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India at G7 — Jaishankar Attends Foreign Ministers Meeting in France

27 March 2026

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27 March 2026 · 10 min read · 1 tag

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External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar participated in the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting with Partner Countries at Abbaye des Vaux-de-Cernay in France on March 26-27, 2026, at the invitation of French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot. India was one of five partner countries invited by the French G7 Presidency. Jaishankar raised Global South concerns on energy, fertiliser and food security, stressed the urgency of UNSC reforms, and held bilateral talks with counterparts from eight nations.

What is the G7?

The Group of Seven (G7) is an informal forum of seven of the most industrialised democracies in the world. It does not have a permanent secretariat or a charter. The presidency rotates annually among its members.

FEATURE	DETAILS
Members	United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan
Permanent invitee	European Union (represented by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission)
Founded	1975 as G6 (without Canada); Canada joined in 1976 to form G7
Combined GDP	~\$52 trillion (2025 estimate) — approximately 28-30% of global GDP (PPP)
2026 Presidency	France (took over on 1 January 2026)
2026 Leaders Summit	Evian-les-Bains, France — June 15-17, 2026
Previous host	Evian last hosted in 2003 (then the G8 summit)

Presidency Rotation Order: France (2026) - United Kingdom - Germany - Italy - Canada - Japan - United States

The G7 share of global GDP has declined from over 50% in the 1980s to under 30% today, reflecting the rise of emerging economies. Despite this, the G7 remains influential in shaping global financial regulation, international taxation, climate policy and crisis response.

G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting Agenda

The two-day meeting at Abbaye des Vaux-de-Cernay was dominated by two ongoing conflicts and their global consequences:

West Asia and the Iran Crisis: The war in West Asia and its impact on global energy security was the central agenda item. G7 foreign ministers discussed coordinating efforts to keep the Strait of Hormuz open for international shipping. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio pressed G7 partners to “step up” and help secure the Strait, through which approximately 20% of global oil and gas supplies transit. European G7 members described the conflict as having a “catastrophic” impact on the global economy.

Ukraine Conflict: The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war remained a key discussion topic, with ministers reviewing reconstruction efforts and future security guarantees.

Other Agenda Items:

- Reform of global governance institutions, particularly the UN Security Council
- Maritime security and freedom of navigation
- Strengthening humanitarian supply chains
- Controlling excessive industrial capacity and combating non-market trade practices
- Securing critical mineral and critical-metal supply chains

The French G7 Presidency has organised seven ministerial tracks for 2026: foreign affairs, development, trade, finance, digital, environment and home affairs.

India as a Partner Country

France invited five partner countries to join the G7 Foreign Ministers session: **India, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Ukraine**. The EU foreign affairs chief Kaja Kallas also attended.

India has been a regular invitee to G7 summits and ministerial meetings in recent years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also expected to attend the G7 Leaders Summit in Evian (June 15-17, 2026) as a guest.

The French G7 Presidency chose to involve major emerging economies in its work, recognising that issues such as global governance reform, post-conflict reconstruction, and cross-cutting threats require collective commitment beyond G7 members alone. French President Emmanuel Macron has framed India as the essential “bridge” between the G7 and BRICS.

Key Themes Raised by India

Session 1 — Global Governance Reform: Jaishankar highlighted the urgency of UNSC reforms, the need for streamlining peacekeeping operations, and strengthening humanitarian supply chains. India has long demanded a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, arguing that the current structure reflects the post-World War II order and does not represent contemporary geopolitical realities.

Session 2 — Connectivity and Trade Corridors: Jaishankar shared India’s views on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), arguing that the uncertainties arising from West Asian conflicts make a stronger case for building more resilient trade corridors and supply chains. He noted that India’s recently concluded Free Trade Agreements with the European Union, EFTA members and the United Kingdom have enhanced the utility of IMEC.

Global South Concerns: Jaishankar raised the concerns of the Global South, particularly on energy availability, fertiliser shortages and food security. These issues have been exacerbated by the disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and broader West Asian instability.

