DIPLOMAT TODAY
Navigating the World's Diplomatic Waves
https://diplomattoday.com
September 2026 | Volume 03 | Issue 03 | ₹ 250

BRICS
INDIA 2026

THE GLOBAL SOUTH RISES

NEW DELHI AND THE ROAD AHEAD

COUNTRY DOSSIER

INDIA–ARMENIA

A Partnership Rooted In Friendship, Driven By The Future

DIPLOMAT TODAY

Diplomat Today Magazine focuses on Diplomacy, Bilateral Relations, International Business, Investments, Trade, Tourism and Cultural Changes. It is nexus as a diplomatic guide, to connect consulate and industry leaders, cover a wide range of services including media reporting, events, forums and policies, pertaining to relations between India and other countries.

MAGAZINE | SPECIAL REPORTS

EVENTS

Promotions & Media Partnership Globally

MAGAZINE ★ WEBSITE ★ NEWSLETTERS

TOPICS COVERED

News: National and International
Foreign Matters: Bilateral Relations, Diplomacy, Defense, Economy
Interviews & Insights: Diplomats, Spokespersons, Leaders, Entrepreneurs
Global Concern: Environment, Education, Agriculture, Transportations, Energy
Events: Coverage, Promotions, Partnership

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS

- Bilateral Relations
- Trade & Investments
- Exclusive Interviews
- Export - Imports Brief
- News and Industry Updates

CONTACT

Uday N Jha
+91-8178133868
dbmpublications@gmail.com
business@dbandm.com

DIPLOMAT TODAY
DESCRIBES DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUES

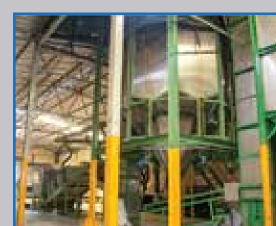
WHO WE ARE

Trans-Atlantic Trading Company Limited, is a company from Kenya, East Africa has been involved in the export of Tea since 2020.

We purchase black loose tea from Mombasa Tea Auction and also source directly from tea factories from Kenya and the East African Region.

Our team has decades of experience in the tea business to guarantee quality, value and timely delivery.

EXPORT OF BULK LOOSE CTC TEA - BLENDED TEAS



Tea is blended when teas of various gardens of different qualities and properties are mixed to come with a tea blend with unique and distinct taste and flavour.

We export blended teas as per a client's sample with assurance of consistency of quality. We ship with all the required documents and certifications in either 20ft. or 40ft. containers under FOB or CIF terms.

We offer very competitive pricing based on the teas making the blend.

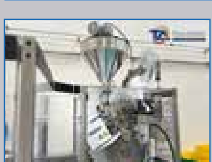
EXPORT OF BULK LOOSE TEA- STRAIGHT LINE TEAS

We export straight line teas, that is, teas of a specific garden mark as requested by the client. However, we ensure the tea is of acceptable quality and standard.

Our prices are competitive as we place a small margin above the actual cost price of the tea to meet the logistical costs.

ORTHODOX TEAS

We export various Orthodox Teas based on the clients' desires including OPA, OPl, FBOPF SP, FBOPF, PEKOE, FOF, GBOP, STGFOP, together with Specialty teas like Purple tea and Green tea. The prices vary depending on the grade and season. Nonetheless, our prices are most competitive.



BRAND PACKAGING

We provide brand packaging for tea products so that we supply your product in your own branding ready for the shelves. Be it tea bag or loose tea, in foil pouches or paper boxes, or even jars; we are able to provide optimal brand packaging solutions suitable for your market.

Trans-Atlantic
Trading Company Limited
Your ultimate business partner

Nairobi Head Office
Muthaiga Golf View Office Suites, 1st floor
P.O. Box 26454 - 00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 791 071 920 | info@tatcke.com

Mombasa Office
Harbour House, 3rd Flour, Moi Avenue
P.O Box 80111-80100, Mombasa, Kenya
Tel: +254 722 708 906| tea@tatcke.com

DIPLOMAT TODAY
NAVIGATING THE WORLD'S DIPLOMATIC WAVES
https://diplomattoday.com

September 2026 | Volume 03 | Issue 03

Cover Price: ₹250/-

Published by:
Uday Jha for Diplomat Today Magazine an imprint of Digital Business Media (opc) Pvt Ltd Email: business@dbandm.com Website: https://dbandm.com

Publisher's Note

Diplomat Today Describes: BRICS 2026 and the New Global South

Dear Readers,

The September 2026 issue of Diplomat Today arrives at a significant moment in the evolution of global diplomacy. As geopolitical realities shift and the Global South assumes a stronger voice, India continues to expand its role as a bridge-builder and a constructive force in international affairs.

