

CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION



CIF E-Newsletter



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Chair's Message



From Words to Action

The Moment Canada and India Have Been Waiting For!

Dear Friends

Something historic happened in the first days of March. For those of us who have spent years working toward a stronger Canada-India partnership - through diplomatic crises, broken trust, and what sometimes felt like an endless holding pattern - the images from New Delhi were not just news. They were vindication.

Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit to India from February 27 to March 2 was the first bilateral visit by a Canadian Prime Minister since 2018. Eight years. Let that settle for a moment. Eight years during which the world changed, India rose to become the fourth-largest economy on the planet, and Canada and India allowed a relationship of enormous potential to drift - and then fracture.

That chapter is now closed.

What Actually Happened? And Why It Matters

This was not a diplomatic courtesy call. PM Carney arrived with senior ministers, provincial premiers, and a delegation of leading Canadian CEOs. The outcomes were concrete and consequential.

The CEPA Terms of Reference were signed. After fifteen years of on-again, off-again talks, formal negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement are now officially underway, with both leaders committing to conclude by end 2026. The bilateral trade target: CAD 70 billion by 2030, compared to approximately CAD 31 billion today. That is not incremental growth. That is a structural transformation.

Eight major agreements were signed, spanning clean energy, critical minerals, agriculture, space collaboration, defence dialogue, and cultural exchange. A landmark CAD 2.6 billion, 10-year deal on Canadian uranium for India's nuclear reactors was among the most significant - a direct expression of Canada's identity as a reliable, long-term energy partner.

Agriculture: Canada's Defining Opportunity

The agri-food sector - Canada's single largest export category to India - was explicitly named as a priority cooperation area. For Saskatchewan's pulse farmers, Alberta's canola growers, and Manitoba's food processors, CEPA could be genuinely transformational. Pulse crops currently face tariffs of up to 30% entering India. Eliminating those tariffs alone could expand Canadian pulse exports by well over 100% within five years.

Canada produced a record 107 million tonnes of grain and oilseeds in 2025. India feeds 1.4 billion people and is the world's largest pulse consumer. The complementarity here is not theoretical - it is almost embarrassingly obvious.

Critical Minerals: Locking in Canada's Strategic Role

Canada holds the world's third-largest proven oil reserves and is among the global leaders in lithium, cobalt, nickel, and uranium. India needs these inputs to fuel its electric vehicle ambitions, its manufacturing expansion, and its energy transition. A Ministerial-led Indian energy and industry delegation to Canada is committed for this summer. The PDAC mining conference in Toronto this month included an Indian presence at historical scale for the first time. ([READ MORE](#))

Event

CIF Celebrates International Women's Day 2026



Brampton, March 12, 2026: Canada India Foundation celebrated its sixth annual International Women’s Day in the presence of a committed group of Indo Canadian women and their supportive families.

Opening his address with the lines, “seeing this room filled with such powerful Indo Canadian women, is a testament to how far we have come in this journey” Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, said referring to the theme of the event: “Give to gain is a beautiful philosophy. It suggests that when we give our support, our mentorship and our resources to women, we are not losing anything, we are gaining a stronger economy, a more resilient society and a better future for our children. Giving is not a subtraction; it is an intentional multiplication.”

Malik also referred to a painful episode that happened recently in Ontario where an independent and courageous Indo Canadian woman, Nancy Grewal, was brutally killed for expressing herself freely on politics and society. “Her death was not a random act, but an intentional act for the crime of expressing herself freely. To our policy makers and leaders, I ask what is the meaning of a democratic society if women must live in fear for the right to express their views? Freedom of speech is a hollow promise if it does not include freedom from fear. We don’t just need celebratory messages today, we need action. We need our government to recognize that threats and violence against women, especially those in our diaspora who take a stand, are stains on the fabric of our democracy. We need laws that protect and a justice system that acts before tragedy strikes, not after. [\(Read more\)](#)



HEADLINES

RCMP Commissioner Confirms No More ‘Foreign Interference’



What could possibly be a stick to beat Canada India reset by detractors of the relationship has clearly been removed. The ‘foreign interference by India’ issue that was always suspected to be political in nature has been put to rest by none other than the RCMP Commissioner, Mike Duheme. He stated categorically, “In the files that we have that involve transnational repression, we’re not seeing any connection right now with any foreign entity, based on the criminal information, the investigations that we have presently.” ([Read More](#))

