

AMONG THE ELITE: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON INDIA AT THE G-7 SUMMIT

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As he left for Japan on Friday to attend the G-7 summit — India is a special invitee — [Prime Minister Narendra Modi called India's attendance “particularly meaningful”](#) this year. While Mr. Modi was referring specifically to India's G-20 presidency, and aligning the G-20 agenda with Japan's agenda for the G-7 summit is key, there are other reasons for India's presence to stand out at the conversations this weekend. Japan, as host, has taken a fairly tough position on Russia, with its envoy to India saying that the “message to Putin” must be that Russia will have to “pay” for its war in Ukraine. While all G-7 countries — the U.S., the U.K., Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the EU — are united in their efforts to sanction Russia further, it will be left to India, which has walked a line of fine balance thus far, to temper some of that language, particularly if joint communiques are sought with the outreach countries including South Korea, Australia, Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia, Comoros and the Cook Islands. Neither Russia nor China, the “elephants in the room”, are actually invited, and India's position will be all the more important for the “Voice of the Global South” that Mr. Modi has committed to amplify, in conversations about the impacts of sanctions imposed by the G-7 countries on the developing world, including on food, fertilizer and energy security. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has decided to accept Japan's invitation to attend the G-7 summit in person, and all eyes in India will be on a possible [meeting between him and Mr. Modi](#), which would be a first since the Ukraine war began. The G-7 countries will keenly watch whether Mr. Modi extends an invitation to Mr. Zelenskyy to address the G-20 summit in September.

Apart from the [Russia-Ukraine tussle](#), India will be at the forefront as G-7 and G-7+ countries discuss debt sustainability and helping countries such as Sri Lanka to avoid a “debt trap”. It will also be a key speaker on issues such as building supply chain reliability, spearheading alternative energy coalitions, and seeking infrastructure and development aid in the region. Finally, India's unique voice, as a nuclear power that is not a member of the Non Proliferation Treaty regime, yet has built an impeccable record in nuclear restraint, will be heard as Japan seeks to send a united message on non-proliferation from Hiroshima which was devastated by an American atomic bomb in 1945. While the heavy lifting for the G-7 summit will be done by Japan and member countries, they are still seen as a small and “elitist” grouping, and India's heft as a developing power combined with its G-20 presidency make it the significant “other” this year, that can leave its mark in making the process more inclusive.

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