Our Cover Story, "BRICS 2026: From Strategic Vision to Practical Outcomes," by Ambassador Srikumar Menon, IFS (Retd.), examines the significance of the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi and the grouping's evolving role in shaping a more representative and multipolar global order.

This issue also explores the wider BRICS landscape, including China's vision for the grouping and the strategic dynamics of Russia–India–China cooperation. Our bilateral coverage highlights India's growing partnerships with Russia, Indonesia, Belgium, Liberia, Rwanda, Namibia, Mauritius and Vietnam, spanning trade, technology, defence, maritime security and development cooperation.

We also feature important perspectives on India's engagement with Central Asia and the Global South, economic diplomacy, and the India–UAE food corridor. Professor Moni Madaswamy's analysis of transformative agri-food and blue economy models for Sri Lanka adds an important dimension to the discussion on food security, rural livelihoods and sovereign resilience.

Our Country Dossier, "India–Armenia: A Partnership Rooted in Friendship, Driven by the Future," explores the growing strategic, defence, technological and economic relationship between the two nations.

Through this issue, we remain committed to bringing our readers informed perspectives on the relationships, ideas and developments shaping our changing world.

We thank our contributors and readers for being part of the Diplomat Today journey.

CONTENT

SEPTEMBER 2026

BRICS 2026: From Strategic Vision to Practical Outcomes

About the Author:
Ambassador
SRIKUMAR MENON, *IFS (Retd.)*
Former Ambassador of India to South Sudan, Angola and Sao Tome & Principe

The 18th BRICS Summit, hosted in New Delhi under India's chairship, was a watershed moment for contemporary international relations. Twenty-five years after it originated as an economic acronym in 2001, BRICS has evolved into a major Global South forum. The high-level consultations brought together, for the first time, leaders from the expanded 11-member grouping (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE).

The summit possessed undeniable geopolitical weight with the participation of China's Xi Jinping (his first India visit in seven years), Russia's Vladimir Putin, Iran's Masoud Pezeshkian, Indonesia's Prabowo Subianto, South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa, Egypt's Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Ethiopia's Abiy Ahmed Ali and others; while Brazil and the UAE sent high-level representatives.

As dawn broke over New Delhi on 12 September 2026, the 'Bharat Mandapam' venue stood transformed as a focal point of intense high-level diplomatic activity- flanked by elite security cordons, fluttering BRICS flags, and a fleet of media vans under the humid monsoon sky.

Inside the vast halls, polished marble and intricate floral arrangements awaited the participants for the closed plenary; outside, a palpable tension mixed with anticipation hung in the air - high expectations tempered with a sobering awareness of the formidable challenges to peace, tranquility and consensus in a world marked by deepening conflicts and divisions.

Navigating Divisions, Building Consensus

The Summit's wider significance for the evolving global order can be assessed through four themes: Multilateral Reform, Economic Resilience, Innovation and Development, and India's diplomatic stewardship - highlighting both its substantive achievements and limitations, while offering cautious optimism for the future.

The central theme of the summit - "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," - provided the cue and basis for discussions, against the dark backdrop of the ongoing conflict in West Asia and Ukraine, crippling Western economic sanctions, energy insecurity, trade tensions, accompanied by the increasingly strident calls for reforms in the UN and the multilateral system.

The summit served as a crucial test, with challenging questions being raised as to whether a vastly expanded and politically diverse BRICS could still forge common ground. Nonetheless, the summit was able to demonstrate that the grouping's fundamental strength lies not in ideological uniformity, but in providing a pragmatic forum where a diverse Global South can bargain, cooperate, and navigate a changing global order.

Key Takeaways

The most consequential outcome of the Summit was the unanimous adoption on 12 September of the New Delhi Declaration, a 140-paragraph consensus document. This followed overnight negotiations dragging-on into the early hours of 12 September.

Navigating the competing priorities and agenda of each of the eleven distinct nations required delicate diplomatic steering. The limits of consensus were initially exposed when the earlier Foreign Ministers' meeting (that just preceded the summit) failed to yield a joint text, primarily due to sharp differences between Iran and the UAE over the West Asia conflict.

Just before the opening plenary, overnight negotiations had stretched into the early hours, with Indian diplomats and interlocutors huddled together and teaming up to narrow down and bridge the Iran-UAE divides on West Asia. Simultaneously, the Protocol and logistics teams executed their part with clockwork efficiency and precision to welcome leaders like Putin, Xi and others along with their entourage.

India deftly leveraged its presidency, holding intensive diplomatic parleys and bilateral engagement - including direct talks by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Iranian, Emirati and Russian leaders.

A significant and rare sideline meeting between Pezeshkian and Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince helped enable compromise language that avoided naming the United States, Israel or specific Iranian retaliatory strikes. The text called for "maximum restraint," protection of civilians and infrastructure (including IAEA-safeguarded nuclear facilities), respect for sovereignty, and uninterrupted trade, supply chains and energy flows - without a separate detailed reference to the Russia-Ukraine war.

