



AIR Discussions (June 2nd Week)

AIR SPOTLIGHT: CARBIS BAY G7 SUMMIT

CONTEXT:

- The **47th G7 Summit** was held between June 11 and 13, 2021.
- It is the first physical G7 summit to be held in two years and took place in Carbis Bay, Cornwall, the UK.
- The **Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and representatives from South Korea, South Africa and Australia were also invited to be a part of the Summit as guest countries.**

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Objective of the 47th G7 Summit is to unite leading democracies to help the world build back better from the coronavirus and create a greener, more prosperous future.
- The **theme for the Summit is 'Build Back Better'**.
- UK has outlined **FOUR PRIORITY AREAS FOR ITS PRESIDENCY**. These are:
 1. Leading the **global recovery from coronavirus** while strengthening resilience against future pandemics;
 2. Promoting future prosperity by championing free and fair trade;
 3. Tackling **climate change and preserving the planet's biodiversity**; and
 4. **Championing shared values and open societies.**

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SUMMIT:

- Members guided by enduring ideals as free open societies and democracies, and by commitment to multilateralism, agreed a shared G7 agenda for global action to:
 - **HEALTH:**
 - **End the pandemic and prepare for the future** by driving an intensified international effort, starting immediately, to vaccinate the world by getting as many safe vaccines to as many people as possible as fast as possible.
 - Total G7 commitments since the start of the pandemic provide for a total of over two billion vaccine doses, **providing for one billion doses over the next year.**
 - Strengthen collective defences against threats to global health by: **increasing and coordinating on global manufacturing capacity on all continents; improving early warning systems; and support science in a mission to shorten the cycle for the development of safe and effective vaccines, treatments and tests from 300 to 100 days.**
 - **ECONOMY:**
 - Reinvigorate economies **by advancing recovery plans that build on the \$12 trillion of support put in place during the pandemic.**
 - **Shifting the focus of support from crisis response to promoting growth into the future, with plans that create jobs, invest in infrastructure, drive innovation, support people, and level up** so that no place or person, irrespective of age, ethnicity or gender is left behind.
 - Secure future prosperity by championing freer, fairer trade within a **reformed trading system, a more resilient global economy, and a fairer global tax system that reverses the race to the bottom.**



- Collaborate to **ensure future frontiers of the global economy and society, from cyber space to outer space**, increase the prosperity and wellbeing of all people while upholding values as open societies.
- Develop a **new partnership to build back better for the world**, through a step change in approach to investment for infrastructure, including through an initiative for clean and green growth.
- **“Build Back Better World” (B3W) project** is aimed at competing with China’s trillion dollar Belt and Road infrastructure (BRI) initiative
- **ENVIRONMENT:**
 - Protect planet by supporting a green revolution that creates jobs, cuts emissions and **seeks to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees**.
 - Commit to **net zero no later than 2050**, halving collective emissions over the two decades to 2030, increasing and improving climate finance to 2025; and to conserve or protect at least 30 percent of our land and oceans by 2030.
 - G7 leaders agreed to raise their contributions to **meet an overdue spending pledge of \$100 billion a year** to help poorer countries cut carbon emissions and cope with global warming, calling on other developed countries to join the effort.
- **POLITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES:**
 - **Harness the power of democracy, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights** to answer the biggest questions and overcome the greatest challenges.
 - **Supporting a target to get 40 million more girls into education and with at least \$2¼ billion for the Global Partnership for Education.**
- **GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION:**
 - Deepen current partnership to a **new deal with Africa**, including by magnifying support from the International Monetary Fund for countries most in need to support aim to reach a total global ambition of \$100 billion.
 - Seek to advance open agenda in collaboration with other countries and within the **multilateral rules-based system**.

PRIME MINISTER’S PARTICIPATION IN 47TH G7 SUMMIT:

- This is the **second time the Prime Minister participated in a G7 meeting**.
- India had been invited by the **G7 French Presidency in 2019 to the Biarritz Summit** as a "Goodwill Partner" and Prime Minister participated in the Sessions on 'Climate, Biodiversity and Oceans' and 'Digital Transformation'.
- Prime Minister participated in the first Outreach Session, titled **‘BUILDING BACK STRONGER - HEALTH’**, focused on global recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and on strengthening resilience against future pandemics.
 - He expressed appreciation for the support extended by the G7 and other guest countries during the recent wave of COVID infections in India.
 - He highlighted **India's ‘whole of society’ approach** to fight the pandemic, synergising the efforts of all levels of the government, industry and civil society.
 - He also explained **India’s successful use of open source digital tools** for contact tracing and vaccine management.
 - He sought the **G7's support for the proposal moved at the WTO by India and South Africa, for a TRIPS waiver** on COVID related technologies.
 - **Message of "One Earth One Health"** for the whole world was highlighted.
- Prime Minister took part in two other sessions titled **‘BUILDING BACK TOGETHER—OPEN SOCIETIES AND ECONOMIES’ AND ‘BUILDING BACK GREENER: CLIMATE AND NATURE’**.
 - He shared the concern expressed by several Leaders that open societies are particularly vulnerable to disinformation and cyber-attacks, and stressed the **need to ensure that cyberspace remains an avenue for advancing democratic values and not of subverting it**.



