



KHALISTAN EXTREMISM MONITOR

NEWSLETTER



Spotlight

As a result of the transnational expansion of Punjab-based criminal networks involved in gangsterism, terrorism, and drug smuggling, Canada also recently witnessed a surge in violent incidents.

On April 9, Buta Singh Gill, the president of a gurdwara and owner of a construction firm, along with another individual named Nik Dhaliwal, were shot dead near a construction site in the Millwoods area of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in what appears to be a targeted attack by Indian gangsters. Another person, Sarbajit Singh, is currently hospitalized with life-threatening injuries. Connections between these gangsters and pro-Khalistan elements in Canada have surfaced, with reports suggesting extortion attempts aimed at affluent Indian-origin Canadians. The Edmonton police have previously linked extortions targeting affluent individuals of Indian origin to a criminal network operating from India, with investigations ongoing into multiple related incidents, including arson and firearms offences.

The month in review

Amid continuing accusations against India for interfering in their internal politics and targeting prominent pro-Khalistani figures in Western countries, along with the ongoing campaigning for the 2024 general elections, the Indian state of Punjab witnessed an escalation in gang-related violence during April 2024. These incidents were primarily associated with gangsters/terrorists operating from Western countries, notably from the United States (US) and Canada.

On April 13, 2024, following a pattern akin to the 'targeted killings' ongoing in Punjab since 2016, Vikas Prabhakar *aka* Vikas Bagga, the President of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) in Nangal town, Rupnagar district, Punjab, was fatally shot by two unidentified assailants at his confectionery shop. Subsequently, the police apprehended the perpetrators, unravelling their ties to a Pakistan-backed terrorist module. The police refrained from disclosing the specifics of the terrorist outfit, indicating that further investigations were underway to ascertain the identity of the organizations and individuals associated with this module. The investigation further exposed the involvement of entities based in Portugal in orchestrating the murder.

On the night of April 8, 2024, Sandeep Singh *aka* Shera, a youth hailing from Dera Baba Nanak town in Gurdaspur district, was discovered murdered by sharp-edged weapons in Amritsar. Shera was embroiled in several unresolved criminal cases at the time. Subsequently, Harpreet





Singh *aka* Happy Pachhia, a notorious gangster based in the US, publicized his purported responsibility for the killing through a communication on the social media platform *Facebook*. In this communication, Pachhia alleged that the victim had been an informant for law enforcement agencies such as the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and local police authorities.

Earlier on April 4, 2024, Rattandeep Singh, a former Khalistani terrorist of the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan (BTFK), was fatally shot by unidentified assailants riding a motorcycle in Balachaur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district, Punjab. Rattandeep, known for his involvement in multiple acts of terrorism, including a bombing incident in Chandigarh in 1999, had eluded authorities until his arrest in 2014. After years in custody, he was released in 2019. Following this incident, Gopi Nawanshahria, a notorious gangster, claimed responsibility for the murder through social media channels. In a Facebook post, Nawanshahria alleged that "Rattandeep was acting as a police tout and has committed a fraud with innocent youngsters."

Also, though no direct connection to a gang war has been established yet, a violent incident occurred on April 9, 2024, at Sangrur District Jail. Two inmates – Harsh and Dharminder Singh – lost their lives, while two others – Gagandeep Singh and Mohammad Sehbag – sustained serious injuries following an alleged altercation among inmates.

Some other violent gang-related incidents reported during the month include:

On the night of April 1, 2024, unidentified individuals fired gunshots at the residence of Punjabi singer Sahil Shah in the Buta Mandi area of Jalandhar. Shah had been receiving threatening calls in recent days and discovered bullet marks on his house's gate upon returning from Chandigarh. He also mentioned facing pressure from gangsters to collaborate with them. Police recovered a bullet shell from the scene.

On April 7, 2024, two members of the Arsh Dala gang, who allegedly targeted an executive engineer of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) for INR 20 lakh in extortion money, sustained gunshot wounds during an encounter with the Police near Machaki Mal Singh village in Faridkot district. According to police investigations, the gangsters, arrested along with weapons, had planned the attack on the engineer, who refused to comply with their demands.

