



G-7 & India

 drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-editorials/09-06-2021/print

This article is based on **“The G-7 opportunity”** which was published in The Indian Express on 08/06/2021. It talks about the significance of the upcoming G-7 Summit for India.

In the coming days, the summit of the **Group of Seven (G-7)** industrial countries is going to take place in the United Kingdom. In the context of Post-Covid-19 era, the summit promises to be a definitive moment in the political evolution of the Western countries as a group of nations.

Apart from this, the summit will also see the digital participation of Indian Prime Minister. For India, the G-7 summit is an opportunity to expand the global dimension of India’s growing partnerships with the US and Europe.

Thus, the summit can emerge as an important step towards a new global compact between India and the West.

G-7: Background

- The G7 was created as a consultation of industrialized economies, all of which have been democracies since the grouping’s origins in 1975.
- The original G6 included the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy, with Canada joining to make the G7 by 1976.
- Russia participated in the G8 from 1998 to 2014 until its invasion of Ukraine’s Crimea caused the group to eject it.

Significance of G-7 Summit For India

- **America First To America is Back:** Former US President Donald Trump’s “America First” policies weakened the US hegemony. Now US President Joe Biden is determined to strengthen US alliances and draw India into a new global architecture.

- **Need for a Strong G-7 Coalition:** The need for reinvigoration of G-7 emanates from the challenges put forward by increasingly aggressive China, the urgency of mitigating climate change, and the construction of a post-pandemic international order.
These challenges are generating an unprecedented convergence between the interests of India and the West.
- **G-7 to G-11:** Not a long time ago, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that the G-7 of the world's most developed nations was "outdated" and proposed to expand it.
 - Now, the move to invite India, Australia, South Africa and South Korea to this can be seen as a possible step onwards upgradation of G-7 to G-11.
 - The idea of a G-11 also can emerge as a global democratic coalition and India is at the very heart of this narrative.
 - Further, the proposed G-11 grouping would recognise India's place amongst the world's richest nations, and acknowledge its global voice.
- **Countering China:** India now can't escape the conclusion that China is the greatest obstacle to India's global aspirations.
 - Thus, forming a western pivot which includes strong bilateral strategic cooperation with the US, France, UK, EU as well as the **Quad** can help India counter China.
 - India is also eager to emerge as a critical node in future supply chains oriented to the democratic world, including in the area of vaccine production.
- **Easing Navigation Among Great Powers:** With Russia also invited at the G-7 summit, India now hopes that a renewed dialogue between US and Russia can lead to a relaxation of tensions between them and will ease India's navigation among the great powers.

Associated Challenges With G-7 & India

- **Clash of Interests:** The growing convergence of interests between India and the West does not mean the two sides will agree on everything.
After all, there are many areas of continuing divergence within the West — from the economic role of the state to the democratic regulation of social media and the technology giants.
- **Internal Tussle Within G-7:** An evaluation of the G-7's effectiveness as a multilateral forum thus far is needed, given deep member differences on issues including climate change, security contributions, Iran, etc.
- **Emerging New Cold War:** Despite its border tensions with China, India must also consider its objectives in attending a grouping that appears aimed at fuelling a **new Cold War** between the U.S. and China.

Conclusion

While India continues to strengthen its partnerships in Asia and the global south, a more productive partnership with the West helps secure a growing array of India's national interests and adds a new depth to India's international relations.

However, this would require sustained negotiations on converting shared interests — on reforming the global economic order, mitigating climate change, promoting greener growth, making the world immune to future pandemics, and constructing trusted supply chains — into concrete outcomes.

Drishti Mains Question

India now can't escape the conclusion that China is the greatest obstacle to India's global aspirations. In light of this statement, discuss the prospects of India joining the G-7.
