Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

News18 opinion piece alleging a "Khalistan asylum loophole" found misleading

An October 2026 opinion article republished on qoshe.com asserts that Canada–India security cooperation will fail unless Ottawa closes a Khalistan-related asylum loophole. The Lab's review finds the piece misleading: it draws systemic conclusions from statistics and historical events that do not establish the relationship claimed.

PUBLISHED
19 October 2026

SOURCE POSTED
13 October 2026

NARRATIVES
Portraying Foreign Governments as Safe Havens for Sikh Activists · Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism · Stereotyping Sikh Youth and Migrants as Dishonest or Dependent · Portraying the Sikh Freedom Struggle and the Events of 1984 and After Solely as Terrorism

OUR ASSESSMENT

An October 13, 2026, News18 opinion article by Ruchi Wali argues that Canada–India security cooperation will remain ineffective unless Ottawa closes what the author describes as a Khalistan-related asylum loophole. The article combines Canadian refugee statistics, allegations concerning asylum-support letters, historical acts of terrorism and contemporary extradition cases to suggest that Khalistan-aligned networks have exploited Canada's refugee and legal systems. The information-integrity concern arises in the conclusions drawn from these facts. The article does not establish how many Sikh asylum applicants have submitted fraudulent claims, how many have relied on fabricated political documentation, or how many are connected to extremist or criminal networks. Nevertheless, its framing presents refugee protection based on Khalistan-related political persecution as a potential mechanism through which dangerous individuals evade scrutiny. It is important because seeking protection from political persecution is not an immigration privilege created for a particular community. It is a recognized human right, governed in Canada by domestic legislation, constitutional safeguards and international refugee obligations.

-The right to seek asylum cannot be reduced to a suspected immigration loophole: Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right of every person to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol establish internationally recognized protections for people who meet refugee criteria, including protection against return to territories where they face persecution. These protections are not unconditional guarantees of refugee status. States may assess credibility, investigate fraudulent documentation, exclude individuals responsible for certain serious crimes and refuse claims that do not satisfy legal requirements.

What they cannot properly do is treat a person's religion or lawful political beliefs as sufficient grounds to presume that an application for protection is fraudulent. Canadian refugee law recognizes persecution connected to religion and political opinion under Section 96 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Section 97 separately addresses specified serious risks, including torture and threats to life. An applicant therefore does not obtain refugee status simply by stating support for Khalistan. Equally, an applicant does not lose the right to seek protection because that political position is opposed by the government of the country from which protection is requested. The risk created by an asylum-loophole narrative is that the political identity relevant to a potential persecution claim becomes a reason to distrust the claim before its evidence has been examined. The Supreme Court of Canada addressed the constitutional importance of fair refugee procedures in Singh v. Minister of Employment and Immigration (1985). The case affirmed the importance of fundamental justice in refugee decision-making where life, liberty and security interests are at stake. The same legal principles require attention to the consequences of removal. A mistaken refusal may not simply prevent immigration; it may return an individual to the circumstances from which protection was sought.

Wali cites 43,900 pending refugee claims involving India as of September 30, 2025, and a 26% acceptance rate for Indian claims during the first two quarters of fiscal 2025–26. The IRB records claims according to the country of alleged persecution. The category involving India is not a count of Sikh applicants, Khalistan supporters, political persecution claims or fraudulent applications.

The article does not provide a breakdown identifying how many applicants relied on Khalistan-related evidence or how many were found to have deliberately misrepresented their circumstances. The distinction between a rejected claim and a fraudulent claim is equally important. A refugee claim may be rejected because the decision-maker finds insufficient evidence of personal risk, determines that state protection is available, concludes that internal relocation is reasonable, or finds that other legal requirements are not satisfied. None

of these findings automatically establishes deliberate deception. Evidence of systemic abuse would require information about verified false applications, fraudulent documents, organized facilitation networks and the proportion attributable to identifiable actors.

The article does not establish those measurements.

India's democratic institutions do not eliminate the possibility of individual persecution: Wali points to India's electoral democracy, courts, constitutional protections and opportunities for internal relocation as reasons for closer scrutiny of asylum claims. These are relevant considerations in refugee decision-making. They do not, however, establish that every individual has effective access to state protection or can relocate safely.

Canada's transnational repression concerns are documented, not merely political rhetoric

The article's treatment of allegations concerning transnational repression is particularly incomplete when considered against Canada's public investigative record.