On April 11, 2024, gunshots were fired at Punjab Police Inspector Gabbar Singh, SHO Mataur, Mohali, while he was traveling in his bulletproof car in Kurali, Sahibzada Ajit Singh (SAS) Nagar district. Although the shooters managed to escape, Police are actively investigating the case to determine any potential gang involvement.

The investigation into recent shooting incidents, such as the firing at actor Salman Khan's Mumbai residence on April 14, 2024, and at Punjabi singer Gippy Grewal's residence in Canada on November 25, 2023, highlights the national and international reach of these criminal networks, particularly the Lawrence Bishnoi syndicate. On April 20, 2024, Mumbai Police declared Lawrence Bishnoi and his brother Anmol Bishnoi as 'wanted accused' in the shooting incident outside Salman Khan's residence. Anmol Bishnoi had claimed responsibility for the incident from Canada. The investigation unveiled a novel *modus operandi*. Traditionally targeting vulnerable minors, the syndicate has now shifted to luring unsuspecting labourers with promises of lucrative rewards. Operating from abroad, the gang coordinates its activities, with individuals overseas instructing recruits to carry out orders. Utilizing internet-based services and international coordination, the syndicate engages in various criminal activities, including extortion and smuggling, with Bishnoi orchestrating operations from prison and channelling funds abroad.





Meanwhile, the Punjab Police continued their proactive efforts to address the escalating criminal networks associated with gangsterism, terrorism, and drug trafficking within the state. Data compiled by the *Khalistan Extremism Monitor* (KEM) reveals that 71 individuals were apprehended in April due to their affiliations with Khalistani terrorist organizations or organized criminal networks in Punjab. Moreover, an additional 87 individuals were arrested in connection with drug-related incidents during this period. Security forces also intercepted and confiscated 12 drones utilized for the illicit smuggling of arms and narcotics across the Pakistan-India border in Punjab.

In a significant development, on April 15, Punjab Police arrested 12 members of the Lakhbir Singh Landa group and confiscated two pistols, 26 bullets, and a motorcycle, in Kapurthala district. The gang, under the leadership of Lakhbir Singh Landa, based in Canada, and his associate Harjit Singh Bhandal based in the United Kingdom (UK), enlisted local criminals in India for illegal operations, focusing on affluent individuals and making ransom demands through phone calls in Kapurthala and surrounding areas.

TOP NEWS



Terrorist Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale poster at Assam Dhaba

Terrorist Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale poster at Assam Dhaba, owner arrested

On April 1, the Assam Police arrested the owner of a *dhaba* (eatery), identified as Gurmukh Singh, for displaying posters of Khalistani terrorist Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, along with posters of Sidhu Moose Wala and Khalistani flags, in the Bongaigaon district of Assam.

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Former Khalistani militant Rattandeep Singh shot dead in Balachaur, Punjab

Rattandeep Singh, a former Khalistani militant associated with the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan (BTFK), was shot dead by two unidentified motorcycle-borne assailants in Balachaur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district, Punjab, on April 4. Having been a hardcore terrorist involved in various terrorist activities, including a bomb blast in Chandigarh in 1999, Rattandeep was arrested in 2014, after evading authorities for years, and was released in 2019. His nephew, who was in the car with him, reported that they were meeting unidentified persons when the assailants opened fire. Gangster Gopi Nawanshahria claimed responsibility for the killing, alleging Rattandeep's involvement in fraud.

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Geo/The News London reporter on Indian RAW's hit list

Geo/The News London reporter on Indian RAW's hit list, says Pakistan source

Sikh Federation United Kingdom (UK) leader Dabinderjit Singh recently disclosed in an interview with Akaal TV that prominent Geo/The News London reporter Murtaza Ali Shah allegedly faces death threats from the Indian state due to his coverage of Khalistan issues and Sikh activists. Singh revealed that the Metropolitan Police are aware of these threats, linking them to Shah's reporting on the Khalistan Referendum and the Khalistani outfit Sikhs For Justice (SFJ).

