



# US & CANADA

## *Newsletter*

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## US POLITICS

### America's Contentious Spring: Protest, Polarization, and Strategic Realignment

- The 2026 May Day protests took place on May 1, 2026, under the banner of [May Day Strong](#), a nationwide movement protesting against the Trump administration's policies. Thousands of demonstrators gathered in cities across the United States, as the organisers encouraged workers to [stay off the job](#), students to skip classes and consumers to refrain from shopping as a part of coordinated economic boycott. Protests were also held against the Iran war and the global energy and fuel crisis emerging due to it, with demands for peace, higher wages and better working conditions. The coalition of labor unions, advocacy groups, and community organizations expressed [dissatisfaction with Trump](#) administration policies regarding immigration, wages, and foreign policy. The scale of participation demonstrated significant grassroots mobilisation ahead of the 2026 midterm elections.

- The White House officially released its new [United States Counterterrorism Strategy](#), marking the first comprehensive framework of threat priorities under the second Trump administration. The document signaled a sharp domestic and international shift from previous policies. Nationally, it drew heavy political commentary for elevating groups like Antifa to core terrorist threat status, while completely omitting “Racially and [Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism](#)” (REMVE), which covers far-right

extremism. Internationally, the strategy represents a stark departure from multilateral security coordination. It heavily criticises long-standing Western allies, labelling them as “incubators of terrorist threats,” and explicitly focuses on a unilateral “[crush the threat](#)” mindset with no mention of human rights. This development follows a series of earlier executive pullouts from international security bodies.

- The U.S. Department of Justice announced a massive settlement agreement in the federal case [President Donald J. Trump v. Internal Revenue Service](#). The lawsuit was initially filed by the Trump family and the Trump Organization following the unlawful leak of their tax returns. In exchange for dropping this suit and withdrawing administrative damage claims related to the Mar-a-Lago raid, the DOJ established “[The Anti-Weaponization Fund](#).” Backed by a \$1.776 billion federal allocation, the fund is designed to hear, formally apologize to, and financially redress Americans who claim they [suffered from government “lawfare”](#) or political targeting. Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche stated the fund will create a lawful process for victims of weaponization to seek redress. However, the multi-billion-dollar fund has now been [abandoned](#) post severe backlash from Republican senators.

## INDIA-US RELATIONS

- U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio held talks with Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in Delhi, with the two sides discussing West Asia, trade, visas, maritime security and energy supplies. Rubio highlighted progress in

[efforts to resolve the Iran conflict](#), while Jaishankar said that India and the United States share common interests and challenges, and reiterated [that India supported safe maritime passage](#). On trade, Rubio said that the pending India-US trade deal was on the “verge” of being finalised, stating “We are on the verge of making that happen,” and expressed hope that the US Trade Representative would visit India very soon. Prior to his departure, Rubio had announced that he [would encourage India to buy more energy](#) from the US and possibly also from Venezuela. The talks represented significant diplomatic engagement aimed at addressing past tensions and strengthening bilateral ties amid various geopolitical challenges.

- India and the United States [signed a bilateral framework](#) aimed at securing the supply, mining, and processing of critical minerals and rare earth elements. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced the landmark agreement, highlighting its strategic importance in a highly contested global landscape following bilateral discussions and the Quad Foreign Ministers’ meeting. The framework is designed to deepen [comprehensive cooperation across](#) the entire critical minerals and rare earth supply chain. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio highlighted the importance of India for the United States and said that the signing of the agreement is a tangible example of it. This agreement signifies strengthened cooperation in crucial technological supply chains.

- The Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, Japan and the Secretary of State of the United States met in New Delhi, for the

[11th Quad Foreign Ministers’ Meeting](#). The Ministers/Secretary of State welcomed recent and upcoming activities conducted by their four countries and in cooperation with partners to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. Ministers announced key new initiatives to [strengthen maritime and transnational security, economic prosperity](#) and security, critical and emerging technology, and support humanitarian assistance and emergency response across the region. The Quad partners launched the first ever Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration (IPMSC) initiative to leverage Quad countries’ maritime surveillance in the Indo-Pacific, enhancing information sharing and maritime domain awareness capacity. India’s decision to host the meeting can itself be read as a deliberate assertion, signaling that the grouping’s strategic rationale remains operative.