The Declaration carefully calibrated its language on key global friction points. On West Asia, it called for immediate restraint, the protection of civilians and critical infrastructure, and full Palestinian membership in the United Nations within a two-state framework.

On counter-terrorism, it adopted a firm stance against double standards while explicitly condemning the Pahalgam attack.

Regarding global governance, BRICS reaffirmed the urgent imperative to reform the United Nations and its Security Council to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities - supported by China and Russia backing greater roles for India and Brazil - alongside structural updates to the IMF, World Bank, and WTO.

The overarching message was clear: the Global South is actively transitioning from being a passive 'rule-taker' to an active 'rule-shaper' in global affairs.

Building BRICS' Economic Resilience and Strategic Autonomy

Economic and financial autonomy formed a major pillar of the deliberations. In an era marked by unilateral tariffs, coercive sanctions, and trade barriers, the New Delhi Summit prioritized concrete mechanisms to safeguard financial self-reliance and supply chain security across the Global South.

Addressing external economic pressures, leaders such as Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian championed independent pathways for trade, capital, and technology. Key proposals—including a dedicated BRICS cargo insurance mechanism, a collaborative Grain Market, and leverage of the New Development Bank's $140 billion project portfolio—aim to shield member states from secondary sanctions while reinforcing the link between economic stability and regional security.

Crucially, these initiatives do not seek an abrupt displacement of the US dollar or the immediate overthrow of established multilateral institutions. Instead, through local-currency settlements, cross-border payment interoperability, the BRICS Pay initiative, and the BRICS Logistics Supply Chain Cooperation Framework, the bloc is quietly expanding its strategic autonomy. By creating practical alternatives, emerging economies are diversifying risk, reducing systemic vulnerabilities, and enhancing their collective bargaining power within the global order.

Underpinning this push for economic resilience is a call for actionable progress over abstract rhetoric. As BRICS

enters its third decade, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi cautioned against the weaponization of technology and critical minerals, advocating instead for inclusive digital public infrastructure that anchors innovation directly to human development.

India's substantive suite of proposed initiatives—spanning an Early Warning System for infectious diseases, disaster management guidelines, a BRICS Startup Innovation Fund, and a Digital Agriculture Network leveraging AI and geospatial tools—demonstrates a commitment to tangible outcomes. Coupled with focused platforms for MSMEs, urban mobility, smart grids, and regenerative agriculture, the summit signaled a decisive shift toward translating technological innovation into job creation, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

From Consensus to Collective Action

The broader significance of the New Delhi Summit lies in what it reveals about the reality of 21st century diplomacy. BRICS is neither an anti-Western security alliance nor a monolithic world government. Its members maintain distinct strategic trajectories and internal rivalries: India and China remain border rivals; Russia is locked in conflict with Western powers; and Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE hold contrasting visions for West Asia.

The summit demonstrated that BRICS works precisely because its members have learned the art of remaining in the room. By offering a non-ideological venue where nations that refuse to choose between competing global blocs can negotiate, trade, and manage disagreement, the bloc serves as an essential pressure valve in a fragmented international system.

As China prepares to assume the BRICS chairship in 2027, the ultimate test for the expanded bloc will be execution and implementation - converting its aggregate economic weight into functioning payment networks, technology exchanges, resilient supply chains, and meaningful institutional reforms.

In the final analysis, the New Delhi Summit offered neither a sudden global transformation nor a final resolution to international divisions. Instead, it delivered something far more valuable - proof that quiet diplomacy, pragmatic cooperation, and multi-aligned dialogue remain achievable amid deep global fractures. By replacing ideological confrontation with constructive engagement, the summit ended on a note of measured optimism - offering the global community a practical model for building a more inclusive, resilient, peaceful, and responsive international order.

BRICS now represents nearly half of the world's population. The true measure of BRICS-2026, therefore, will lie, not in the declarations it adopted, but in its capacity to convert collective aspirations into tangible outcomes. Its enduring legitimacy, significance and defining strength lie in demonstrating that, even in a fractured and increasingly contested world – its ability to encourage dialogue, cooperation and collective action remain powerful instruments for building a more balanced, stable, resilient and inclusive global order.

A GLOBAL SOUTH PLATFORM FOR PARTNERSHIP, INNOVATION & TRANSFORMATION

1ST GSM-FACC

GLOBAL SOUTH MINISTERS, FARMERS, ACADEMIA & CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

SUMMIT, AWARDS & INTERNATIONAL EXPO 2026

Uniting Leaders. Empowering People. Building Prosperity.