Press Hails Carney’s Asia Outreach

Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit to India, China and Australia is being hailed as a pivotal moment in Canada's geopolitical journey. The successful visit, besides resetting the relationship with India and China, but also led to tangible results on behalf of Canada's ambitious trade goals. Media in Asia have noted the trip as the first move towards reaching a more diversified and resilient national economy. ([Read more.](#))



India Blames Extreme Bias in Report on Religious Freedom



The celebration in Canada over the US Supreme Court's decision to strike down the Trump tariffs proved to be short-lived, as experts pointed out that little has changed as far as Canada-US trade is concerned. In fact, levies imposed on critical sectors like steel, aluminium and automobiles, stay in place, threatening hundreds of thousands of jobs in Canada. And worse may be yet to come when the CUSMA comes up for review in a few months. ([Read more.](#))

Innovation Centre Plans to Bring 300 Highly Qualified Students from India

The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Vancouver-based Mitacs, a national innovation connector, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expand talent mobility between India and Canada across disciplines from science, engineering, and mathematics to the humanities and social science. The Mitacs-AICTE MOU, in effect for three years, will support 300 highly qualified senior undergraduate students from India to travel to Canada each year through the Mitacs Globalink Research Internship (GRI) Program. ([Read more.](#))



India Developing Small Modular Reactors



India has joined the race to master Small Modular Reactors (SMR) to join a handful of countries that are currently in advanced stages of design and building a technology that many consider holds the path to clean energy transition. Three types of small reactors - 220 MWe Bharat Small Modular Reactor (BSMR-200), the 55 MWe SMR (SMR-55), and a 5 MWth high-temperature gas-cooled reactor (HTGCR) for hydrogen generation – are currently under development. ([Read more.](#))

India Aims to Become a Semiconductor Powerhouse

India has identified semiconductor manufacturing locally as a top priority to meet the rising demand from industry. Besides offering attractive subsidies to the global majors, India also has the second most experienced designers. According to some media reports, the plan yet to be formalized, may allocate almost \$11 billion to potential investors. ([Read more.](#))



Indian Pharma Set to Roll Out Cheaper Versions of Weight-loss Drugs



As the patent protection ends this month on the most sought-after drugs to fight obesity, Ozempic and Wegovy, Indian pharma is all set to market the generic versions to meet a rising demand in India as well as rest of the world. The drug costs are considered prohibitive till now impeding its widespread adoption. But with India offering the world the cheaper option, the millions more can expect to shed pounds without losing their wallets. ([Read more.](#))

Spotlight

Ramesh Chotai appointed Honorary Consul General of Uganda

Canada India Foundation (CIF) proudly announces the appointment of its Past Chair, Ramesh Chotai, as the Honorary Consul General of Uganda—a distinguished recognition of his lifelong commitment to global business leadership and community service.

A visionary co-founder of the Canada India Foundation, Mr. Chotai has played a pivotal role in strengthening Canada–India relations. Under his leadership as Chair (2009–2011), CIF advanced several high-impact initiatives, including the Canada India Energy Forum and the Canada India Mining & Metals Forum, bringing together leading entrepreneurs and policymakers to foster bilateral trade and drive sector-specific public policy dialogue.



Mr. Chotai is the President of Bromed Pharmaceuticals and a globally respected figure in the pharmaceutical industry. Educated as a pharmacist in the UK and Switzerland, he began his professional journey with ICI Pharmaceuticals in Kampala, Uganda. After immigrating to Canada in 1972, he started as a Pharmacist/Manager in Oshawa and went on to build a highly successful group of companies specializing in the manufacturing and global distribution of medical and healthcare products.

A passionate community builder and philanthropist, his outstanding contributions have been widely recognized with numerous awards from the Government of India with Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award, and various community organizations.

This prestigious appointment reflects Mr. Chotai's enduring dedication to public service, international cooperation, and community development, further strengthening ties between Canada and Uganda.



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CIF Urges Community Members to Donate Blood

Canada India Foundation continued its efforts to help create awareness in the community to donate to the Canadian Blood Services. Blood is always a critical element in healthcare with the power to save lives. CIF is encouraging members of the Indo Canadian community to be proactive and help in this crucial program.

[Click here to join today.](#)



Make a meaningful impact on the lives of patients in your community and across Canada.

Join us and book your lifesaving blood and/or plasma donation today.

To join the team:

- 1** Sign in or create an account at blood.ca/PFL or use the **GiveBlood app**
- 2** Select 'Partners' from the menu, then 'Join an existing team'
- 3** Search for: **Canada India Foundation**
- 4** For help booking or for more information, contact info@canadaindiafoundation.com



Use the camera app on your phone and scan the QR code to book your appointment.

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