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EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

Shaping the Next Chapter in India-Canada Relations

 **THE HINDU**

1 June 2026 · **IR** · **GS2**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY



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Shaping the Next Chapter in India-Canada Relations

 **The Hindu** 1 June 2026 **GS2**

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INTERVIEW ANGLE

"India and Canada have deep people-to-people ties and strategic complementarities, yet the Khalistan controversy nearly severed them. How should India balance domestic political sensitivities with the long-term imperatives of the bilateral relationship?"

India and Canada are resetting bilateral ties after the 2023 diplomatic rupture, with CEPA negotiations relaunched and a \$50 billion bilateral trade target by 2030. Shared democratic values, Indo-Pacific strategic alignment, critical minerals cooperation, and a large diaspora form a durable foundation.

THE ARGUMENT IN ONE LINE

The India-Canada relationship is resilient enough to survive a **severe diplomatic rupture** — but the reset must be **sequenced**, addressing security concerns and rebuilding institutional trust alongside economic ambition.

THE 2023 RUPTURE — CONTEXT

- Canada alleged India's involvement in the killing of **Hardeep Singh Nijjar** (a Canadian Sikh activist and Khalistan supporter) in June 2023.
- India expelled Canadian diplomats; Canada imposed restrictions. Bilateral trade and student flows slowed but did not stop.
- India maintains Khalistan-related activities in Canada constitute **foreign interference** in India's domestic affairs.

WHY THE RESET IS HAPPENING

DRIVER	DETAIL
Indian diaspora	1.8+ million Indians in Canada; significant remittances and political salience
Critical minerals	Canada holds large reserves of lithium, uranium, cobalt — vital to India’s clean-energy transition
Education	Indian students = one of Canada’s largest international-student groups
CEPA	Negotiations relaunched; target: \$50 billion bilateral trade by 2030
Indo-Pacific	Both are democracies in the Quad-adjacent Indo-Pacific alignment

WAY FORWARD

- 1 Address security/**sovereignty** concerns through bilateral diplomatic channels — not public allegations.
- 2 Rebuild via institutional engagement: CEPA, Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA).
- 3 Leverage diaspora as a **bridge**, not a fault-line.

UPSC RELEVANCE

PAPER	RELEVANCE
GS2	India-Canada bilateral relations; diaspora diplomacy; Indo-Pacific
Prelims	India-Canada CEPA (under negotiation); critical minerals (lithium, uranium, cobalt); Khalistan

Source: Shaping the Next Chapter in India-Canada Relations — Ujjyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Editorial Analysis

● KEY ARGUMENTS AT A GLANCE

India and Canada are resetting bilateral ties after the 2023 diplomatic rupture, with CEPA negotiations relaunched and a \$50 billion bilateral trade target set for 2030; shared democratic

values, Indo-Pacific strategic alignment, critical minerals cooperation, and a large Indian diaspora form a durable foundation for the relationship.

 **SUPPORTING**

- The 2023 rupture (India’s expulsion of Canadian diplomats, Canada’s accusations regarding the Hardeep Singh Nijjar killing) severely damaged ties, but practical interests — trade, education, energy, diaspora remittances — survived the crisis and have provided a floor for rebuilding.
- India and Canada share complementarities: Canada holds vast reserves of critical minerals (lithium, uranium, cobalt) vital to India’s energy transition; Indian professionals, students, and entrepreneurs contribute significantly to Canada’s knowledge economy.
- Both are democracies with common interests in a rules-based Indo-Pacific order, making the relationship strategically too valuable to sacrifice on political grievances.

 **COUNTER**

Critics argue the structural reset is premature — trust has not been rebuilt, the underlying issue (foreign interference, Khalistan networks) remains unresolved, and any normalisation is primarily driven by business lobbying rather than principled reconciliation.

 **WAY FORWARD**

A relationship reset should be sequenced: address outstanding security/sovereignty concerns through diplomatic channels, rebuild institutional engagement (Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, CEPA), and leverage the diaspora as a bridge rather than a fault-line.

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MAINS ANSWER FRAMEWORK

QUESTION

"Bilateral relationships between democracies can survive political ruptures if they are anchored in deep structural complementarities." Examine with reference to India-Canada relations. (250 words)

INTRODUCTION

When the 2023 diplomatic crisis nearly shattered India-Canada ties, the structural depth of the bilateral relationship proved resilient. The editorial notes that a reset is now underway — with CEPA negotiations relaunched and a \$50 billion trade target in sight — pointing to how complementarities can outlast political ruptures between democracies.

BODY

The 2023 crisis — stemming from Canada’s allegations and India’s counter-expulsions — exposed the fragility of ties that had long been taken for granted. Yet practical interests never went away: a 1.8+ million strong Indian diaspora in Canada generates significant remittances and political salience in both countries; Canada’s uranium, cobalt and critical minerals fit India’s energy-transition needs; Indian students constitute one of Canada’s largest international-student groups; and both nations share concerns about a stable, rules-based Indo-Pacific order.

The relaunching of CEPA negotiations signals that these complementarities have reasserted themselves over political friction. But the reset must also address the underlying issue of foreign interference and Khalistan-linked activity on Canadian soil if it is to be durable — strategic interests require that neither side uses the other’s domestic politics as a lever.

CONCLUSION

India-Canada ties will hold not merely because of strategic alignment or economic complementarity, but because both governments choose to manage the legitimate security concerns on both sides through dialogue rather than rupture. The \$50 billion trade target is achievable only if diplomatic trust is rebuilt in parallel.

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