

Modi invited to Canada despite strained ties

The Indian prime minister accepts, will attend the G-7 summit amid tension over the killing of an activist.

BY ROB GILLIES

TORONTO — Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Friday invited Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the G-7 summit in Alberta later this month, an invitation Modi accepted despite strained ties between the countries.

The countries expelled each other's top diplomats last year over the killing of a Sikh Canadian activist in Canada and allegations of other crimes.

The invitation prompted anger from the World Sikh Organization of Canada, which wrote to Carney in May asking him not to invite Modi. Tensions remain high between Canada and India over accusations about Indian government agents being involved in the killing of a Canadian activist for Sikh separatism in British Columbia in 2023.

Carney extended the invitation to Modi in a phone call between the two leaders Friday. The summit runs June 15 to 17.

Carney noted Canada is in the role of G-7 chair and said there are important discussions that India should



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PRIME MINISTER Mark Carney's move angered a Sikh group in Canada.

be a part of.

"India is the fifth-largest economy in the world, the most populous country in the world and central to supply chains," Carney told reporters, adding that there has been some progress on law enforcement dialogue between the two countries.

"I extended the invitation to Prime Minister Modi and, in that context, he has accepted," Carney said.

Carney said there is a legal process underway in the killing of the Canadian Sikh activist and said he would not comment on the case when asked by a reporter if he thought Modi was involved.

The tit-for-tat expulsions came after Canada told In-

dia that its top diplomat in the country is a person of interest in the 2023 assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, and that police have uncovered evidence of an intensifying campaign against Canadian citizens by agents of the Indian government.

Modi said he was glad to receive a call from Carney and congratulated him on his recent election victory.

"As vibrant democracies bound by deep people-to-people ties, India and Canada will work together with renewed vigour, guided by mutual respect and shared interests. Look forward to our meeting at the summit," Modi said in a social media statement.

Nijjar, 45, was fatally shot

in his pickup truck after he left the Sikh temple he led in Surrey. An Indian-born citizen of Canada, he owned a plumbing business and was a leader in what remains of a once-strong movement to create an independent Sikh homeland.

Four Indian nationals living in Canada were charged in Nijjar's murder.

Canada is not the only country that has accused Indian officials of plotting an association on foreign soil.

In 2023, U.S. prosecutors said an Indian government official directed a failed plot to assassinate a Sikh separatist leader in New York.

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