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Extortion racket: Two members of Arsh Dala gang held after encounter in Faridkot

On April 7, Police arrested two members of the Arsh Dala gang identified as Vimalpreet Singh and Ashu Kumar and seized two illegal .32-bore pistols and a .30-bore pistol from them, near Machaki Mal Singh village in Faridkot district, Punjab. The accused were allegedly targeting an executive engineer of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) for INR 20 lakh in extortion money, and sustained gunshot wounds during the encounter with the police. According to police investigations, the gangsters had planned the attack on the engineer, who had refused to comply with their demands.

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Two members of Arsh Dala gang held after encounter in Faridkot



Khalistani Terrorist Pannun

Khalistani Terrorist Pannun Releases Video Challenging PM Modi, Rajnath Singh

Khalistani terrorist Gurbawant Singh Pannun, chief of the banned Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), released a new video on April 8, in which he threatened Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, and former RAW chief Samant Goel, vowing to challenge them 'right in their own backyard.' The video features excerpts from Rajnath Singh's remarks on government action against terrorism and footage of PM Modi's strong statements on India's capability to retaliate against enemies. Pannun also labelled the upcoming Lok Sabha election in 2024 as an opportunity to 'shame' PM Modi.

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Z-category cover for CEC in view of threats from Khalistanis

According to sources, the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, Rajiv Kumar, allegedly received threat calls from pro-Khalistan elements abroad. These threats were reportedly conveyed through pre-recorded calls to Indian numbers, featuring a well-known pro-Khalistan leader who has a history of making such threats via internet-based voice calls and social media. As a result, the Union Ministry for Home Affairs (UMHA) has taken steps to enhance Rajiv Kumar's security, with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) now providing "Z-category level" protection, extending across India. Kumar, currently under Delhi Police protection, is expected to receive round-the-clock security from CRPF commandos, including an escort vehicle, as part of his upgraded security detail.

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Khalistan Zindabad Force member Prabhpreet Singh arrested from Delhi airport

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On April 12, Punjab Police's State Special Operation Cell arrested Prabhpreet Singh, a member of the banned Khalistani terrorist outfit Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport in New Delhi. Prabhpreet Singh was found to be running a terrorist recruitment and funding network from Germany. Further investigations unveiled that Prabhpreet Singh, in collaboration with his associate Jagdish Singh Bhura based in Belgium, facilitated funding and weapons procurement for associates in India, resulting in the arrest of four operatives and the seizure of weapons and ammunition.

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Unrest grips Nangal town as VHP leader shot dead; police probe CCTV footage

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Vishva Hindu Parishad's (VHP's) Nangal unit president, Vikas Prabhakar *aka* Vikas Bagga, was shot dead by two unidentified assailants in his confectionery shop in Nangal, Rupnagar district, Punjab, on April 13. Police are investigating multiple angles, and analyzing CCTV footage for leads. The community is deeply saddened by this crime and seeks justice for Vikas Prabhakar's death.

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36 years on, Khalistan Commando Force terrorist held in Jalandhar

On April 14, Police arrested a Khalistani terrorist belonging to the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), identified as Parminder Singh Rana, from Dingrian village in the Jalandhar district of Punjab. Rana, a close associate of KCF chief Sukhdev Singh *aka* Sukha, had been evading authorities since being declared an absconder in the 1980s. He had been living clandestinely in Rajasthan following Sukha's demise. The arrest was made based on a tip-off received by the police.

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36 years on, Khalistan Commando Force terrorist held in Jalandhar

Khalistani protesters burn flag in front of Indian consulate 300 days after killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar

On April 18, Khalistani protesters commemorated 300 days since the death of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, accusing the Indian government of involvement in Nijjar's death and burning and slashing Indian flags outside the Indian Consulate in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Protesters, organised by the Khalistani outfit Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), chanted slogans demanding Khalistan independence, while SFJ chief and Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun accused Indian spies of operating from the consulate.

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Order to take Bhindranwale pics off buses sparks row in Punjab

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Pepsu Road Transport Corporation (PRTC) recently reissued orders to remove images of Sikh militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale from its buses, marking a reversal of a similar directive issued two years ago. The move stirred memories of events from July 2022 when PRTC initially instructed all its depots to strip the buses of Bhindranwale and Jagtar Singh Hawara's images, labelling them as terrorists. Protests by the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) compelled PRTC to retract its orders, acknowledging its 'mistake' in labelling them as terrorists.

