Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

NDTV report on Anand's remarks frames Nijjar as a terrorist without attribution

An NDTV article carried on MSN accurately reports Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand's comments on free expression and public safety, but its opening framing describes Hardeep Singh Nijjar as a "Khalistani terrorist" and compresses the Canada–India dispute into a "controversy." The Lab assesses the item as misleading.

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SOURCE POSTED
14 October 2026

NARRATIVES
Labelling Sikh Individuals as Terrorists Without Evidence · Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism · Portraying Sikh Protests as Extremist Activity · Labelling Sikhs as “Good” or “Bad” Sikhs

OUR ASSESSMENT

The October 14 NDTV article accurately reports Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand's comments on freedom of expression, public safety and improving Canada–India relations. However, its introductory framing requires two important corrections concerning Hardeep Singh Nijjar and the underlying diplomatic dispute.

First, NDTV categorically describes Nijjar as a terrorist without explaining that this designation was imposed by India under its Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in 2020. Nijjar was a Canadian citizen and Sikh community leader whose killing in Surrey in June 2023 became the subject of a major Canadian homicide investigation. India's designation and allegations against him are relevant background, but they should be attributed to Indian authorities rather than presented as a universally established legal finding.

Second, the article characterizes the deterioration in Canada–India relations primarily as a controversy following Nijjar's assassination. This omits the substantive basis of Canada's response. On October 14, 2024, the RCMP publicly reported evidence connecting agents of the Indian government to homicides, violent acts, organized criminal activity and threats against members of Canada's South Asian community, specifically including pro-Khalistan individuals. Canada subsequently expelled six Indian diplomatic and consular officials. India has denied the allegations, and responsibility in individual criminal cases remains subject to investigation and judicial determination.

The Canadian investigative record also continued beyond the original diplomatic confrontation. In July 2026, the RCMP announced joint enforcement action with the FBI against organized crime networks associated with Lawrence Bishnoi and other individuals, expressly identifying the killing of Nijjar among the violent crimes addressed by the investigations. These official developments are important context for understanding why the Nijjar case remains a matter of Canadian national security and criminal justice.

The article's discussion of Khalistan-related slogans also requires a legal distinction. Section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter protects political expression, including peaceful advocacy for Khalistan. Canadian law separately addresses threats of violence and unlawful hate incitement. The display of controversial political imagery or expression of support for Khalistan cannot automatically be treated as a criminal offence without examining the content, circumstances and applicable legal threshold.

THE CLAIM

Exclusive - Need to strike balance: Canadian foreign minister on Khalistani slogans

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 14 October 2026, an NDTV article headlined "Exclusive - Need to strike balance: Canadian foreign minister on Khalistani slogans" was syndicated to MSN's India edition. The piece reports on comments by Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand concerning freedom of expression, public safety and the state of Canada–India relations.

The Lab's review finds that the reporting of Anand's remarks is accurate. The problem lies in the article's introductory framing, which states that the relationship "took a nosedive following the controversy over the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in 2023."

The item is assessed as **disinformation, misleading in nuance**, severity 2 of 5, containing inaccuracies. Three specific claims were assessed.

Claim 1: Nijjar was a "Khalistani terrorist" — False

The article presents this description as settled fact in its opening paragraph, without attribution.

The designation was imposed by India under its Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in 2020. Nijjar was a Canadian citizen and a Sikh community leader. His killing in Surrey, British Columbia, in June 2023 became the subject of a major Canadian homicide investigation.

India's designation and its allegations are relevant background and may legitimately be reported. They should be attributed to Indian authorities rather than presented as a universally established legal finding, and they are not an undisputed Canadian legal determination.

Claim 2: Relations deteriorated over "the controversy" — Misleading

The article characterises the downturn in Canada–India relations primarily as a controversy following Nijjar's assassination. That framing omits the substantive basis of Canada's response.

On 14 October 2024, the RCMP publicly reported evidence connecting agents of the Indian government to homicides, violent acts, organized criminal activity and threats against members of Canada's South Asian community, specifically including pro-Khalistan individuals. Canada subsequently expelled six Indian diplomatic and consular officials.

India has denied the allegations. Responsibility in individual criminal cases remains subject to investigation and judicial determination.