On October 14, 2024, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police publicly disclosed findings from investigations into alleged links between agents of the Government of India and serious criminal activity in Canada.

The RCMP reported credible threats to life affecting members of the South Asian community, specifically including individuals associated with the pro-Khalistan movement. It also described evidence concerning organized crime, violent acts, information gathering and interference in democratic processes.

These were findings publicly presented by Canada's federal police service, not simply allegations made by political advocacy groups.

India has disputed allegations of government involvement. Responsibility for specific crimes remains a matter for investigations and judicial proceedings.

Nevertheless, the RCMP record establishes that concerns about foreign-state-linked intimidation cannot reasonably be dismissed as an invented response to lawful scrutiny.

The January 2025 Foreign Interference Commission also documented India's efforts to influence Canadian political discourse and promote anti-Khalistan narratives.

The Commission identified tensions between India's treatment of separatism and Canada's legal protection of peaceful political expression. It reported that India did not appear consistently to distinguish lawful advocacy from a small subset of violent extremist actors.

These findings are directly relevant to refugee and extradition discussions.

When a claimant alleges persecution related to political advocacy, the credibility of evidence supplied by the government accused of that persecution may require careful examination. This does not mean Indian evidence should be rejected categorically. It means the source, reliability, possible political motivation and available corroboration must be assessed.

The News18 article's suggestion that concerns about transnational repression are predictably used to resist scrutiny leaves out the fact that Canadian authorities have independently documented such threats. The bilateral Security Work Plan does not establish a Khalistan asylum loophole

The article begins with the October 2026 meeting between David Morrison and India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

Canada's official account confirms that the two countries discussed cooperation concerning transnational organized crime, terrorism, violent extremism, trafficking, extortion, cybercrime and extradition.

The readout does not identify a Khalistan-specific asylum loophole, announce that Sikh political persecution claims require special treatment, or make refugee-policy restrictions a condition of successful security cooperation. The central information-integrity finding is that an unsupported association between Sikh political advocacy, refugee-system abuse and criminality is advanced through statistics and historical examples that do not establish the claimed relationship.

A credible approach to asylum integrity requires evidence of misconduct by identifiable applicants or networks, not suspicion based on political affiliation. Protecting the refugee process from fraud and protecting people from persecution are not competing objectives. Both depend on applying the law fairly and examining the evidence in each case.

THE CLAIM

Opinion | Canada-India Security Cooperation Will Fail Unless Ottawa Closes Khalistan Asylum Loophole

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 13 October 2026, an opinion article by Ruchi Wali, headlined "Canada-India Security Cooperation Will Fail Unless Ottawa Closes Khalistan Asylum Loophole," appeared on qoshe.com, a Turkey-based aggregator, carrying News18 attribution.

The piece opens from the October 2026 meeting between Canadian National Security and Intelligence Adviser David Morrison and India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, and the bilateral Security Work Plan on terrorism, violent extremism, organised crime, extortion and trafficking. It argues that this cooperation will remain ineffective unless Canada restricts what it describes as a Khalistan-related asylum loophole.

Verdict: Disinformation - misleading. Severity 4 of 5.

What the review found

The article assembles Canadian refugee statistics, allegations about asylum-support letters, historical acts of terrorism and contemporary extradition cases. The integrity problem lies in the conclusions drawn. The article does not establish how many Sikh asylum applicants have filed fraudulent claims, how many relied on fabricated political documentation, or how many are connected to extremist or criminal networks. Its framing nonetheless presents refugee protection grounded in Khalistan-related political persecution as a mechanism through which dangerous individuals evade scrutiny.

Seeking protection from political persecution is not a privilege created for one community. Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution, and the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol set out protections for those meeting refugee criteria. Those protections are not unconditional: states may assess credibility, investigate fraudulent documents, exclude persons responsible for certain serious crimes and refuse claims that fail legal requirements. What they cannot properly do is treat religion or lawful political belief as sufficient grounds to presume fraud.

In Canada, section 96 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* recognizes persecution connected to religion and political opinion; section 97 addresses specified serious risks. An applicant does not obtain status merely by stating support for Khalistan, and does not lose the right to seek protection because that position is opposed by the government concerned. In *Singh v. Minister of Employment and Immigration* (1985), the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed the importance of fundamental justice in refugee decision-making where life, liberty and security are at stake.

