



# IAS PARLIAMENT

*Information is Empowering*  
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

## Visa to Jaspal Atwal, Blacklisted Khalistani Militant

### Why in the issue?

\n\n

- \n
- Indian visa was granted to a Canadian national Jaspal Atwal, a blacklisted individual.
- \n
- Click [here](#) to know more on Blacklist
- \n

\n\n

### Who is Jaspal Atwal?

\n\n

- \n
- Jaspal Atwal is a Canadian businessman of Indian origin and a Sikh.
- \n
- He was earlier convicted of trying to assassinate a Punjab cabinet minister in 1986.
- \n
- He is a former member of the terrorist organisation International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF).
- \n
- ISYF advocated for a separate Sikh state of 'Khalistan'.
- \n
- India declared the ISYF as a terrorist outfit and banned it under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in 2001.
- \n
- The outfit is also banned in Canada, United Kingdom and USA.
- \n

\n\n

### Why was he invited now?

\n\n

- \n
- The invitation was part of the government's new approach.
- \n
- It aims at engaging with those who have not indulged in any separatist and extremist activities in recent years.
- \n
- This is primarily to marginalise the pro-Khalistan voices.
- \n
- Ministry of External Affairs has clarified that Atwal's name was removed from the blacklist last year.
- \n
- Notably, names of more than 100 Sikh individuals were removed when the list was reviewed in 2017.
- \n

\n\n

### **What is the controversy?**

\n\n

- \n
- Jaspal Atwal's presence at a dinner honouring Canadian PM Trudeau has triggered a controversy.
- \n
- Trudeau indicated that Atwal issue had diverted attention from the focus on trade and cooperation to extremism.
- \n
- The Canadian PM also hinted at ordering an official inquiry into this.
- \n

\n\n

### **Why were many NRI Sikhs blacklisted?**

\n\n

- \n
- The Operation Blue Star in 1984 involved Army action at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab.
- \n
- Many Sikhs protested the Army action and were alleged to be involved in "anti-national" activities.
- \n
- Subsequently they sought political asylum in foreign countries.
- \n
- Indian intelligence agencies gave a list containing their names to all Indian embassies and high commissions.

- \n
- Consequently, these individuals were denied Indian visas.
- \n
- In the early 1990s, Punjab leaders received complaints from Sikhs abroad that they were being denied entry into India.
- \n
- The blacklist which was not in the public domain became known after this.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Indian Express, Firstpost**

\n



**IAS PARLIAMENT**

*Information is Empowering*

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative