singh as the leader of Canada's NDP has also caused some concern in New Delhi. While Singh has refrained from offering unqualified support to the Khalistan cause and remains vague on the issue, he has criticized New Delhi for the Operation Blue Star. Singh has also supported Guy Caron, another NDP leader, who asked the Canadian government to recognize the 1984 riots in India as genocide (Kumar, 2025).

In 2023, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian PM Justin Trudeau met on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Delhi and discussed Khalistan extremism. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Khalistani extremism said that "foreign interference" came up during his talk with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "It is important to remember that the actions of the few do not represent the entire community or Canada", He added (Saha, 2023).

While India-Canada economic relations have made some progress, Canada remains an insignificant trading partner for India. Canada's Indo—Pacific strategy, which says India's strategic importance can only increase as its economy grows and it becomes the world's most populous country, offers a wider staging ground for the two to come together to work for mutual benefits. However, the operation of Khalistani elements from the land of Canada has always hanged like a demcles sword on the two states. The recent diplomatic stalemate between India and Canada also stemmed from mutual recriminations over the 2023 killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, which Ottawa linked to Indian agents which New Delhi vehemently denied. Tensions escalated with reciprocal expulsions of diplomats and suspended visa services. However, the recent reports of CSIS has strenghthened the Indian stand as it revealed the Khalistani connection with the anti-India activities supported from Canada.

CSIS

Quite recently in 2025 Canada's spy agency, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), formally acknowledged that Khalistani extremist organizations, who have been operating from Canada are engaged in fundraising from different channels, and planning violent activities in India, posing a threat to both India and Canda. The confession in the detailed CSIS public report underscores a shift in Canada's public stance on Khalistani extremism and has turned against them accommodating the Indian view. The CSIS report also discusses how these groups exploited Canada's open democratic system to raise funds, recruit supporters, and coordinate actions to destabilise India, particularly the Indian state of Punjab. The report also notes the use of encrypted communication platforms and diaspora networks to orchestrate violence, including targeted killings and propaganda campaigns. This admission comes amid restored Canada-India diplomatic ties following the 2025 G7 Summit in Alberta, where Prime Ministers Mark Carney and Narendra Modi agreed to reappoint high commissioners and resume trade and visa services. Canada announced its first Consul General appointment in Mumbai in July 2025 marking the end of a freeze on diplomatic postings in Canadian missions in India that began in October 2023, when Canada pulled out 41 diplomats after New Delhi demanded parity in numbers (The Wire, 2015). CSIS's findings also underscored the need for enhancing the bilateral law enforcement cooperation to address transnational However, threats, including terrorism and foreign interference. acknowledgment risks inflaming domestic tensions in Canada, particularly

within Sikh diaspora communities, while raising questions about balancing free speech with national security (The Hindu, 2025).

G7 Summit

During the 51stG7 Summit, held in Kananaskis, Alberta, from June 15–17, 2025, India and Canda got an appropriate time to develop the lost cordiality as Prime Ministers Mark Carney and Narendra Modi agreed to restore full diplomatic ties following a period of strained relations (MEA, 2025; India Today, 2025a). This diplomatic breakthrough, initiated by Carney's invitation to Modi, addressed tensions stemming from Canada's 2023 allegations linking Indian agents to the murder of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. The bilateral meeting on the summit's sidelines resulted in commitments to reappoint high commissioners, resume visa services, and restart trade negotiations, signaling a strategic reset in bilateral relations. This meeting lays the groundwork for a potential reset (India Today, 2025b). This development reflects Canada's intent to leverage its 2025 G7 presidency to re-engage with India, a rising global power, amid shared priorities in critical minerals, clean energy, and counterterrorism. The agreement also aligns with Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy and efforts to diversify trade amid U.S. tariff threats. However, challenges persist, including Canada's concerns about Indian foreign interference and India's allegations of Canada-based Khalistani extremism (The Hindu, 2025). Both leaders emphasized mutual respect, rule of law, and sovereignty, with Modi advocating for the Global South's concerns and Carney highlighting cooperation on transnational crime. The restoration of diplomatic channels is expected to facilitate law enforcement collaboration and economic partnerships, potentially increasing bilateral trade by up to C\$8 billion over the next decade. Despite this progress, unresolved tensions, particularly around the Nijjar case and Khalistani activism, underscore the need for sustained engagement to ensure a durable thaw (MEA, 2025).

However, in the meantime, the presence of Khalistani protests led by groups like Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) and inflammatory rhetoric figures like Gurpatwant Singh Pannun highlight the ongoing challenge of managing separatist sentiments within Canada's Sikh diaspora (Times of India, 2025a). The following measures are suggested for balancing domestic political pressures and strengthening bilateral ties:

1. Strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation: Canada must take decisive steps to address India's concerns regarding Khalistani extremism, including enforcing measures against groups like SFJ, which India has designated a terrorist organization (Times of India, 2025a). Ottawa should act on India's extradition requests for 26 Khalistani fugitives and restrict activities that glorify violence or threaten India's sovereignty, such as provocative protests during high-profile visits. India, in turn, should provide actionable intelligence to support Canada's investigations, particularly in the Hardeep

Singh Nijjar case, while maintaining its rejection of unverified allegations of interference (India Today, 2025b).