Bilateral Meetings on the Sidelines

Jaishankar held bilateral meetings with counterparts from eight nations on the margins of the G7 meeting:

COUNTERPART	COUNTRY	KEY DISCUSSION TOPICS
Jean-Noel Barrot	France	Situation in West Asia; Strait of Hormuz security; India-France Special Global Strategic Partnership
Anita Anand	Canada	Deepening bilateral ties; critical minerals; trade; agriculture; education; follow-up to Canadian PM Mark Carney’s visit to India
Andrii Sybiha	Ukraine	Bilateral ties; developments in West Asia; regional stabilisation; safety of global supply chains
Prince Faisal bin Farhan	Saudi Arabia	Bilateral relations; cooperation in various fields
Counterpart	South Korea	Bilateral cooperation; regional security
Counterpart	Japan	Indo-Pacific cooperation; bilateral ties
Counterpart	United Kingdom	Bilateral ties; post-FTA cooperation
Counterpart	Germany	Bilateral ties; trade; technology cooperation

The meeting with Canadian FM Anita Anand was notable given the recent thaw in India-Canada relations following PM Mark Carney’s visit to India. The meeting with Ukrainian FM Sybiha underscored India’s continued engagement with both sides of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

India-France Special Global Strategic Partnership

The Jaishankar-Barrot bilateral meeting took place against the backdrop of a significantly upgraded India-France relationship. Key milestones:

- **1998:** India-France Strategic Partnership launched — India’s first strategic partnership with a Western nation and France’s first outside the EU
- **2023:** Elevated to “Strategic Partnership of Trust” during PM Modi’s Bastille Day visit
- **February 2026:** Further elevated to “Special Global Strategic Partnership” during President Macron’s three-day visit to India (February 17-19); 21 agreements signed spanning defence, critical minerals, renewable energy and high technology

Defence Cooperation:

PROGRAMME	DETAILS
Rafale Fighter Jets	36 delivered to IAF (2020-22); 114 more approved (18 fly-away + 96 Made in India)
Rafale-Marine	26 jets contracted for Indian Navy for INS Vikrant-class carriers
Scorpene Submarines	6 delivered under Project-75 (Mazagon Dock, Mumbai); 3 more approved with ~60% indigenous content (up from 30-40%)
HAMMER Missiles	Co-production agreement signed
H125 Helicopters	Assembly line established in India
Defence Roadmap	Estimated \$40-50 billion in joint programmes over the next decade

Bilateral Trade: US\$ 15.21 billion in FY25. France is India’s 3rd-largest EU trading partner (after the Netherlands and Germany).

France is one of the few major powers that supported India’s nuclear tests in 1998 without imposing sanctions and has consistently backed India’s bid for a permanent UNSC seat.

India Balancing G7 and BRICS

India’s participation in the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting comes while it simultaneously holds the BRICS Chairship for 2026 (the fourth time, after 2012, 2016 and 2021). This dual engagement epitomises India’s “multi-alignment” foreign policy — engaging with both Western-led and non-Western institutions to maximise strategic autonomy.

BRICS Presidency 2026:

FEATURE	DETAILS
Theme	“Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability”
Guiding principle	“Humanity First”
Four pillars	Resilience (supply chains, health); Innovation (DPI, AI, fintech); Cooperation (reformed multilateralism); Sustainability (green finance, energy transition)
Flagship initiative	Promoting Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) as a scalable model for the Global South
Members	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa + Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE (10 total after 2024 expansion)

The Balancing Act:

- At BRICS, India downplays contentious areas like de-dollarisation (which has drawn US criticism), reframing it as trade settlement in national currencies
- At G7, India positions itself as a responsible voice of the Global South, raising concerns on energy, food and fertiliser security
- India avoids taking sides on the Russia-Ukraine conflict — it engages with Ukraine (bilateral meeting at G7) while maintaining its relationship with Russia through BRICS
- The West Asia crisis adds complexity: India needs stable oil supplies (85-88% crude import dependence) and has ~9 million citizens in the Gulf region

India’s ability to sit at both the G7 and BRICS tables — without being a formal member of G7 — reflects its growing weight in global affairs and its value as a swing state in the emerging multipolar order.

