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- ❖ **Globalization and Social Security Measures in India**
- ❖ **AI and Employment Landscape in India**
- ❖ **Strategic Autonomy in India's Neighbourhood**
- ❖ **Regional Political Party and Electoral System in Manipur**
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18th BRICS Summit

BRICS is a multilateral forum consisting of 11 member states (Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the UAE) representing 49.5% of global population, 40% of global GDP and 26% of global trade. The diversity in the group brings together major markets, natural resources, technological capabilities and varied development experiences. BRICS agenda includes terrorism, climate change, food and energy security, trade and agriculture. Its major advocacy is equity in international institutions and global financial architecture. It is fast emerging from crisis to collective action on the globe and has witnessed evolution from continuity to consensus over the last 20 years.

India hosted the 18th BRICS Summit on September 12-13, 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, which marked the 20th years of its establishment. Theme was deftly chosen as ‘Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability’, to redefine the BRICS and bring inclusivity. India rightly placed the concerns of the Global South at the forefront of the agenda. India assumed the Chairship of BRICS in January 2026 for the fourth time which was a significant milestone as it also marked the 20th anniversary of its institutionalized cooperation. India vouched to advance the forum with a people-centric approach and the spirit of ‘Humanity First’ which truly marked the BRICS cooperation as increasingly practical, forward-looking, and responsive to the priorities of people. The discussions during the course of the Summit reaffirmed the foundations of BRICS cooperation to be anchored in mutual respect, equality, solidarity, openness, inclusiveness, and consensus, with differences to be addressed through dialogue and consultations.

Over the last eight months India organized more than 350 meetings; including in-person, virtual, across thematic clusters, ministerial meetings, working group meetings, business sessions, people-centric activities and initiatives. Presence of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese Premier Xi Jinping alongside the Head of other member-countries speaks volume about the robust participation and its growing engagement with the Global South. India called for a stronger implementation and continuity mechanism within BRICS and proposed a ‘Troika’ arrangement and a secure digital repository to ensure that decisions taken by the grouping are followed up.

First Member Session theme “Inclusive Global Governance and Strengthening Multilateralism” was responded through broad convergence on the need to strengthen multilateralism and to make global governance institutions more representative, inclusive, effective, and responsive to today’s realities. Most important was that 12th September is observed as the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation in backdrop of which conservation on the role of emerging and developing economies in a changing global order was emphasized. Leaders at the Summit reiterated for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including the Security Council, to provide wider representation to developing countries and also for a reform of the international financial architecture to give developing countries and the Global South a stronger voice to reform the global governance. BRICS expansion has added demographic and economic weight thereby strengthening it as a platform for South-South Cooperation and Global South representation. Outcome of the Summit was aligned with the theme of the Summit as enshrined in the ‘New Delhi Declaration 2026’ addressing fair global trade, safety in conflicts, and multilateral cooperation. Adoption of the Declaration was the defining outcomes of India’s Chairship.

Numbers of bilateral meetings were also held on the sidelines of the Summit which are of greater importance given the present status of the world. Leaders of BRICS also participated in joint tree plantation to commemorate “Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” to express shared commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and resilient future for future generations. A postal stamp was also released to highlight the two decades of BRICS journey. BRICS leaders were also given a tour of exhibition “Bharat Innovate”, which was crafted specially for BRICS leaders and partners and delegation members and business people during the Summit. The exhibition showcased India’s achievements and potentials in innovation, entrepreneurship, technology, and development.

Key takeaways of the Summit were four vehicles of resilience, innovation, cooperation, and sustainability. The *resilience* pillar included: food and health security, BRICS Centers of Excellence on Agro-ecology, BRICS Network on Digital Agriculture, and the BRICS Mission for Healthy Lifestyle, alongside wellness and disaster risk reduction and management. *Innovation* pillar included initiatives to promote technology, research, and entrepreneurship, cooperation on Digital Public Infrastructure, BRICS Science and Research Repository, and the BRICS Startup Innovation Fund and Incubator Network. *Cooperation* pillar included practical initiatives to deepen economic cooperation, BRICS MSME Cooperation Portal, Cooperation on Global Value Chains, BRICS Logistics Supply Chain Cooperation Framework, and initiatives to promote traditional and indigenous knowledge and traditional complementary and integrative medicine. *Sustainability* pillar is about cooperation on smart grids, energy storage, climate-resilient urban infrastructure, and sustainable urban mobility, and initiatives to promote sustainable lifestyles and climate-resilient agriculture. Overall, the Summit had many high-sounding inclusive commitments but the deliveries could be assessed only with passage of time.

—BK