

New Delhi: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday said that

Canada has always taken "serious action" against terrorism, rebutting criticisms

that his government has been lax on pro-Khalistan activists within the country.

His remarks were in response to accusations from India, which on Monday

summoned the Canadian ambassador in New Delhi, expressing concern over

escalating activities by pro-Khalistan elements in Canada. This diplomatic move

by India also comes two days before a scheduled pro-Khalistan rally outside the

Indian High Commission in Ottawa on July 8.

"They are wrong. Canada has always taken extremely seriously violence and

threats of violence. We have always taken serious action against terrorism, and

we always will," Mr Trudeau stated at a press conference, rejecting the notion that

his government is soft on Khalistan supporters and terrorists.

The Canadian Prime Minister's comments were prompted by questions regarding

a controversial parade float in the Greater Toronto Area last month. The float, set

up by Khalistan supporters marking the 39th anniversary of Operation Blue Star,

depicted a tableau of assassinated former prime minister Indira Gandhi with

blood on her clothes and a poster reading, "Revenge of attack on Shri Darbar

Further inflaming the situation, provocative pro-Khalistan posters labelling several senior Indian diplomats as "killers" have recently sparked widespread outrage in India.

"We have an extremely diverse country and freedom of expression is something that we value, but we will always make sure that we are pushing back against violence and extremism in all its forms," Mr Trudeau affirmed.

India has reportedly requested the Canadian authorities to take adequate measures considering the planned protests by pro-Khalistan groups outside Indian missions in Canada on July 8.

In response to these concerns, Canada has reassured India of the safety of its diplomats. This assurance comes after Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar called upon partner countries, including Canada, the UK and the US, to resist providing platforms to "extremist Khalistani ideology," arguing that it's detrimental to international relations.

On Monday, Mr Jaishankar expressed concern over Khalistani posters in Canada

targeting Indian diplomats and condemned the "radical, extremist Khalistani ideology."

In a statement on Tuesday, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly echoed Mr Trudeau's commitment to the Vienna Conventions regarding diplomat safety. She termed the "promotional material" circulating in the lead-up to the Khalistan rally as "unacceptable" and emphasized that the actions of a few individuals "do not speak for an entire community or Canada".

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