- He called for the **reform of the multilateral system** as the best signal of commitment to the cause of Open Societies.
- He called for **collective action on climate change**.
- He stressed that **India is the only G-20 country on track to meet its Paris commitments**.
- He stressed that **developing countries need better access to climate finance, and called for a holistic approach towards climate change**.
- India is a **“natural ally” to work with the world’s richest G7 countries** to fight against threats of authoritarianism

ABOUT G7:

HISTORY OF THE G7:

- The concept of a forum for the world’s major industrialized countries **emerged before the 1973 oil crisis**.
- In **1975, a summit hosted by France brought together representatives of six governments**: France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- in **1976, Canada joined it**.
- **Russia formally joined the group in 1998**, resulting in a new governmental political forum, the Group of Eight or G8. However, the Russian Federation was **ejected from the G8 political forum in March 2014**, following its annexation of Crimea.

COMPOSITION OF THE G7:

- The G7 is composed of the **seven wealthiest advanced countries**.
- All the 7 are top-ranked advanced economies with the current largest GDP and with the highest national wealth and are among the 15 top-ranked countries with the highest net wealth per capita.
- The **requirements to be a member of the G7 are a high net national wealth and a high HDI**.
- The **G7 also accounts for 46% of the GDP and also for 32% of the global PPP GDP**.

SUMMIT PARTICIPATION:

- Summits are **held annually and hosted on a rotation basis by the group’s members**.
- The leaders of important international organizations like the European Union, IMF, World Bank and the United Nations are also invited.

CHALLENGES FACED BY G7:

- **MEMBERSHIP:**
 - There are **no G7 members from Africa, Latin America, or the southern hemisphere**.
 - Calling the G7 a **“very outdated group”** former US President Trump had suggested that the Group of 7 be called **“G10 or G11”** by including India, Australia, South Korea and Russia.
 - G7 in 1975 collectively produced 70% of the world’s GDP, a number that has dropped to 46%.
 - China would be the second-largest with 16.4% of the world net wealth but is excluded because of its relatively low net wealth per adult and HDI.



- **China pointedly cautioned Group of Seven leaders that the days when “small” groups of countries decided the fate of the world was long gone**
 - China **poses a “threefold threat” to G7 countries**—economically, ideologically, and geopolitically.
 1. China’s repression of Uyghurs in the Xinjiang region and its crackdown in Hong Kong have drawn condemnation from G7 members.
 2. Its massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has prompted concerns about Beijing’s influence over developing countries.
 3. G7 have shared grievances over Beijing’s state-led economic model and alleged unfair trading practices, including its use of industrial subsidies.
- **ISSUES WITH THE WORKING:**
 - Unlike the United Nations or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the G7 is **not a formal institution with a charter and a secretariat.**
 - The decisions taken by leaders during annual summits are **non-binding.**
 - There are a **number of disagreements in the Group internally**, e.g. clash of the USA with other members over taxes on imports and action on climate change.
 - The organization **has also been criticized for not reflecting the current state of global politics or economics.**
 - When the G7 summits began in the mid-1970s, the heads of states sought to resolve economic differences.
 - As the summits progressed, **the emphasis on economic issues remained salient and endured, but the heads of States began to prioritise other matters as well— the environment, debt relief for developing countries, security and the strains on globalisation.**
- **ALTERNATIVES:**
 - Many analysts believe that the **power and prestige of G20, a forum for nineteen of the world’s largest countries as well as the EU, has surpassed that of the G7.**
 - **Emerging powers including Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa, whose absence from the G7 was often noted, all belong to the G20.**
 - Russia remains a member of the G20.
 - The **group’s member states represent about 80 percent of global GDP and three-fifths of the world’s population.**

OPPORTUNITIES:

- **SHARED VALUES:** They’re a repository, an embodiment of common values and a similar rules-based approach to world order.
- **PRE-NEGOTIATION FORUM:** G7 can serve as a useful platform for “pre-negotiation,” allowing members to hash out disagreements before taking proposals to the G20 or other forums.
- **AGREEMENT TO REWRITE THE GLOBAL RULES FOR CORPORATE TAXATION:** G7 finance ministers reached the agreement in an effort to prevent multinational companies from parking profits in tax havens.
- **BUILD BACK BETTER INITIATIVE:** The group is also reportedly set to launch an alternative to China’s BRI.
- **GLOBAL RECOVERY FROM CORONAVIRUS:** Leading this while strengthening resilience against future pandemics.
- Promoting future prosperity by **CHAMPIONING FREE AND FAIR TRADE.**
- Tackling **CLIMATE CHANGE AND PRESERVING THE PLANET’S BIODIVERSITY.**
- **REVIVING MULTILATERALISM.**