Canadian authorities have independently documented the concerns the article treats as predictable deflection. On 14 October 2024, the RCMP publicly disclosed findings on alleged links between agents of the Government of India and serious criminal activity in Canada, including credible threats to life affecting members of the South Asian community, specifically individuals associated with the pro-Khalistan movement. India has disputed allegations of government involvement, and responsibility for specific crimes remains a matter for investigations and courts. The January 2025 Foreign Interference Commission documented India's efforts to influence Canadian political discourse and promote anti-Khalistan narratives, and reported that India did not appear consistently to distinguish lawful advocacy from a small subset of violent extremist actors.

Canada's official readout of the Morrison–Doval meeting confirms discussion of transnational organized crime, terrorism, violent extremism, trafficking, extortion, cybercrime and extradition. It does not identify a Khalistan-specific asylum loophole, require special treatment of Sikh political persecution claims, or make refugee-policy restrictions a condition of cooperation.

The claims, one by one

- **Khalistan-aligned networks have exploited Canadian asylum and extradition systems for decades — Misleading.** A broad systemic allegation; the article does not establish scale, specific networks or causal mechanism.
- **Support for Khalistan is converted into a refugee claim through political persecution narratives — Misleading.** A generalization. Actual or imputed political opinion can lawfully establish a ground of persecution, but applicants must demonstrate risk.
- **Air India Flight 182 demonstrates the violent history associated with Khalistan — Misleading.** The atrocity is documented, but it cannot establish wrongdoing by contemporary asylum applicants.
- **Canada had 43,900 pending India-related refugee claims in September 2025 — Unsupported.** The IRB records claims by country of alleged persecution; the category covers claims concerning India generally, not Khalistan-related claims.
- **The 26% acceptance rate indicates a large pool of questionable claims — Unsupported.** An incorrect inference. Claims may be rejected for insufficient evidence of personal risk, available state protection or reasonable internal relocation; rejection does not establish fraud.
- **India is democratic and generally permits internal relocation — Unsupported.** Relevant to decision-making, but it does not establish that every claimant is safe or can relocate safely.
- **Canada's asylum system needs stronger security checks — False.** Canada already conducts security screening and has procedures for serious criminality and inadmissibility.

- **Protests, litigation and lobbying are used to recast scrutiny as persecution — Misleading.** A sweeping characterization of lawful activity; no evidence establishes that exercising legal rights generally constitutes obstruction.
- **Goldy Brar and historical extradition failures demonstrate why extradition must be taken seriously — False.** These cases do not establish a Khalistan asylum loophole.

Why it matters

The central finding is that an unsupported association between Sikh political advocacy, refugee-system abuse and criminality is advanced through statistics and historical examples that do not establish the claimed relationship. Credible asylum-integrity work requires evidence of misconduct by identifiable applicants or networks, not suspicion based on political affiliation. The item is tracked under the Portraying Foreign Governments as Safe Havens for Sikh Activists narrative.

CLAIMS ASSESSED

01	Khalistan-aligned networks have exploited Canadian asylum and extradition systems for decades.	MISLEADING
02	Support for Khalistan is converted into a refugee claim through political persecution narratives.	MISLEADING
03	Air India Flight 182 demonstrates the violent history associated with Khalistan.	MISLEADING
04	Canada had 43,900 pending India-related refugee claims in September 2025.	UNSUPPORTED
05	The 26% acceptance rate indicates a large pool of questionable claims.	UNSUPPORTED
06	India is democratic and generally permits internal relocation.	UNSUPPORTED
07	Canada's asylum system needs stronger security checks.	FALSE
08	Protests, litigation and lobbying are used to recast scrutiny as persecution.	MISLEADING
09	Goldy Brar and historical extradition failures demonstrate why extradition must be taken seriously.	FALSE

SOURCES

01 https://qoshe.com/news18/ruchi-wali/opinion-canada-india-security-cooperation-will-fail-unless-ottawa-closes-khalistan-asylum-loopl

02 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14

03 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol

04 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada), ss. 96 and 97

05 Singh v. Minister of Employment and Immigration, Supreme Court of Canada (1985)

06 RCMP public disclosure on alleged links between agents of the Government of India and criminal activity in Canada, 14 October 2024

07 Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference, January 2025 report

08 Government of Canada readout of the October 2026 Morrison–Doval meeting and bilateral Security Work Plan

09 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada refugee claim statistics (pending claims by country of alleged persecution, 30 September 2025)

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.

This project has been made possible with support from the Government of Canada.

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