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EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

France Hosts Emergency G7 — Multilateral Diplomacy in the Shadow of War

 **THE HINDU**

26 March 2026

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INTERVIEW ANGLE

"The G7 remains a forum of advanced economies that excludes rising powers like India, China, and Brazil. Is it still relevant in addressing 21st-century global crises?"

WHY IN NEWS

France convened an emergency meeting of G7 Foreign Ministers in Paris on March 26 to coordinate a response to the escalating Iran-US conflict, oil price crisis, and humanitarian situation in the Gulf region.

The Editorial Argument

The Hindu editorial examines whether the G7 — a grouping of seven advanced economies formed in the 1970s oil crisis — can still effectively manage 21st-century geopolitical crises. The editorial argues that G7 statements carry diminishing weight without the buy-in of energy producers (OPEC+), rising powers (India, China, Brazil), and the countries directly affected by the conflict.

G7 — Structure and Composition

FEATURE	DETAIL
Members	US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada
Founded	1975 (as G6; Canada joined 1976)
EU participation	Permanent invitee since 1981
Russia	Member 1998-2014 (G8); suspended after Crimea annexation
Presidency (2026)	France (rotating annual presidency)
GDP share	~43% of global GDP (declining from ~65% in 1990)

The Emergency Agenda

The Paris meeting addressed three interconnected crises:

- ❶ **Iran-US military escalation:** Following Iran's March 2 attack on Ras Laffan and subsequent US naval build-up in the Persian Gulf
- ❷ **Energy price shock:** Brent crude at \$112/barrel; LNG spot prices up 40%; helium supply disrupted
- ❸ **Humanitarian concerns:** Shipping lanes through Hormuz disrupted; Gulf states' civilian infrastructure damaged

G7 vs G20 – The Relevance Debate

FEATURE	G7	G20
Members	7 advanced economies	19 countries + EU + AU
Global GDP share	~43%	~85%
Includes India	No (guest only)	Yes (founding member)
Includes China	No	Yes
Includes OPEC members	No	Yes (Saudi Arabia)
Decision-making	Consensus among like-minded democracies	Broader but more contentious
Iran crisis relevance	Limited — excludes energy producers and affected parties	Higher — includes Saudi Arabia, India, China

The editorial argues that a G7 statement on the Iran crisis is insufficient. The real diplomatic architecture needed is:

- **G20 emergency session** (India, China, Saudi Arabia at the table)
- **UN Security Council resolution** (though likely vetoed by the US or Russia)
- **OPEC+ coordination** on supply management
- **India's direct diplomacy** with both Iran (Chabahar relationship) and the US (strategic partnership)

India's Diplomatic Position

India has maintained **strategic autonomy** in the Iran-US conflict:

- **With Iran:** Chabahar Port operationalised; 10-year agreement signed May 2024. India sees Chabahar as gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia

- **With the US:** Strategic partnership; Quad member; defence procurement (P-8I, MH-60R, C-17). India condemned the Ras Laffan attack but avoided naming Iran directly
- **At the UN:** India called for “restraint and dialogue” — classic non-alignment position
- **Energy pragmatism:** India increased Russian crude imports post-2022 sanctions; may do the same with discounted Iranian crude if sanctions ease

Historical Precedent — India and Gulf Crises

CRISIS	INDIA’S RESPONSE
Gulf War (1990-91)	Operation Airlift — evacuated 1,76,000 Indians from Kuwait (world’s largest civilian airlift)
Yemen crisis (2015)	Operation Rahat — evacuated 4,640 Indians + 960 foreign nationals
Qatar diplomatic crisis (2017)	India maintained neutrality; continued trade with all Gulf states
Iran sanctions (2018-2023)	Reduced Iranian oil imports; maintained Chabahar exception
Iran-US conflict (2026)	Strategic autonomy; humanitarian corridor advocacy

UPSC RELEVANCE

G7 members, founding year, G7 vs G20 comparison, France as 2026 G7 president, Chabahar Port

India’s foreign policy in West Asia; multilateral diplomacy — G7, G20, UNSC; strategic autonomy doctrine

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGEPEDIA
G7:

Members: US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada

Founded: 1975 (G6); Canada joined 1976; Russia: 1998-2014 (suspended)

2026 Presidency: France

GDP share: ~43% of global GDP (declining)

EU: Permanent invitee since 1981

G20:

Members: 19 countries + EU + AU (added 2023)

Founded: 1999 (finance ministers); leaders' summit since 2008

India hosted G20 Summit: September 9-10, 2023 (New Delhi)

GDP share: ~85% of global GDP

2026 Presidency: South Africa

INDIA AND GULF:

Indians in Gulf: ~9 million; remittances: ~\$40 billion/year

Chabahar Port: India-Iran; 10-year agreement May 2024

Operation Airlift (1990): 1,76,000 Indians evacuated from Kuwait

Operation Rahat (2015): 4,640 Indians + 960 foreigners from Yemen

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

UNSC: 5 permanent members (P5) with veto; 10 non-permanent (2-year terms)

OPEC+: OPEC (13 members) + 10 non-OPEC producers led by Russia

JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015 Iran nuclear deal)

India's crude from Gulf: ~60% of total imports

Sources: [The Hindu](#), [Indian Express](#), [MEA](#)



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