16–18 OCTOBER 2026
WORLD TRADE CENTRE MUMBAI
INDIA

WFP

COMMEMORATING THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE WOMAN FARMER & WORLD FOOD DAY 2026

WHY IT MATTERS

The GSM-FACC Summit is the first global platform that brings together Governments, Farmers, Academia, Industry, Investors, and Innovators to accelerate sustainable agricultural transformation, food security, climate resilience, youth empowerment, and inclusive development across the Global South.

KEY THEMES

- Food Security & Agricultural Transformation
- Women Farmers & Rural Prosperity
- Youth Innovation & Job Creation
- Climate Resilience & Green Growth
- Trade, Investment & Industrialisation
- Research, Innovation & Technology Transfer
- South–South & Triangular Cooperation
- Financing the Sustainable Development Goals

WHO PARTICIPATES

- Ministers & Government Leaders
- Multilateral Institutions & Development Partners
- Agribusiness & Industry Leaders
- Academia, Researchers & Innovators
- Chambers of Commerce & Industry Associations
- Farmer Organisations & Cooperatives
- Investors, Financiers & Philanthropies
- Media & Thought Leaders

SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

- HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY SESSIONS with Global Leaders
- STRATEGIC ROUNDTABLES for Action & Impact
- GSM-FACC LEADERSHIP AWARDS
- INTERNATIONAL EXPO Showcasing Innovation, Technology & Solutions
- NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
- GLOBAL VISIBILITY. LOCAL IMPACT. LASTING LEGACY.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

GOSCCIMA | G-SCIEPTS-D | GSUA | GSEA | GSSEA | GSMA

HOSTED BY
WORLD TRADE CENTER MUMBAI

CO-HOSTED BY
AIAI
All India Association of Industries

COORDINATED BY
AASGON
GSEF UNITED KINGDOM

IN COLLABORATION WITH
GS-IDF

SUPPORTED BY
GSSDC

BE A PARTNER. BE A LEADER. BE THE CHANGE.

JOIN US IN SHAPING A RESILIENT, INCLUSIVE & PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

www.aasgon.com www.gsefworld.org
aasgon@live.co.uk
+44 7443950254

BRICS
INDIA 2026

BRICS 2026: The Leaders Shaping Tomorrow

New Delhi brought together leaders from across the BRICS family with different national priorities, but a shared ambition: to build a more connected, resilient, innovative and representative global order.

Narendra Modi — India

Vision: A Future-Ready Global South

India's vision for BRICS centres on making the grouping more practical, inclusive and future-oriented. Technology, artificial intelligence, innovation, sustainable development, economic cooperation and stronger representation for developing nations are central to India's outlook for the next phase of BRICS.

Xi Jinping — China

Vision: Stronger Cooperation, Greater Global Stability

China sees BRICS as an increasingly important platform for cooperation among emerging economies. Its vision emphasises stronger economic partnerships, dialogue, peaceful solutions to global challenges and a greater role for developing countries in shaping international affairs.

Vladimir Putin — Russia

Vision: Deeper Economic and Technological Partnerships

Russia's BRICS vision focuses on expanding economic cooperation, strengthening trade and investment links, developing technology partnerships and building alternative channels for cooperation among emerging economies. For Moscow, BRICS represents an important platform for a more diversified global economic system.

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva — Brazil

Vision: A Stronger Voice for Developing Nations

Brazil's approach places the Global South at the centre of the BRICS agenda. Greater representation in international institutions, sustainable development, social progress and a fairer global economic system remain important elements of Brazil's vision.

Cyril Ramaphosa — South Africa

Vision: Inclusive Multilateralism

South Africa sees BRICS as an instrument for strengthening the voice of developing countries. Its vision highlights inclusive global governance, industrial development, infrastructure, food security, health, climate resilience and greater economic opportunities for Africa and the wider Global South.

Abdel Fattah El-Sisi — Egypt

Vision: Development and Economic Resilience

Egypt brings a strong development perspective to BRICS, with emphasis on investment, infrastructure, food and energy security and stronger economic cooperation. Its participation also strengthens the African dimension of the expanded BRICS partnership.

Abiy Ahmed — Ethiopia

Vision: New Opportunities for Africa

Ethiopia's BRICS engagement reflects Africa's growing role in the global economy. Its priorities include development, investment, infrastructure, trade and greater access to international economic opportunities for African nations.

Prabowo Subianto — Indonesia

Vision: Growth, Food Security and Global South Cooperation

Indonesia brings the perspective of Southeast Asia to the expanded BRICS family. Its vision emphasises economic growth, food security, investment, industrial development and stronger cooperation among emerging economies.

Masoud Pezeshkian — Iran

Vision: Connectivity and Economic Cooperation

Iran's participation adds an important West Asian dimension to BRICS. Its priorities include expanding trade, strengthening economic connectivity, developing partnerships with emerging economies and creating new opportunities for regional cooperation.