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<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/13/carbis-bay-g7-summit-communique/>

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33905/Prime+Ministers+participation+in+47th+G7+Summit>

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33909/Prime+Minister+participates+in+the+first+Outreach+Session+of+G7+Summit>

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33911/Prime+Minister+participates+in+two+sessions+on+the+second+day+of+G7+Summit>

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/where-g7-headed>



NEWS IN BRIEF: PRELIMS SPECIAL

Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy

- Department of Biotechnology supported first CAR-T cell therapy conducted at ACTREC, Tata Hospital in Mumbai.
- CAR-T therapy has **emerged as a breakthrough in cancer treatment.**
- However it is **extremely expensive** in India and therefore, unavailable in the country.
- It is a **type of treatment in which a patient's T cells (a type of immune system cell) are changed in the laboratory so they will attack cancer cells.**
- T cells are taken from a patient's blood. Then the **gene for a special receptor that binds to a certain protein on the patient's cancer cells is added to the T cells in the laboratory.**
- The special receptor is called a chimeric antigen receptor (CAR).

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/08/department-of-biotechnology-supported-first-car-t-cell-therapy-conducted-at-actrec-tata-hospital-in-mumbai/>

Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan

- NITI Aayog & Piramal Foundation launched Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan in 112 Aspirational Districts.
- It was **launched to assist district administrations in providing home-care support to Covid-19 patients who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.**
- It is **part of a special initiative, Aspirational Districts Collaborative**, in which local leaders, civil societies and volunteers work with district administrations to address emerging problems across key focus areas of the Aspirational Districts Programme.
- It **will be led by district magistrates in partnership with over 1000 local NGOs.**

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/09/surakshit-hum-surakshit-tum-abhiyaan-launched-in-112-aspirational-districts/>

QS World University Rankings 2022

- **Three Indian institutes in the top 200 ranks of the QS World University Rankings 2022.**
- IISc Bengaluru ranked number 1 in the world for research under these rankings. The institute secured a rank of 186 in the universities ranking. IIT Bombay secured the 177th position whereas IIT Delhi the 185th rank .
- QS World University Rankings is an **annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a British company specialising in analysing higher education institutions.**
- The first edition of the university rankings was released in 2004, then known as the Times Higher Education–QS World University Rankings.

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/10/three-indian-universities-achieve-top-200-positions-in-qs-world-university-rankings/>



Indo-Thai CORPAT

- The 31st edition of the **India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol** (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted.
- India and Thailand have been **conducting CORPAT biannually along their International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) since 2005.**

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/09/31st-edition-of-india-thailand-coordinated-patrol-underway/>

Agriculture Exports during 2020-21

- The **export of agriculture and allied products (including marine and plantation products) during 2020-21 jumped to USD 41.25 billion, indicating an increase of 17.34% from the previous year.**
- Despite COVID-19, balance of trade in agriculture has improved by 42.16% from USD 14.51 billion to USD 20.58 billion.
- For agriculture products (excluding marine and plantation products), the growth is 28.36% with exports of USD 29.81 billion in 2020-21 as compared to USD 23.23 billion in 2019-20.
- Largest markets for India's agriculture products are USA, China, Bangladesh, UAE, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Nepal, Iran and Malaysia.

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/10/india-registers-17-34-growth-in-agriculture-exports-during-2020-21/>

Report of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20

- It has been **compiled by the Ministry of Education** based on voluntary uploading of data by institutions of Higher Education listed in aishe.gov.in portal in specially designed formats of data collection.
- This is the **tenth such report** in the series of All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) annually released by the Education Department.
- In the last five years from 2015-16 to 2019-20, there has been a **growth of 11.4% in student enrolment.**
- The **rise in female enrolment in higher education during the period is 18.2%.**
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), the percentage of students belonging to the eligible age group enrolled in Higher Education, in 2019-20 is 27.1%.**
- **Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 1.01 against 1.00 in 2018-19.**
- **Pupil Teacher Ratio in Higher Education in 2019-20 is 26.**

44th GST Council Meeting

- The 44th Goods and Services Tax Council meeting was held.
- The GST Council **waived tax rates on black fungus drugs Amphotericin (it was earlier 5%) and reduced rates on several other covid-related essential items like drugs, testing kits, ventilators, etc.**
- However, it has **decided to continue with 5% GST rates for covid vaccines.**
- **Pulse oximeters, hand sanitizers, and temperature check devices will attract lower rates of 5% (down from 12%).**

<http://newsonair.com/2021/06/12/fm-nirmala-sitharaman-to-chair-44th-gst-council-meeting-today/>