

Justin Trudeau “not trying to provoke” Indian government after accusation of involvement with murder of Sikh leader



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OTTAWA – Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has accused the Indian Government of being involved in the killing of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Mr. Nijjar was shot dead outside of a Sikh temple in Surrey B.C in June of this year.

Nijjar, 46, moved from his home country of India to British Columbia in 1997 and began working as a plumber. Singh was an active voice in the Sikh community, being a vocal advocate for the creation of Khalistan (a separate homeland for Sikhs).

Mr. Nijjar had recently been branded a terrorist by the Indian government for his separatist views. He was accused of masterminding a banned militant group in India, as well as being responsible for multiple bombings within the country in the early 2000's, years after having migrated to Canada.

Prime Minister Trudeau announced on Monday that, "Canadian security agencies have been actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar,"

The Prime Minister said he's urging the Indian Government to cooperate with this investigation.

"We are not looking to provoke or escalate. We are simply laying out the facts as we understand them," Trudeau told reporters on Tuesday, September 18th. He added that, "The government of India needs to take this matter with the utmost seriousness. We are doing that."

Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly also announced that Canada has expelled a "key" Indian diplomat, Pavan Kumar Rai, who is listed on the Indian High Commission's website as a minister for economic, coordination and community affairs. Mr. Rai was the head of the Canadian operations for the Research and Analysis Wing -- India's foreign intelligence agency.

A statement posted by the Indian Government on Tuesday dismissed the claims that the Indian Government was involved as "absurd" and "highly motivated" and are currently unwilling to cooperate.