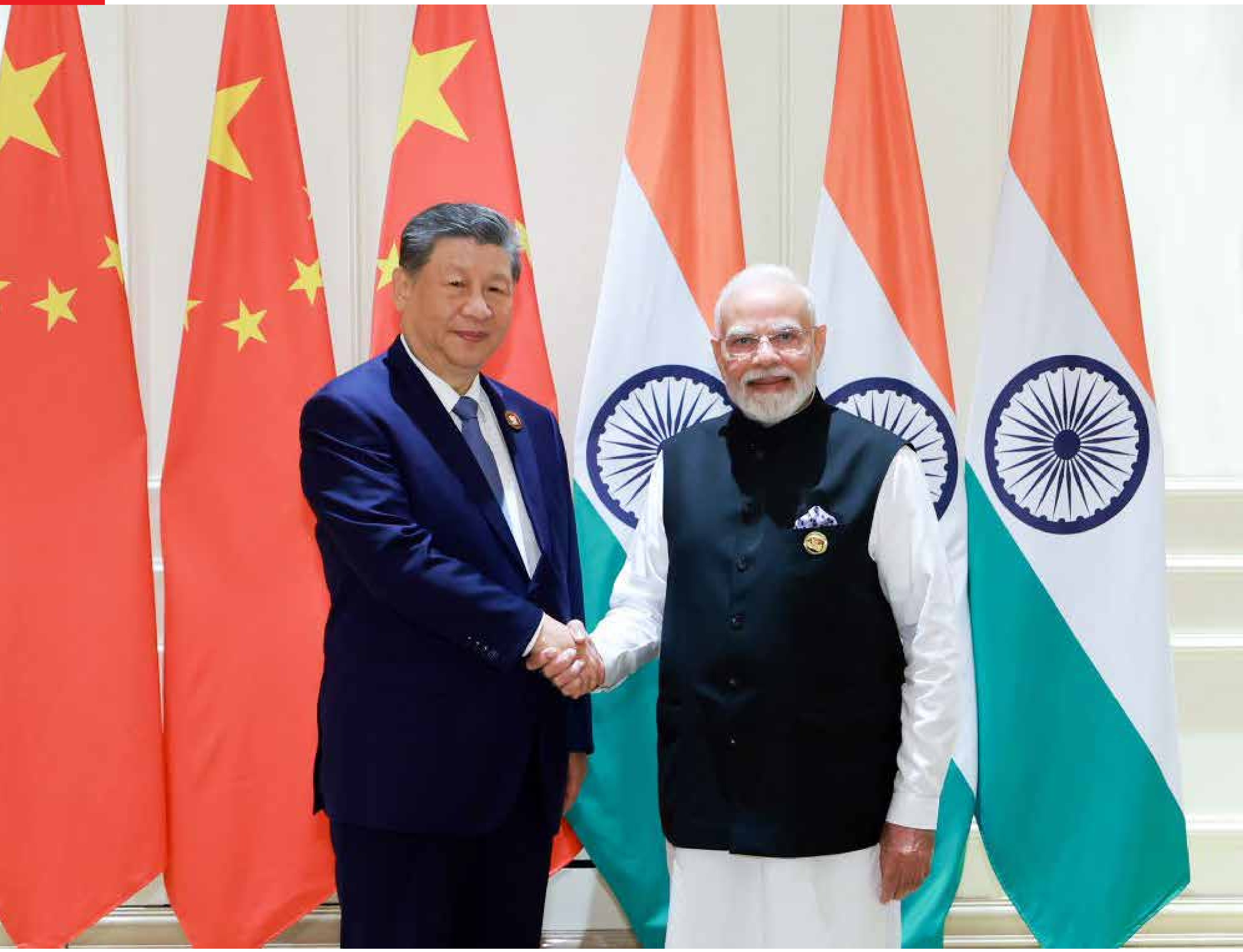
Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan — United Arab Emirates

Vision: Investment, Innovation and Sustainable Growth

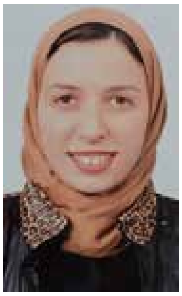
The UAE's participation reflects its ambition to connect BRICS with global investment, trade and innovation networks. Technology, infrastructure, energy, logistics and sustainable economic development are key areas of opportunity.

The New Delhi Summit demonstrated that BRICS is no longer defined by a single economic or political model. Its expanded membership brings together countries with different geographies, resources, economic structures and national priorities.

Different Nations. Different Priorities. One Shared Horizon.