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Australian journalist leaves India over visa issue day after she reported on Sikh separatist Nijjar

An Australian journalist Avani Dias, the South Asia Bureau Chief of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), stated on April 23 that she was forced to leave India because her work visa wasn't extended, citing her reportage on the assassination of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar as the likely reason. Dias's documentary on the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar was removed from YouTube India, with the Indian government accusing her of biased reporting and lacking necessary permissions. Meanwhile, an official from the Indian government disputed this claim, stating that Dias left due to personal reasons and timing for another job.

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Amritpal Singh

Amritpal Singh to contest Lok Sabha election from Punjab's Khadoor Sahib, claims lawyer

On April 24, Waris Punjab De (WPD) chief Amritpal Singh's legal counsel Rajdev Singh Khalsa stated that Amritpal Singh was purportedly preparing to contest the Lok Sabha elections as an independent candidate from the Khadoor Sahib seat in the Tarn Taran district of Punjab. Khalsa mentioned that Amritpal had agreed to enter politics for the interests of the Khalsa Panth, as communicated during their meeting at Dibrugarh Jail in Assam, where Amritpal is currently held. Amritpal's father, Tarsem Singh, refrained from commenting on the matter, until he met his son, in view of Amritpal's previous disinterest in politics.

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NIA arrests key accused in attack on Indian High Commission in London

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested a key accused, Inderpal Singh Gaba, on April 25 in New Delhi, in connection with the violent attack on the High Commission of India in London, United Kingdom (UK), in March 2023. Gaba, a UK citizen of Afghan descent, claimed coercion to participate in the incident while celebrating his birthday in London. NIA has not disclosed Gaba's exact role in the attack or his affiliation with pro-Khalistani leaders.

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Khalistan slogans on walls of Bathinda mini secretariat in high-security zone

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On April 27, several government offices' walls, including the Deputy Commissioner's office, were defaced with pro-Khalistani graffiti in Bathinda district, Punjab. The police have initiated an investigation and are reviewing nearby CCTV footage to apprehend the culprits. This incident is part of a worrying trend, with similar graffiti appearing in various states over the past year, including Delhi metro stations. While no group has claimed responsibility, previous arrests have linked such actions to individuals associated with the banned Khalistani outfit Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), allegedly influenced by its chief, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

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Terrorist Pannun issues threat to Haryana CM Naib Saini and Anurag Aggarwal

The chief of the banned Khalistani outfit Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, issued a threat via video targeting Haryana Chief Minister (CM) Naib Saini and Chief Election Officer Anurag Aggarwal. Pannun vowed to make Haryana part of Khalistan and demanded the distribution of Khalistan Referendum registration forms at every polling booth. He also claimed that slogans supporting Khalistan were written outside the Fatehabad District Court in Fatehabad, Haryana.

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Terrorist Pannun issues threat to Haryana CM Naib Saini and Anurag Aggarwal





Delhi summons Canadian envoy over pro-Khalistan slogans at Justin Trudeau's event

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On April 29, India summoned Canadian Deputy High Commissioner Stewart Wheeler over the raising of separatist slogans 'Khalistan Zindabad', at an event addressed by Prime Minister (PM) Justin Trudeau on April 28, in Toronto, Canada. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) expressed deep concern, citing the incident as illustrative of Canada's tolerance towards separatism, extremism, and violence.

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HATE SPEECH TRACKER

Date	Incidents
08 April 2024	Khalistani terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun threatens Prime Minister Narendra Modi
09 April 2024	The Chief Election Commissioner of India receives threats from Khalistanis
27 April 2024	Gurpatwant Singh Pannun issued a threat to Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini
29 April 2024	Former Delhi MLA receives death threat from Khalistani extremist

