

For Public Release



Government of Canada
Privy Council Office

Gouvernement du Canada
Bureau du Conseil privé

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0A3

NOV 29 2023

PROTECTED BMEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

cc: The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc

cc: Nathalie G. Drouin, Jody Thomas, Daniel Rogers

**REPLY TO YUKON PREMIER RANJ PILLAI
REGARDING CANADA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA AND
SHARING SECURE INTELLIGENCE WITH PREMIERS**

(Signature Required)

SUMMARY

- The Premier of Yukon, Ranj Pillai, wrote to you on October 31 (**Tab C**), in his capacity as Chair of the Western Premiers' Conference. The letter expresses concern at a lack of consultation with premiers regarding national security incidents, the inability of security agencies to share classified information with provincial and territorial officials and notes support for the normalization of relations between Canada and India.
- The proposed response (**Tab A**) addresses Premier Pillai's request for intelligence sharing and discusses Canada's ongoing diplomatic engagement with the government of India.
- Transmittal letters for Ministers LeBlanc, Blair, Joly, Ng, as well as other western premiers are attached for your signature (**Tab B**).

Background

- Although foreign policy is an area of federal jurisdiction, premiers have increasingly asked to be consulted in security matters affecting their respective provinces and territories (PTs). Premier Pillai and British Columbia Premier David Eby have been particularly vocal and have criticized the inability of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to share classified and actionable information with provincial and territorial officials due to restrictions imposed by the *CSIS Act*. The letter requests changes to the *CSIS Act* and other federal policies to facilitate the sharing of classified information with PTs.
- The Privy Council Office (PCO) recommends highlighting existing work to modernize information sharing protocols. s. 39 - Cabinet
s. 39 - Cabinet Confidence

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PROTECTED B

s. 39 - Cabinet Confidence

Launch of public consultations is expected soon. In addition, officials from Public Safety and Justice Canada notified federal, provincial, and territorial assistant deputy ministers of intergovernmental affairs at a meeting on November 8 that bilateral engagements with PTs would be carried out over the coming months on the proposed legislative amendments.

- o PTs have paid increasing attention to export promotion, including in India. Premier Pillai's letter makes note of India's increasing significance as a market for Western Canadian exports and a major source country for skilled immigrants. Provincial trade envoys from Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan were among those forced to leave India in recent weeks. Accordingly, Premier Pillai's letter expresses hope that "current challenges in the federal government's relationship with India are expeditiously resolved".
- o PCO recommends highlighting the deep, long-standing ties between Canada and India, Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) continued engagement with the government of India and the fact that Canada is not seeking to escalate tensions. This language aligns with GAC's public messaging.



John Hannaford

Attachments

/Ferguson/Ramrattan/Williams

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TAB | A
Onglet

For Public Release

Dear Premier:

Thank you for your letter of October 31, 2023, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

I appreciate your concern regarding the sharing of classified information. Our government recognizes the need to ensure our security practices evolve with the nature of the threat posed by foreign interference. We are always looking at ways to strengthen the national security mechanisms currently in place, legislative or otherwise, and we look forward to working with other orders of government on improving information-sharing. This is why Minister LeBlanc and Janice Charette, then-Clerk of the Privy Council, committed in an April 2023 report to expanding briefing mechanisms with provincial and territorial officials and increasing awareness of foreign interference threats. Public Safety Canada is planning to launch National Security Consultations on proposed amendments to the *CSIS Act*, with a view to modernizing the Act to improve intelligence sharing. We look forward to hearing your views through this engagement.

The Department of National Defence is committed to continuing to enhance communication and mutual understanding with provincial and territorial governments. Among other measures, biannual threat briefings for territorial Premiers help facilitate the transmittal of information, support your decision-making and provide regular touchpoints. The next threat brief with territorial premiers will be arranged to include the newly formed government of the Northwest Territories.

As you know, the international environment is becoming increasingly complex and the rules-based international order has come under strain. Canada has continued to work with like-minded partners to advance our interests and values and address shared global challenges.

The Honourable Ranj Pillai
Premier of Yukon
P.O. Box 2703
Yukon Government Building
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

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The Indo-Pacific region is an integral part of this approach. In November 2022, Minister Joly released Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy to guide our engagement in the region. The federal government is committed to developing strong relationships with partners across the Indo-Pacific. This year, Minister Ng has led Team Canada Trade Missions to Japan and Singapore, with missions to Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam planned in 2024. We welcome the involvement of provinces and territories in these Team Canada Trade Missions, and in all of Canada's relationships with Indo-Pacific partners.

The federal government shares your concerns about the alleged link between agents of the Indian government and the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. The federal government will continue to support the investigation of this incident. We have been in regular contact with the Indian government and hope they will cooperate.