China Sets the Pace for a Stronger BRICS at the New Delhi Summit



About the Author:
NESSMA YOUSSEF
is an Egyptian journalist with a specialization in diplomacy and foreign affairs. She serves as a senior editor at the prominent Egyptian daily, and is also known for her expertise as a diplomatic correspondent and writer, focusing on international relations and global tourism.

Chinese President Xi Jinping used the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi to set out an ambitious vision for the bloc's next phase, calling for deeper economic integration, stronger industrial and supply-chain cooperation, and greater coordination among emerging economies and countries of the Global South.

Addressing the summit, Xi presented BRICS as an increasingly important platform for practical cooperation at a time when the global economy is facing geopolitical tensions, disruptions to trade and supply chains, and rapid technological change. His message placed China's economic and technological capabilities at the center of a broader effort to strengthen the expanded BRICS framework.

The intervention underscored China's weight within the grouping, while also framing Beijing's approach around openness, mutual benefit and a stronger role for developing countries in global economic governance.

From an expanded bloc to a more integrated one

With BRICS now encompassing a wider group of major emerging economies, Xi argued that the bloc should make greater use of its collective strengths.

Rather than treating expansion as an end in itself, he called for the "Greater BRICS" to translate its growing membership into more concrete cooperation. This includes expanding trade and investment, keeping industrial and supply chains stable, and working toward more integrated markets among member countries.

The emphasis is significant because the enlarged BRICS brings together major producers, consumers, energy exporters, manufacturing powers and rapidly growing markets across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

For China, deeper economic connectivity within this group can create additional channels for trade, investment and industrial cooperation while strengthening the economic links connecting the Global South.

Xi also called for BRICS countries to leverage their position as economies rooted in emerging markets and closely connected with the Global South, while maintaining an open and cooperative approach based on mutual benefit.

China puts technology at the heart of BRICS cooperation

One of the clearest signals from Xi's speech was the importance Beijing attaches to technology as a new pillar of BRICS cooperation.

China proposed the creation of a BRICS open-source artificial intelligence zone, alongside initiatives aimed at advancing cooperation in the digital economy, smart manufacturing and talent development.

The proposal places AI within the broader BRICS agenda rather than treating it as a purely national technological competition. It also reflects the growing importance of digital technologies to economic development across emerging markets, where access to affordable technology, skills and infrastructure is increasingly linked to competitiveness.

Xi's proposals included the development of innovation incubators, the upgrading of traditional industries, the expansion of emerging industries and forward-looking planning for future industries.

For China, this approach offers a way to connect its technological and industrial capabilities with the development priorities of other BRICS economies.

Five areas for deeper cooperation

Xi outlined five areas in which he said BRICS cooperation should advance: artificial intelligence; trade and investment facilitation; the digital industry; smart manufacturing; and talent development.

Together, the proposals point toward a broader economic agenda in which BRICS cooperation extends beyond traditional trade to technology, industrial modernization and human capital.

This could become particularly important for newer BRICS members and other developing economies seeking to expand their manufacturing and technological capacities.

The Chinese approach therefore seeks to make BRICS more than a political forum. Beijing is advocating a framework capable of generating practical projects, connecting markets and supporting industrial development across member states.

A stronger voice for the Global South

Xi also linked the future of BRICS to the wider question of global governance.

He called on countries of the Global South to work together to defend international rule of law and reject the notion that power alone should determine international outcomes. His remarks reflected a longstanding Chinese argument for a more representative international system in which developing countries have a greater role in shaping global rules.

The emphasis on the Global South has gained additional significance as BRICS has expanded. The bloc increasingly brings together countries with different political systems, economic structures and foreign-policy priorities, but with a shared interest in increasing their influence within international institutions.

Xi's message was therefore both economic and geopolitical: BRICS should strengthen practical cooperation while contributing to a more balanced and representative international order.

BRICS and the changing global economy

The summit also highlighted the bloc's growing economic significance. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi noted

that BRICS countries collectively represent around half of the world's population, about 40 percent of global GDP and more than a quarter of global trade.

Against this background, China's proposals carry weight because of the scale of its economy, manufacturing base, technological capabilities and role in global supply chains.

Xi's emphasis on supply-chain stability was particularly notable. As companies and governments increasingly seek to diversify production and reduce exposure to geopolitical disruptions, Beijing is advocating greater coordination among BRICS economies to keep industrial and trade networks functioning.

The proposal reflects an important tension facing the global economy: while countries are pursuing greater resilience and diversification, emerging economies also have an interest in maintaining efficient cross-border trade and investment.

China's place in the next BRICS

China's role at the New Delhi summit illustrates how the expansion of BRICS is changing the bloc's ambitions.

