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India a 'Top Priority' for France Ahead of the G7 Summit

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India a 'Top Priority' for France Ahead of the G7 Summit

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WHY IN NEWS

Ahead of the **52nd G7 Summit** (at **Évian-les-Bains**), which **France is hosting**, French diplomatic sources described **India as a “top priority”** partner, noting that “India has joined all the G7 tracks.” **Prime Minister Modi** will hold a **bilateral** with President Emmanuel Macron at **Nice** and attend the G7 as a **partner (invitee) country**, India’s **13th** appearance and Modi’s **7th consecutive** participation. The visit underscores the depth of the India-France “Special Global Strategic Partnership” and India’s role as a bridge between the Global North and South.

THE VISIT AT A GLANCE

ASPECT	DETAIL
Event	52nd G7 Summit, hosted by France (Évian-les-Bains)
India’s status	Partner country (invitee), not a member
Appearance	India’s 13th at the G7; Modi’s 7th consecutive
Bilateral	PM Modi to meet President Macron at Nice
Partnership	India-France “Special Global Strategic Partnership”
Summit focus	Includes a dedicated session on West Asia

WHAT IS THE G7?

ASPECT	DETAIL
Members	The US, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada, plus the EU
Origins	Formed in 1975 as the G6 ; Canada joined in 1976 ; it was the G8 with Russia (1997 to 2014, suspended after the annexation of Crimea)
Nature	An informal grouping of major advanced economies (no charter or secretariat)
Weight	About 30 per cent of global GDP today, down from nearly half in the 1990s
India's role	A regular invitee/partner , not a member

The G7 is distinct from the **G20**, of which India is a full member and which it hosted in 2023. The G7's shrinking share of world output, against the rise of the G20 and the Global South, is itself a live debate about the grouping's relevance.

THE INDIA-FRANCE PARTNERSHIP

India and France have had a **strategic partnership since 1998**, given fresh shape by the “**Horizon 2047**” **roadmap** (adopted in 2023, on the partnership's 25th anniversary). It spans several pillars:

PILLAR	EXAMPLES
Defence	36 Rafale fighters (2016) and 26 Rafale Marine for the Navy (2025); Scorpene/Project P-75 submarines; co-development of a 120 kN jet engine with Safran for the AMCA, with full technology transfer
Space	ISRO-CNES cooperation, including the planned TRISHNA thermal-imaging mission
Nuclear	The Jaitapur project (six EPR reactors planned)
Indo-Pacific	A shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific; the India-France-UAE trilateral
Connectivity	The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

France has been a consistent partner that supports India's **strategic autonomy** and its claim to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The **Safran-DRDO jet-engine** deal, with full technology transfer, is the single most strategically significant deliverable, since aero-engine technology is one of the few areas where India still depends heavily on others.

WHY IT MATTERS: MULTI-ALIGNMENT

India's regular presence at the G7, even without membership, illustrates its foreign-policy strategy of **multi-alignment** (engaging multiple power centres simultaneously).

- **Bridge between North and South:** India brings the Global South's concerns to the table of advanced economies.
- **Strategic autonomy:** It engages the G7 while remaining in **BRICS, the SCO, the Quad** and other groupings, choosing partners issue by issue.
- **West Asia diplomacy:** With a summit session on West Asia, India's voice on de-escalation matters amid the oil crisis, given its **~85% crude-import dependence**, its stake in the Strait of Hormuz, and its roughly **9 million-strong diaspora in the Gulf**.

But partner status has limits: as an invitee, India helps shape the conversation but has **no vote in the G7's decisions**, an agenda-influencer rather than an agenda-setter. The deeper question is whether outreach status advances India's interests or whether the rise of the G20 and the Global South is the more consequential platform.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Prelims

- France hosts the **52nd G7 Summit** (Évian-les-Bains); India attends as a **partner (invitee)**, its **13th** appearance (Modi's 7th consecutive)
- The **G7** = US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada + EU; formed **1975 (G6)**, Canada 1976; **G8** with Russia 1997-2014
- The G7 is now about **30% of global GDP**; India is **not a member** but is a full **G20** member (hosted 2023)
- India-France: strategic partnership since **1998**, the **Horizon 2047** roadmap (2023); **36+26 Rafale, Safran-DRDO jet engine, Jaitapur, IMEC**

Mains Angles

- 1 **GS2 International Relations:** "India's regular presence at the G7 reflects its **multi-alignment**." Examine India's role as a bridge between the Global North and South.
- 2 **GS2 Bilateral:** Discuss the pillars of the India-France strategic partnership.
- 3 **GS2 Global Groupings:** Distinguish the G7 from the G20 and analyse India's engagement with each.

FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
Summit	52nd G7 at Évian; bilateral at Nice
India's status	Partner (13th appearance; Modi's 7th consecutive)
G7	US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada + EU; ~30% of global GDP
G7 history	1975 (G6), Canada 1976; G8 with Russia 1997-2014
India-France	Partnership since 1998; Horizon 2047 (2023)
Defence	36 + 26 Rafale; P-75 Scorpene; Safran-DRDO jet engine; Jaitapur
Other	ISRO-CNES (TRISHNA); India-France-UAE trilateral; IMEC
Strategy	Multi-alignment / strategic autonomy; partner, not member (no vote)

Sources: Ministry of External Affairs, The Hindu, PIB

Source: India a 'Top Priority' for France Ahead of the G7 Summit — Ujyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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