Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

News On AIR report broadens one MP's remarks into unsourced "Khalistani terrorists and gangsters" framing

A report published by India's state broadcaster service News On AIR asserts that Canadian MP Chandra Arya "hits out at the Khalistani terrorists and gangsters." The Lab's review finds the framing misleading: the report generalizes beyond both its evidence and Arya's own remarks.

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4 October 2026

NARRATIVES
Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism · Linking Sikhs to Gangs, Drugs and Organized Crime · Claiming Authorities Shield Sikh Activists from Prosecution

OUR ASSESSMENT

News On AIR uses a documented controversy involving Gurpatwant Singh Pannun to frame a broader category of “Khalistani terrorists and gangsters.” The report does not identify who else is included in that category, provide evidence establishing terrorism or gangster links for those individuals, or distinguish peaceful Khalistan advocacy from violent extremism. This generalization is also broader than Chandra Arya's own remarks (which seem to gloss over the main facts and assertions and totally opposite of the framing): while condemning Pannun, Arya explicitly stated that the vast majority of Canadian Sikhs did not support the Khalistan movement. Canadian security authorities likewise state that non-violent Khalistan advocacy is lawful political activity.

THE CLAIM

Canadian MP Chandra Arya hits out at Khalistani terrorists

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 4 October 2026, newsonair.gov.in (the national and government news portal of India) the news portal of India's state broadcasterpublished an item headlined "Canadian MP Chandra Arya hits out at Khalistani terrorists."

The report states that "Canadian MP Chandra Arya today hits out at the Khalistani terrorists and gangsters," and adds that "in a video message, Mr Arya also condemned the attack."

What it claims

Two elements of the report were assessed.

First, the report asserts that a category described as "Khalistani terrorists and gangsters" is the relevant group responsible for the conduct under discussion.

Second, the report conveys that Arya questioned how what he regarded as glorification of terrorism, or a hate crime, could occur under freedom of expression protections.

What the review found

The Lab's verdict: **disinformation, misleading in nuance**, assessed at severity 3 of 5.

The review found that the report uses a documented controversy involving Gurpatwant Singh Pannun as the basis for a far broader characterization. Having anchored itself to that single matter, the report then invokes a general category of "Khalistani terrorists and gangsters."

The report does not identify who else falls within that category. It does not present evidence establishing terrorism offences or gangster affiliations for any individuals beyond the named controversy.

The first claim is therefore recorded as unsupported. A categorical attribution of criminality requires identified subjects and evidence; the report supplies neither.

The second claim is recorded as misleading rather than false. Contemporary reporting confirms that Arya made comments questioning how conduct he regarded as glorification of terrorism or a hate crime could be protected as free expression. The difficulty is not that the remarks were fabricated, but how they are framed.

The gap between the remarks and the headline

The generalization in the News On AIR report is broader than what Arya himself said. While condemning Pannun, Arya explicitly stated that the vast majority of Canadian Sikhs did not support the Khalistan movement.

That qualification is material. It narrows the scope of his criticism to specific conduct by a specific individual. The report's framing does the opposite: it expands a particular condemnation into a collective one, and omits the element of Arya's statement that cut against that expansion.

The effect is a report that presents itself as relaying an MP's position while summarising it in terms the MP did not use and partially contradicted.

Canadian context

Canadian security authorities state that non-violent advocacy for Khalistan is lawful political activity. The threshold for designating conduct as terrorism in Canada is a legal one, met through evidence and process, not through political characterization.

Reporting that collapses lawful advocacy and criminal conduct into a single undifferentiated category removes that threshold from view. Where the category is also left undefined, readers have no means of assessing who is being described or on what basis.

The Lab assigns this item to the Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism narrative.

Scope of this finding

This finding concerns the framing and sourcing of the News On AIR report. It makes no assessment of the underlying Pannun controversy, which the review treats as documented. It makes no finding as to the accuracy of Arya's own characterizations, which are his to make and which contemporary reporting confirms he made. It makes no assertion about the motive behind the report's publication, and none is claimed in the review.

The finding is confined to this: the report's central category is asserted without evidence, is not defined, and is wider than the remarks it purports to summarise.

CLAIMS ASSESSED

01	“Khalistani terrorists and gangsters” form the relevant category responsible for the conduct being discussed.	UNSUPPORTED

02 Arya also questioned how what he regarded as glorification of terrorism or a hate crime could occur under freedom of expression protections. Contemporary reporting confirms those comments. MISLEADING

SOURCES

01 https://newsonair.gov.in/canadian-mp-chandra-arya-hits-out-at-khalistani-terrorists/

02 The Lab's analyst review record (verdict: Disinformation / Misleading; severity 3; the Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism narrative)

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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