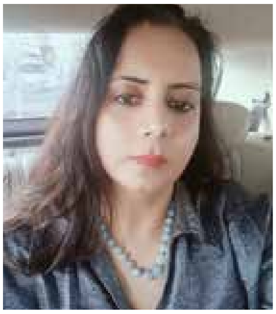
The organization is no longer limited to cooperation among its original members. With countries such as Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates joining the expanded framework, BRICS now brings together a wider geographic and economic spectrum of the Global South.

For Beijing, this creates both an opportunity and a challenge. China can use its economic and technological strength to promote ambitious projects across the bloc, but the diversity of BRICS means that its initiatives must also accommodate the interests of countries with different development priorities and strategic calculations.

Xi's proposals at the New Delhi summit suggest that China wants BRICS to move in precisely that direction: toward a more integrated economic space in which trade, investment, technology, manufacturing and human capital reinforce one another.

The message from New Delhi was clear. China sees the future of BRICS not simply in expanding its membership, but in increasing its capacity to act. By placing economic integration, technology and Global South cooperation at the center of its agenda, Beijing is seeking to help shape what the expanded BRICS can become — and, in the process, reinforce China's position as one of its most influential economic and technological powers.

Russia–India–China (RIC) Dynamics in the BRICS 2026 Context



PRATIMA SINGH
Editor-in-chief

The 18th annual BRICS Summit is being held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, India, from September 12–13, 2026, under India's fourth chairship of the bloc. Chaired by PM Modi, the two-day high-level meeting focuses on building resilience, innovation, cooperation, and sustainability that together constitute its four pillars. Amidst many political and economic agendas being raised and discussed, the "2026 BRICS Summit in New Delhi" has sparked discussions around the strategic significance of the Russia–India–China (RIC) relationship. The confluence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Chinese President Xi Jinping brings us to think about whether the RIC framework can become an important instrument of multipolar diplomacy. Taking note of the fact that the trilateral countries remain major role players in Eurasia but are marked with both cooperation and significant strategic differences, their roles must be scrutinized carefully.

RUSSIA, INDIA, CHina - The Trilateral Context

With the emergence of the concept in the 1990s, the convergence of the three nations envisaged cooperation among Russia, India, and China to encourage a more balanced, multipolar international system—primarily as an alliance free from military and political intentions.Rather, it provided a platform through which the three countries could exchange views on international security, economic cooperation and global governance. Come BRICS Summit 2026, the relevance of trilateral confluence is seen increasing given the backdrop of US-Iran war. Besides, The expansion of BRICS has also provided a broader institutional setting in which India, Russia and China can pursue common interests alongside other major countries of the Global South.

RUssia-India-China and BRICS 2026

Noticeably, India's 2026 BRICS Chairship has given the RIC dynamic renewed diplomatic visibility. As New Delhi Declaration places a great emphasis on dialogue, diplomacy, multilateralism and greater representation for developing countries the approach for RIC nations becomes all the more significant because all three have an interest in a world order in which major powers have greater strategic autonomy and developing countries have a stronger voice in global institutions. Nevertheless, RIC's approach and emphasis on developing nations must not corner it to an anti-west bloc. Since beginning, India has consistently sought to guard its autonomy and maintain productive relations with the multiple centres of power. The 2026 BRIC Summit under India's chairship demonstrates this approach even more pragmatically rather than turning the grouping into a geopolitical alliance.

India–Russia: A Stable Strategic Partnership

At a time when Russia's relations with Western nations are still very tense, this partnership provides India with a crucial avenue for communication with Moscow. India is a significant Asian partner and market for Russia, and the two countries' relationship supports Russia's larger goal of upholding a variety of international alliances.

Russia continues to be a key component of India's foreign policy framework. Defence, energy, space, nuclear cooperation, trade, and technology are just a few of the areas where India and Russia continue to collaborate. Modi and Putin reviewed bilateral cooperation and talked about infrastructure, energy, economics, and other areas of interaction during the 2026 BRICS Summit. In resolving international disputes, India also reaffirmed its preference for communication and diplomacy.

India–China: Cooperation Amid Competition

As far as India-China relations are concerned, their complications cannot be ignored. The two countries are simultaneously economic partners, regional competitors and participants in common multilateral institutions.The 2026 BRICS Summit provided an important opportunity for India and China to improve bilateral communication. Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping held bilateral discussions in New Delhi, with both sides stressing the importance of preventing differences from becoming disputes and maintaining peace along the border. The talks also addressed economic and trade relations and the need for greater strategic communication.

This development does not eliminate the underlying differences between the two countries. The unresolved boundary question, trade imbalances, regional competition and differing strategic interests will continue to influence their relationship. Nevertheless, greater communication can reduce the risk of confrontation and create space for cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Analysing China and Russia: Growing Strategic Convergence

Russia and China have developed increasingly close strategic relations, particularly amid changes in the global balance of power.