UPSC Angle

This topic is critical for understanding India’s evolving foreign policy doctrine and its navigation of a fragmenting global order.

- **Prelims:** G7 membership, presidency rotation, BRICS 2026 theme and pillars, IMEC corridor, India-France defence deals (Rafale, Scorpene), Strait of Hormuz geography
- **Mains GS-2 (International Relations):** India’s multi-alignment strategy; role of G7 and BRICS in global governance; India-France Special Global Strategic Partnership; UNSC reform; India as a bridge between Global North and Global South
- **Mains GS-3 (Economy/Security):** Impact of West Asian conflict on energy security; IMEC as an alternative trade corridor; defence indigenisation through India-France co-production

UPSC RELEVANCE

G7 members, G7 2026 presidency (France), BRICS 2026 chair (India), IMEC, Rafale deal, Scorpene submarines, Strait of Hormuz.

MAINS GS-2:

India's multi-alignment foreign policy; G7 and BRICS as platforms for global governance reform; India-France bilateral relations; UNSC reform demands.

MAINS GS-3:

Energy security implications of West Asian conflict; defence indigenisation; trade corridor resilience.

★ FACTS CORNER — KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

G7 — CORE DATA:

Members: US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan (7 countries)

EU is a permanent invitee (not a member)

Founded: 1975 as G6; Canada joined 1976 to form G7

Russia joined in 1998 (making it G8); suspended in 2014 after Crimea annexation

Combined GDP: ~\$52 trillion (2025); ~28-30% of global GDP (PPP)

G7 share of global GDP has fallen from ~50% (1980s) to under 30% (2025)

2026 Presidency: France; Leaders Summit: Evian-les-Bains, June 15-17, 2026

G7 FM MEETING (MARCH 2026) — KEY FACTS:

Venue: Abbaye des Vaux-de-Cernay, France

Dates: March 26-27, 2026

Host: French FM Jean-Noel Barrot

Partner countries invited: India, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Ukraine

Key agenda: West Asia/Iran conflict, Ukraine, UNSC reform, Strait of Hormuz, trade corridors

INDIA AT THE G7 MEETING:

India represented by EAM S. Jaishankar

Raised: UNSC reforms, peacekeeping streamlining, humanitarian supply chains

Raised: Global South concerns on energy, fertiliser, food security

Advocated: IMEC corridor for resilient trade connectivity

Bilateral meetings held with: France, Canada, Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Japan, UK, Germany (8 nations)

INDIA-FRANCE BILATERAL TIES:

Strategic Partnership: 1998 (India's first with a Western nation)

Elevated to "Special Global Strategic Partnership": February 2026

Bilateral trade: US\$ 15.21 billion (FY25)

Rafale jets: 36 delivered to IAF; 114 more approved; 26 Rafale-Marine for Navy

Scorpene submarines: 6 delivered (Project-75); 3 more approved with ~60% indigenous content

Defence roadmap: \$40-50 billion in joint programmes over a decade

21 agreements signed during Macron visit (February 17-19, 2026)

INDIA BRICS PRESIDENCY 2026:

Theme: “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability”

India’s 4th BRICS chairship (after 2012, 2016, 2021)

Flagship: Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) promotion

BRICS expanded to 10 members after 2024 (added Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE)

STRAIT OF HORMUZ:

Width: ~33 km; navigable lane: ~3 km each way

Handles ~20% of global traded oil (~20 million barrels/day)

India’s crude import dependence: 85-88%

India’s Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR): ~5.33 million metric tonnes (~9.5 days)

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

IMEC announced at G20 New Delhi Summit (September 2023); connects India to Europe via Middle East

India-EU FTA, India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), and India-UK FTA enhance IMEC utility

India has ~9 million citizens in the Gulf; annual remittances: ~\$40 billion

France has consistently backed India’s UNSC permanent membership bid

France did not impose sanctions on India after the 1998 nuclear tests

Canadian PM Mark Carney visited India recently, marking a thaw in India-Canada relations

Sources: [MEA Press Release](#), [DD News](#), [Business Standard](#), [ANI](#), [France 24](#), [Tribune India](#)

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