Canada's intention is neither to provoke, nor to escalate. Canada and India have a long history of close relations, with unique economic and people-to-people ties. Accordingly, we have been acting in a measured and responsible way, in accordance with our values and with international law. Canadian companies are continuing to conduct business in India, with support from our trade network in Canada and in India. We welcome the Indian government's decision to resume issuing visas, including business visas, to Canadians, albeit in limited numbers, and we continue to welcome newcomers from India and elsewhere, whether they wish to come here to visit, work, study, reunite with loved ones or call Canada home. The federal government will continue to keep provincial and territorial governments apprised of developments as they occur.

I am forwarding a copy of our correspondence to: Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs; Bill Blair, Minister of National Defence; Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Mary Ng, Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development. I am also forwarding a copy of our correspondence to your fellow members of the Western Premiers' Conference: David Eby, Premier of British Columbia; Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta; Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan; Wab Kinew, Premier of Manitoba; Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest Territories; and P.J. Akeagok, Premier of Nunavut.

Sincerely,

For Public Release

TAB | B
Onglet

For Public Release

Dear colleague:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable William Sterling Blair
Minister of National Defence
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

For Public Release

Dear colleague:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Mary F. Y. Ng
Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade
and Economic Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

For Public Release

Dear Premier:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable David Eby, K.C.
Premier of British Columbia
P.O. Box 9044 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9E2

For Public Release

Dear Premier:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Wab Kinew
Premier of Manitoba
Room 204, Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

For Public Release

Dear Premier:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Scott Moe
Premier of Saskatchewan
Room 226, Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

For Public Release

Dear Premier:

I am forwarding, for your information, a copy of my recent exchange of correspondence with the Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon, regarding Canada's relationship with India and the sharing of secure intelligence.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Danielle Smith
Premier of Alberta
Room 307, Legislature Building
10800, 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

For Public Release

Chère collègue :

Je vous fais parvenir, à titre d'information, une copie de la correspondance que j'ai échangée récemment avec l'honorable Ranj Pillai, premier ministre du Yukon, concernant les relations entre le Canada et l'Inde et l'échange de renseignements.

Je vous prie d'agréer, chère collègue, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

L'honorable Mélanie Joly
Ministre des Affaires étrangères
Chambre des communes
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0A6

For Public Release

Cher collègue :

Je vous fais parvenir, à titre d'information, une copie de la correspondance que j'ai échangée récemment avec l'honorable Ranj Pillai, premier ministre du Yukon, concernant les relations entre le Canada et l'Inde et l'échange de renseignements.

Je vous prie d'agréer, cher collègue, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

L'honorable Dominic LeBlanc
Ministre de la Sécurité publique, des Institutions démocratiques et
les Affaires intergouvernementales
Chambre des Communes
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0A6

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TAB | C
Onglet

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Office of the Premier
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

October 31, 2023

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

RE: Ensuring the future success of the Canada-India relationship and sharing secure intelligence with Premiers

Western Premiers have been deeply troubled by increasing reports of foreign interference in Canada. In particular, we are concerned about the alleged link between Indian government agents and the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. We support efforts by Canada's law enforcement agencies to ensure those responsible are held accountable. However, as Chair of the Western Premiers' Conference, I wish to raise our concern that the federal government has not sufficiently engaged western jurisdictions regarding Canada-India relations during these challenging times.

Principally, there are issues in sharing information and intelligence with Premiers. We have not been provided timely access to relevant information on foreign interference and national security to support decision-making. Despite gaining limited security clearances, executive branches and senior officials in provincial and territorial governments are supplied with only unclassified briefings, not the necessary classified briefings to manage strategic engagements with international governments.

To address this situation, we request that you immediately review the legislative, regulatory, and policy frameworks in place, including the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act (CSIS Act), to reduce barriers to intelligence-sharing and ensure timely and quality information is provided to provinces and territories. This should also include due attention to necessary physical and digital security infrastructure that enables access to sensitive information for provincial and territorial officials.

Western provinces and territories have longstanding and important interests in India. During these challenging times, our governments must continue to engage at all levels of the Indian government

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and society to achieve our economic and social goals. As part of developing provincial and territorial markets and workforces, Western Premiers will continue to seek skilled workers, build foreign markets for Canadian goods, and attract investment to our jurisdictions. It is our hope that the current challenges in the federal government's relationship with India are expeditiously resolved, those responsible for the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar are held accountable, and that a normalization of relations between India and Canada will soon follow.