The Canadian investigative record continued beyond that diplomatic confrontation. In July 2026, the RCMP announced joint enforcement action with the FBI against organized crime networks associated with Lawrence Bishnoi and other individuals, expressly identifying the killing of Nijjar among the violent crimes addressed by the investigations.

Canada's position therefore rested on official intelligence and police investigations into alleged involvement by Indian government agents, not on a difference of opinion. Describing the rupture as a "controversy" misstates its nature.

Claim 3: Khalistan-related slogans raise public-safety concerns — Misleading

The article's treatment of Khalistan-related slogans requires a legal distinction that it does not make.

Section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects political expression, including peaceful advocacy for Khalistan. Canadian law separately addresses threats of violence and unlawful hate incitement.

The display of controversial political imagery, or the expression of support for Khalistan, cannot automatically be treated as a criminal offence. Whether any given instance crosses a legal line depends on the content, the

circumstances and the applicable legal threshold. Political slogans are not inherently unlawful; threats of violence and certain forms of hate incitement are treated differently.

Context

"Underpinning all of this work is a national security dialogue at the highest levels in which we stress the importance of the rule of law and domestic security considerations," the minister said.

Asked how challenging addressing the security issue has been, the minister appeared to refer to the Nijjar killing without naming him.

"There is an ongoing legal case relating to the killing of a Canadian man on Canadian soil and that case is in the litigation process and it is one which renders it important for us to take the rule of law and the system of justice in Canada extremely seriously. And so what we did is to initiate a high-level dialogue relating to the rule of law and national security to ensure that we don't lose sight of the importance of security issues," she said, adding that a declaration last year also emphasised security and the rule of law.



Exclusive - Need To Strike Balance: Canadian Foreign Minister On Khalistani Slogans

Source: msn.com

The item falls within the Labelling Sikh Individuals as Terrorists Without Evidence narrative. The severity rating reflects that the article's substantive reporting of the minister's statements is sound, and that the inaccuracies are confined to framing language in the introduction.

That framing nonetheless carries weight. Presenting an Indian domestic designation as an unqualified descriptor of a Canadian citizen, while reducing an RCMP-documented set of allegations to a "controversy," shifts the reader's understanding of why the Nijjar case remains a matter of Canadian national security and criminal justice.

The Lab's assessment addresses the content as published and makes no finding about the intent of the publisher or its journalists.

CLAIMS ASSESSED

01	Hardeep Singh Nijjar was a Khalistani terrorist.	FALSE
02	Canada–India relations deteriorated following the controversy over Nijjar's killing.	MISLEADING
03	Khalistan-related slogans raise public-safety concerns.	MISLEADING

SOURCES

01 https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/other/exclusive-need-to-strike-balance-canadian-foreign-minister-on-khalistani-slogans/ar-AA2edJ

02 RCMP public statement, 14 October 2024, on evidence connecting agents of the Indian government to homicides, violent acts, organized criminal activity and threats against members of Canada's South Asian community

03 RCMP announcement, July 2026, of joint enforcement action with the FBI against organized crime networks associated with Lawrence Bishnoi and others

04 India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act designation of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, 2020

05 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s. 2(b)

Sikh Disinformation Lab

About Sikh Disinformation Lab

Sikh Disinformation Lab is an independent, evidence-based programme founded and hosted by the World Sikh Organization of Canada. It monitors, analyses and publicly documents disinformation affecting Sikhs.

The Lab examines claims against evidence, publishes assessments with that evidence attached, and tracks coordinated campaigns over time. Every published assessment names what was claimed, where it appeared, what the review found, and what that assessment rests on. Where an item makes several distinct claims, each is assessed separately.

Assessments are made against the methodology framework in force at the time of publication. That framework is public, versioned, and reviewed at each phase gate; a material change produces a new version rather than a silent edit. The full method is published at sikhdisinfolab.ca/method.

Corrections are dated entries, never silent edits. Where a published assessment is found to be wrong or incomplete, the correction is recorded against it and listed at sikhdisinfolab.ca/corrections. If you believe something published here is inaccurate, write to the programme and it will be reviewed.

Assessments are the responsibility of Sikh Disinformation Lab.

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