

G7 OUTDATED, SAYS TRUMP, INVITES INDIA, RUSSIA AND OTHERS TO SEPTEMBER MEETING

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NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump on Saturday said the G7 group was "very outdated" and has postponed a scheduled summit to September to include India, Russia, South Korea and Australia in the meeting.

"I don't feel that as a G7 it properly represents what's going on in the world. It's a very outdated group of countries," Trump said, according to a transcript made available by the US embassy in New Delhi.

The G7, comprising France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US, the UK, and Canada, were scheduled to meet in June. Russia was added to the group in the mid 1990s and was a member of the so called G8 till 2014 when it was ejected for the annexation of Crimea.

The September summit is expected to focus on how to deal with China.

Alyssa Farah, director of strategic communications, White House, said, "this is bringing together our traditional allies to talk about how to deal with the future of China," the transcript added.

"We want Australia, we want India, we want South Korea," Trump said. "And what do we have? That's a nice group of countries right there," Trump was separately quoted as saying by the New York Times.

Trump at one point "described the theoretical gathering as the 'G10 or G11' which would mean making those countries members — something he cannot do on his own. He said he had had conversations with the leaders of those countries," the New York Times report added.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has reportedly refused to attend the meet given the invitation extended to Russia.

This will be the second time in a row that India will be at the so called "high table" of a group previously seen as representing the world's most industrialised countries. India was part of the extended G7 meeting held in France last year.

It is unsure how the group will come together on dealing with China given the internal dynamics — many of the G7 countries are opposed to Russia rejoining the group. Secondly Russia is seen as an ally of China and has been critical of the US in recent times.

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