- 2. Enhance economic and trade ties: Both nations should capitalize on shared economic interests, especially as Canada seeks to diversify trade amid U.S. tariffs and India aims to expand its North American market presence (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2025). The resumption of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations and collaboration in critical minerals, technology, and energy transition, as discussed at the G7, provide a foundation for mutual growth (The Indian Express, 2025). India should prioritize transparent trade policies to build confidence, while Canada should ensure a stable environment for Indian investments.
- 3. Manage diaspora dynamics: To prevent escalations, Canada must enhance security measures to avoid clashes between pro-India and pro-Khalistan groups during diplomatic events (Times of India, 2025a). India should encourage its diaspora to engage in constructive cultural diplomacy, fostering positive narratives to counter extremist rhetoric. Both nations should promote dialogue platforms to address diaspora grievances while respecting national sovereignty.
- 4. **Institutionalize commitments**: Given the political fluidity in Canada, particularly with the New Democratic Party's (NDP) historical ties to Sikh advocacy, India should push for institutionalized frameworks, such as bilateral counter-terrorism agreements, to ensure continuity beyond electoral cycles (Canada's NDP, 2025). Carney's pragmatic approach, sidelining pro-Khalistani elements in his cabinet, is a positive step, but India must remain cautious of future policy shifts (India Today, 2025b).
- 5. **Foster transparent dialogue**: Both leaders should maintain open channels for frank discussions on sensitive issues like the Nijjar case and transnational repression, as emphasized by Carney during the G7 (India Today, 2025b). Regular high-level engagements and law enforcement cooperation can rebuild trust, ensuring that diplomatic progress is not derailed by domestic pressures or extremist provocations (Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2025).

By implementing these recommendations, India and Canada can transform the G7 Summit's diplomatic breakthrough into a resilient partnership, balancing respect for sovereignty, diaspora rights, and shared economic goals while addressing the Khalistan challenge with resolve. Hence, two nations must ensure a sustainable partnership where both nations must address these complexities with concrete actions and mutual respect.

Conclusion

India and Canada share strong democratic values, social diversity, and multiculturalism, with both nations embracing parliamentary systems and semi-

federal structures that accommodate minority communities and emigrant populations. Their shared commitment to multiculturalism aims to protect cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity, fostering inclusive societies. However, the relationship has been strained by the Khalistan movement, which advocates for a separate Sikh state in India. This movement gained traction in the 1970s and 1980s due to identity-based grievances, and has since found support in diaspora communities, particularly in Canada. Recent incidents, including attacks on Indian diplomatic missions and pro-Khalistan referendums, have escalated tensions. India perceives Canada's lack of action against Khalistan sympathizers as a security concern, leading to diplomatic friction. The issue is compounded by the significant influence of the Sikh diaspora in Canadian politics, especially in British Columbia and Ontario. Allegations of Canada serving as a safe haven for extremists have further soured bilateral ties.

Despite these challenges, India and Canada have made notable progress in trade and education. Bilateral commerce has grown, with India exporting pharmaceuticals, textiles, and chemicals, while importing agricultural and industrial goods from Canada. Foreign direct investment reflects India's growing presence in Canada, particularly in technology and natural resources. Educational partnerships have also flourished, although student admissions have recently declined amid political tensions. The Indian diaspora in Canada plays a key role in bridging cultural and economic ties but is also at the centre of identity politics influenced by separatist elements. This paper explores the historical roots of the Khalistan movement, its impact on India-Canada diplomacy, and the importance of managing diaspora dynamics. Constructive engagement, mutual respect for national security concerns, and inclusive policies are essential for strengthening this multifaceted relationship.

Note and references

Notes

It is often difficult to ascribe a precise date of origin to the rise of a particular secessionist movement. This is especially so when many of its protagonists contend that their demands for separate nationhood are rooted in and legitimised by entrenched historical realities. Nevertheless, many scholars in attempting to place a fixed time frame around the Sikh separatist movement for Khalistan in North India tend to commence their chronology of events from 1981 and end in 1993. This is because it was during this time period that Punjab endured a heightened level of religious militancy with an estimated death toll of over 25,000 resulting from the associated violence (Puri et al 1999: 10). It was only the second insurgency movement the first being the Naga movement in North East India that the postcolonial, post-partition, Indian state had to deal with insurgency. The latter was also the more testing of the two. The roots of Sikh separatism are long and contested, although it is clear that plans for an independent Sikh state did exist in the final years of British rule over the subcontinent. However, these plans emerged as a reaction to the Pakistan resolution of 1940, and were not, for the majority of the Sikh leadership at least, their first preference for a postcolonial settlement. Sikh separatism continued almost immediately after partition through the demand for a Punjabi suba or linguistic state, which Master Tara Singh, a veteran leader of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), had allegedly conceded was merely an acceptable cover for what his community and he were truly seeking, namely a Sikh majority political entity (Singh 1992: 40). After the Punjabi suba was eventually conceded in 1966, further grievances vis--vis New Delhi began to emerge, including the status of Chandigarh, the distribution of river water flowing through Punjab, the alleged religious discrimination of Sikhs, and undue encroachment by the state into their religious affairs. Such grievances found their way into the SADs Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973, which went to form the bedrock of demands for the early portion of the militant movement that emerged at the beginning of the following decade (1980s), and was supported by the likes of Amritdhari Damdami Taksal preacher Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale(*Realpolitik in the Khalistan Movement*, 2019)

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