

# 2 months on, India resumes tourist visas for Canadians

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India on Wednesday resumed issuing electronic visas (eVisa) for Canadian nationals after suspending it following a diplomatic row over Ottawa's accusation of possible Indian government involvement in the murder of a Canadian Sikh separatist leader.

The latest move is being seen as a step that could reduce tensions between the two countries.

India had started issuing Entry visa, Business visa, Medical visa, and Conference visa from October 26 after halting its visa services for Canadian nationals following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia.

Tensions flared between India and Canada in September after Trudeau's allegations. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. India has rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated". Days later, New Delhi announced it was temporarily suspending the issuance of visas to Canadian citizens and asked Ottawa to downsize its diplomatic presence in India.

On Wednesday, the Indian High Commission in Ottawa issued a notice on X, saying Indian eVisa facility has been restored with effect from 22 November 2023, for all eligible Canadian citizens holding Regular/Ordinary Canadian passports. "Holder of any other category of Canadian passport will need to apply for regular paper visa, in accordance with the existing modalities — details may be found on the respective websites of High Commission of India, Ottawa; Consulate General of India, Toronto and Consulate General of India, Vancouver," it said.

Since Trudeau's remarks in the Canadian Parliament, India and Canada have expelled a senior diplomat each.

## *Jaishankar bats for expanding ties with Nordic-Baltic nations*



**External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said major opportunities remained untapped in trade, investment and tech collaboration while speaking at the second India Nordic-Baltic Business Conclave in New Delhi on Wednesday.**

PHOTO: PTI

**SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY**

New Delhi, 22 November

India's relationship with the Nordic-Baltic countries is promising and the natural synergies between the regions are paving the way for expanding ties, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the second India Nordic-Baltic Business Conclave organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in New Delhi, Jaishankar said India and Nordic-Baltic countries (NB8) can join hands to address the challenges of the Global South together.

The ND8 group of nations collectively represent a \$2 trillion economy and a population of 33 million. India's total trade with the region stood at \$7.3 billion during 2022-23. Historical foreign direct investment stands at \$4.65 billion. More than 700 companies from the Nordic region are present in India.

However, the minister said major opportunities remained untapped in trade, investment and tech collaboration in joint

research and development projects, rare-earth minerals, and telemedicine.

Jaishankar also flagged the ongoing negotiations on the proposed free-trade agreement (FTA) between India and the European Union as presenting many opportunities for greater collaboration between the regions. Jaishankar noted the important role played by NB8 as leaders in innovation, startups, tech applications and digital progress. India has ramped up its ties with the region in recent years by establishing appropriate institutional frameworks for closer business-to-business cooperation. Embassies were opened in Estonia in December, 2021, and Lithuania in March earlier this year.

New Delhi's focus on the region has also created institutional frameworks for partnerships in digitalisation with Finland; blue economy, wind energy and polar studies with Norway; geothermal energy with Iceland; and defence with Sweden. Direct flights between India-Finland and India-Denmark have also begun. Jaishankar said a resident embassy will be opened very soon in Latvia.