Click here to access the full list at www.khalistanextremismmonitor.org

COMPOSITE SEIZURES IN PUNJAB

Date	No. of Incidents	No. of Arrests	Items
05 April 2024	1	4	300 grams of heroin and seven country-made pistols
12 April 2024	1	1	3 kilograms of heroin, two .32 bore pistols, and four cartridges
15 April 2024	1	3	7 kilograms of heroin, one .32 bore pistol with 5 live rounds, one .315 bore rifle with 5 live rounds and magazine and two .30 bore pistols with 10 rounds and magazine
19 April 2024	1	2	1 kilograms of opium, three pistols, five magazines, and nine cartridges
28 April 2024	1	1	260 grams of heroin along with a .32-bore pistol with a magazine and five cartridges
Total	5	11	Pistols-16, Rifle-1, Cartridges/Bullets-46, Heroin-10.560 kilograms, Opium-1 kilogram





ARMS & AMMUNITION SEIZURES IN PUNJAB

Date	No. of Incidents	No. of Arrests	Items
01 April 2024	1	2	One HE-36 hand grenade and a .32 bore revolver
03 April 2024	1	2	Two semi-automatic pistols of .32 bore along with eight bullets
07 April 2024	1	2	Two .32-bore pistols and a .30-bore pistol
10 April 2024	2	9	Three pistols, a country-made revolver, and cartridges; A 9 mm pistol along with five rounds
11 April 2024	1	1	A country-made pistol and two live rounds
13 April 2024	1	1	One country-made pistol and one cartridge
15 April 2024	1	12	Two pistols, 26 bullets
16 April 2024	1	2	Two 32-bore pistols, 16 live cartridges, one empty used cartridge,
17 April 2024	1	1	One pistol, along with ammunition
18 April 2024	1	2	Two pistols, 10 cartridges
19 April 2024	2	1	A pistol without a magazine; one semi-automatic pistol of .32 bore with four live cartridges
21 April 2024	1	3	Three pistols and six cartridges
22 April 2024	4	11	Five sophisticated country-made pistols, one rifle and ammunition; six pistols, 10 cartridges, 12 pistol magazines; a pistol, a dummy revolver; two .32 bore pistols and six live cartridges.
23 April 2024	1	1	A Chinese pistol and cartridges
24 April 2024	1	11	A pistol and seven live cartridges
26 April 2024	1	1	Four weapons—one double-barrel rifle and three pistols—along with 26 cartridges
28 April 2024	1	2	Three pistols
30 April 2024	1	2	One country-made pistol with two cartridges
Total	23	65	Pistols-46, Revolver-3, Rifles-2, Hand Grenade-1, Cartridges/Bullets-144





DRUG SEIZURES IN PUNJAB

Date	No. of Incidents	No. of Arrests	Items
03 April 2024	2	2	500 grams heroin; 545 grams heroin
04 April 2024	1	1	1 kilograms of opium
05 April 2024	1	0	2 kilograms of opium
06 April 2024	2	3	5.5 kilograms of heroin; 20 kilograms of poppy husk
07 April 2024	2	1	350 grams of heroin; 40 grams of heroin
08 April 2024	1	2	180 grams of heroin
09 April 2024	1	0	530 grams heroin
12 April 2024	3	3	500 grams of heroin; 200 grams of heroin; 510 grams heroin
13 April 2024	1	1	50 grams of heroin and tobacco
14 April 2024	1	44	110 kilograms of poppy husk, 1kilograms of opium, 24 grams of heroin, and 228 litres of illicit liquor
15 April 2024	4	5	2100 kilograms of poppy husk;220 grams of heroin; 6 kilograms of poppy husk; 1 kilograms of opium
16 April 2024	1	4	800 grams of heroin
17 April 2024	1	3	8 kilograms of heroin
19 April 2024	2	1	20 grams of opium; 500 grams of heroin
20 April 2024	2	0	2.220 kilograms heroin; 2.710 kilograms of heroin
21 April 2024	1	2	1 kilogram of opium
24 April 2024	2	5	100 grams of heroin; 1 kilogram of heroin and 130 bottles of illicit liquor
27 April 2024	1	0	515 grams of heroin
28 April 2024	2	1	440 grams of heroin; 33 kilograms of Ganja (Marijuana)
29 April 2024	2	3	48 kilograms of heroin; 510 grams of heroin
Total	33	81	Heroin-73.904 kilograms, Poppy husk-2,236 kilograms, Opium-6.020 kilograms, Ganja (Marijuana)-33 kilograms