- Rubio called on PM Modi, held bilateral discussions with EAM Jaishankar and [National Security Adviser Ajit Doval](#), and participated in the Quad foreign ministers’ meeting. On the bilateral trade deal under negotiation, the US Secretary of State said the two sides have made “[tremendous progress](#).” “I think we’re going to wind up with a trade agreement between the US and India that is going to be enduring and is going to be beneficial to both sides and sustainable in a way that addresses national interests that we have,” he added. Rubio also conveyed an invitation from the U.S. President Donald Trump for PM Modi to visit Washington later this year. Rubio also pointed to the US’ problems on trade with its allies, including the European Union, stating “[The](#)

[difference is that India is a massive economy.](#)” These high-level meetings underscored the strategic importance both nations place on their bilateral relationship despite past tensions.

## DIASPORA NEWS

- The U.S. Department of State announced that all available immigrant visas in the [Employment-Based Second Preference](#) (EB-2) category for applicants chargeable to India had been issued for fiscal year (FY) 2026. Therefore, no new EB-2 India immigrant visas would be [issued through consular processing](#) for the remainder of the fiscal year, including pending adjustment of status applications. India EB-2 reached its FY2026 per-country limit on May 22, 2026, with approximately 9,300 immigrant visas issued for the full year, and the category becoming unavailable until October 1, 2026 reset. This announcement represents a significant milestone in the immigration system, affecting hundreds of thousands of Indian professionals waiting for green cards. The exhaustion of visa numbers underscores the persistent backlog affecting Indian immigration applicants.

- The [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#) implemented visa bulletin changes that significantly affected Indian green-card applicants. Under the revised policy, applicants could file adjustment-of-status applications only when their priority dates became current, eliminating earlier flexibility that many Indians had relied upon. The change [particularly affected EB-1 and EB-2 categories](#), where retrogression pushed eligibility dates backward. For many Indian

professionals working in the United States, the decision meant longer delays before obtaining employment flexibility, travel authorization, and permanent residency benefits. Advocacy groups warned that the policy would disproportionately affect Indian nationals because they already face the world’s largest [employment-based green-card backlog](#). The issue reignited debate regarding immigration reform and the future competitiveness of the U.S. economy in attracting global talent. The development received extensive attention among Indian-American professional associations and immigrant-rights groups.

- The U.S. State Department announced visa restrictions on thirteen individuals associated with an [Indian online pharmaceutical network](#) accused of distributing counterfeit prescription medicines containing fentanyl. Although the action targeted specific individuals rather than the broader Indian community, it became a notable political issue because it reflected increasing scrutiny of transnational criminal and [pharmaceutical supply chains connecting](#) India and the U.S. The authorities argued that the measures were part of wider efforts to combat the fentanyl crisis. The case generated discussion among diaspora organizations concerned about how enforcement actions [involving Indian entities could influence](#) perceptions of the broader Indian-origin community, highlighting the growing role of cross-border law enforcement cooperation in India–U.S. relations. Analysts viewed the action as part of Washington’s expanding use of visa restrictions as a foreign-policy and law-enforcement tool.

## CANADA POLITICS

### Canada's Strategic Reset: Rebuilding Partnerships in Uncertain Times

- The Prime Minister of Canada Mark Carney departed for Yerevan, Armenia, to participate in the 8th European Political Community Summit. More than 40 heads of state and government took part in the meeting. This marked the first time a non-European country was invited to take part in the event. In his invitation, President of the European Council António Costa said, "Europe and Canada are more than just like-minded partners – together we are building a global alliance to defend peace, [shared prosperity and multilateralism.](#)" This historic invitation represented a significant diplomatic development, signaling Europe's recognition of Canada as an important strategic partner in defense of multilateralism and democratic values amid global challenges.

- The Honorable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Finance and National Revenue, introduced [Bill C-31, Budget 2025 Implementation Act, No. 2](#), the next legislative step to advance key Budget 2025: Canada Strong priorities. Bill C-31 builds on this momentum by introducing measures to make life more affordable and build a fairer, more integrated, and more self-reliant economy, one that creates lasting value for Canadians and stays resilient to global shocks. The bill introduced measures including automatically filing tax returns for the 2026 tax year to reach up to 5.5 million low-income Canadians by the 2028 tax year, facilitating automatic enrolment in the Canada Learning Bond, amending the

Global Minimum Tax Act, and implementing the new [Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework](#). The legislation represented the Carney government's continued effort to implement its core economic and social priorities amid significant trade pressures from the Trump administration and efforts to strengthen Canadian economic resilience.

## INDIA-CANADA RELATIONS

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, who arrived in Ottawa, Canada, along with the largest-ever Indian business delegation comprising industry [leaders from over 100 companies](#), aims to fully revive the India-Canada economic relations. The three-day visit to Canada, covering Ottawa on May 25 and Toronto from May 26-27, is aimed at advancing bilateral trade and economic ties between India and Canada, with a particular focus on accelerating the ongoing negotiations for the [Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement \(CEPA\)](#). Both sides reaffirmed their shared objective of expanding [bilateral trade to USD 50 billion](#) by 2030 and concluding the CEPA negotiations by the end of the year. The reaffirmation of [the USD 50 billion bilateral trade](#) target by 2030 represented a dramatic upgrade from current bilateral trade levels of approximately USD 8-9 billion, reflecting both nations' ambitions to transform economic ties fundamentally through the CEPA framework.

- India and Canada have decided to focus on low-hanging fruit, work on areas of convergence and [avoid seeking concessions](#) in sensitive sectors in the negotiations for the proposed free trade

agreement. The two countries are negotiating a [Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement](#) (CEPA). The third round of negotiations is underway in Ottawa. By prioritizing areas of mutual benefit—critical minerals, energy, aerospace, and technology—both nations aimed to secure quick wins and build [momentum toward a comprehensive final agreement](#) by November 2026.

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal was accompanied by a delegation of 150 Indian business leaders. The visit represented the largest-ever Indian trade delegation to Canada in history, underscoring the commitment of both nations to rapidly rebuild and strengthen economic relations that had been strained in recent years. The delegation [comprised representatives from diverse sectors](#) critical to both countries' future growth.

## DIASPORA NEWS

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal highlighted the role of the [Indo-Canadian community](#) in strengthening bilateral economic relations and deepening people-to-people ties during his three-day visit to Canada, which concluded on May 28. The visit included engagements with academia, innovation centers, government leaders, business councils, institutional investors and members of the Indian diaspora in Toronto and Ottawa. The minister encouraged [businesses to explore partnerships](#) in sectors such as clean energy, aerospace, infrastructure, food processing and technology, stating that India's "growing

global economic stature is opening new avenues for Indian industry worldwide." He also interacted with members of the Canada-India Foundation and highlighted "the invaluable contribution of the Indo-Canadian community in bringing the two nations closer through stronger business engagement and people-to-people ties." Goyal's direct engagement with diaspora organizations and community leaders underscored India's strategy of leveraging the 2.8 million-strong Indo-Canadian population as strategic partners in advancing bilateral economic and cultural relations.

- The Indo-Canadian community, particularly prospective immigrants and temporary workers, was hit by widespread uncertainty when Ontario officially shut down multiple core pathways under [the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program](#) (OINP). Effective May 30, 2026, the province abruptly halted the International Student, Foreign Worker, In-Demand Skills, and Masters/PhD Graduate streams as part of a massive, unannounced [economic immigration overhaul](#). While the provincial government confirmed that existing applications submitted before the deadline remain protected, it withheld immediate structural details regarding the replacement pathways. Given that Indian nationals constitute the single largest demographic utilizing [Ontario's provincial nomination quotas](#), the sudden regulatory freeze sparked intense panic across diaspora legal networks and immigration advocacy boards over valid pathways to Permanent Residency (PR).