Sincerely,



Ranj Pillai
Premier of Yukon
Chair, Western Premiers' Conference

- c. The Honourable David Eby, Premier of British Columbia
- The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta
- The Honourable Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan
- The Honourable Wab Kinew, Premier of Manitoba
- The Honourable Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest Territories
- The Honourable P.J. Akeeagok, Premier of Nunavut
- The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs

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EM001326829 Source Email | Courriels source

Received | Rapu: 10/31/2023 2:27 PM

From | De: "Ranj Pillai" ranj.pillai@yukon.ca

To | À: justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Cc | Cc: premier@gov.ab.ca; lqa_minister-ministre.sig@pco-bcp.qc.ca; premier@gov.bc.ca; pakeeagokib@gov.nu.ca; premier@manitoba.ca; premier@gov.nt.ca; premier@gov.sk.ca

Attachments | Pièces jointes: image001.png (9963); 23.10.31_WPC Letter to PM - India and Secure Information.pdf (200937)

Subject | Sujet: Correspondence from the Office of the Honourable Ranj Pillai

Good morning Prime Minister,

Please see the attached correspondence sent on behalf of Premier Ranj Pillai.

Warmest wishes,

Sylvia

**Sylvia Anderson**

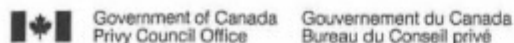
Assistant to the Honourable Ranj Pillai

Office of the Premier | Government of Yukon

867-393-7430 | sylvia.anderson@yukon.ca | Yukon.ca

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Bureau du Conseil privéSecurity / Sécurité (with attachment(s) / avec pièce-jointe(s))
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Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission

To / Pour :		Date :
Tushara Williams		
Subject / Objet:		
REPLY TO YUKON PREMIER RANJ PILLAI REGARDING CANADA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA AND SHARING SECURE INTELLIGENCE WITH PREMIERS		
From / De :		Via:
Name / Nom	Office / Bureau	Name / Nom
+ -	e-approved 23-11-23 IGA-BLR	+ - Veronica Ramrattan e-approved 23-11-23 IGA-BLR
Approved By / Approuvé par :		Drafting Officer / Rédacteur :
Name / Nom	Office / Bureau	Admin typist / Dactylographe :
+ -		
Action Requested / Mesure de suivi :		
<input type="checkbox"/> Your Signature / Votre signature <input type="checkbox"/> Your Comments / Vos commentaires <input type="checkbox"/> Your Meeting / Votre réunion <input type="checkbox"/> Your Decision / Votre décision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your Information / À titre d'information		
For the attention of / À l'attention du:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime Minister / Premier ministre <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk / Greffier <input type="checkbox"/> Minister / Ministre		
Remarks / Observations :		

Proactive Disclosure / Divulgence proactive

Can the briefing note title be released to the public? / Le titre de la note d'information peut-il être divulgué au public?

- Yes / Oui
 Partial / Partielle*

*Provide the exact text to be released / Indiquez le texte exact à publier

REPLY TO YUKON PREMIER RANJ PILLAI REGARDING CANADA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA AND

- No / Non** **Please confirm which Section applies / Veuillez confirmer selon quel article
- Section/ Article 13
 Section/ Article 14
 Section/ Article 15
 Section/ Article 19
 Section/ Article 20
 Section/ Article 21
 Section/ Article 22
 Section/ Article 23
 Section/ Article 69

See page 2 for a description of each Section / Consultez la page 2 pour obtenir une description pour chaque article.

ATIP delegated authority approval / Autorisation de l'autorité déléguée de l'AIPRP :

Name / Nom	Signature
+ - Veronica Ramrattan	e-approved 23-11-23

Reference Numbers / Numéros de référence :

WEBCIMS # 33050505E GCDocs Transmittal Note / Bordereau de transmission 14292812
GCDocs Briefing Note / Note d'information 14344662
GCDocs Other Numbers / Autres numéros 14294591

In consultation with / En consultation avec :

- SD / PDS ERDP / PDER P&P / PP Parl Affairs / LPP F & DP / PED
 IGA / AI MOG / AG Leg. Couns. / CJ PSR / RFP RDU / URL
 S&I / SR IAS / LDR SPS / PS EP / PC COVID Recovery /
 NSIA / CSNR Corp / SM LSMP / SLPM COMMS / COMMS Relance suite à
 Other / Autre : GAC, DND, Public Safety, PCO: MLR, S&I and FDP. la COVID

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Section/ Article	Description
Section/ Article 13	Information Obtained in Confidence/ renseignements obtenus à titre confidentiel
Section/ Article 14	Federal-Provincial Affairs / affaires fédérales-provinciales
Section/ Article 15	International Affairs and Defence / affaires internationales et défense
Section/ Article 19	Personal Information / renseignements personnels
Section/ Article 20	Third Party Information/ renseignements de tiers
Section/ Article 21	Advice/ avis
Section/ Article 22	Testing Procedures/ essais et vérifications
Section/ Article 23	Solicitor-Client Privilege/ secret professionnel des avocats
Section/ Article 69	Cabinet confidences / documents confidentiels du Cabinet