For India, Russia's growing dependence on China presents both opportunities and challenges. On one side where India benefits strongly from its ties with Moscow, on the other side it is equally important for India to be sufficiently independent of the Russia–China partnership.

The RIC framework therefore provides India with an additional diplomatic channel. Rather than choosing between Moscow and Beijing, India can use multilateral platforms to encourage communication while protecting its own national interests.

RIC :Component of a Multipolar Order

The potential contribution of RIC to a multipolar international order is more significant in BRICS 2026 than the prospect of establishing a formal trilateral alliance.China, India, and Russia have significant political, geographic, demographic, and economic clout. Their collaboration may facilitate conversations about:

- overhaul of organisations involved in global governance;
- increased representation of developing nations;
- stability of finances and foreign trade;
- food and energy security;
- resilience of the supply chain and connectivity;
- climate change and sustainable growth;
- technology and digital collaboration; and
- peaceful settlement of international conflicts.

Limitations of the RIC Framework

Despite its potential, RIC faces considerable structural limitations.

First, India and China remain strategic competitors. Differences along the Himalayan border and wider geopolitical competition cannot be overcome simply through participation in multilateral forums.

Second, Russia's increasingly close relationship with China has changed the strategic balance within the triangle. Moscow and Beijing often share positions on international issues, whereas India maintains a more independent approach.

Third, the three countries do not always share identical views on the international order. India seeks strategic autonomy and a diversified network of partnerships, including relations with the United States, Europe, Japan and other countries. Russia and China, meanwhile, often place greater emphasis on challenging what they perceive as Western dominance.

Consequently, RIC is unlikely to evolve into a tightly integrated political bloc.

India's Strategic Opportunity

For India, the revival of RIC should therefore be approached pragmatically. New Delhi can use the framework to maintain dialogue with both Moscow and Beijing without compromising its independent foreign-policy choices.

The 2026 BRICS Summit demonstrates the value of this approach. India was able to engage simultaneously with Russia and China while positioning BRICS as a platform for cooperation among diverse countries rather than as an anti-Western alliance. Prime Minister Modi's emphasis on a greater role for the Global South reinforces this strategy.

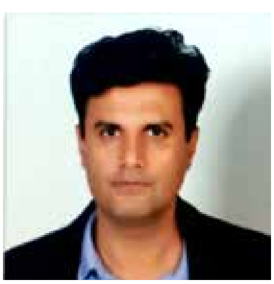
RIC can consequently function as a nested diplomatic mechanism within the wider BRICS and SCO architecture. Cooperation does not require complete strategic convergence. Instead, it can focus on areas where interests overlap while allowing disagreements to be managed through dialogue.

The 2026 BRICS Summit has demonstrated that the RIC framework remains diplomatically relevant, even though its revival should not be interpreted as the emergence of a new geopolitical alliance.

For India, RIC is valuable primarily as a mechanism for strategic communication, multipolar diplomacy and management of competition. Its success will depend on whether the three countries can separate areas of cooperation from areas of disagreement. The future of RIC will therefore not be determined by the symbolism of meetings among Modi, Putin and Xi alone. Its real significance will depend on whether India, Russia and China can translate political dialogue into practical cooperation while respecting their different national interests.

In the broader BRICS 2026 context, RIC represents an important example of India's preferred diplomatic approach: engage widely, cooperate where possible, manage differences peacefully and preserve strategic autonomy. Rather than becoming an exclusive bloc, RIC can contribute to the larger objective of building a more representative, balanced and multipolar international system.

India–Russia: A Partnership Written in Trust, Trade and Tradition



About the Author:

BY RISHI JHA

is a History graduate and a postgraduate in Scriptwriting from Algonquin College, Ottawa, Canada. His work focuses on philosophy, history, and geography, combining research with strong narrative insight.

A Meeting Beyond the Summit

The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin in New Delhi on 11 September 2026, on the sidelines of the 18th BRICS Summit, carried significance well beyond the formal setting of the gathering.

The two leaders reviewed the broad landscape of India–Russia relations and discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation across trade, energy, defence, technology, industry, education and people-to-people ties.

The conversation reflected a relationship that has developed over decades but continues to find relevance in a changing international environment.

From Strategic Trust to Economic Partnership

India–Russia relations have traditionally been associated

> *India's expanding economy requires reliable and diversified energy partnerships, while Russia possesses extensive experience and capabilities across the energy sector. Continued cooperation can therefore contribute to long-term economic engagement while opening possibilities in new areas of energy technology and infrastructure.*

with strategic cooperation, particularly in defence and energy. Today, however, the economic dimension is becoming increasingly important.

Both countries are looking towards greater trade, investment and industrial cooperation, creating opportunities for businesses and institutions to develop new partnerships.

The presence of INNOPROM India in New Delhi during the BRICS Summit period provided an additional platform for showcasing Russian industrial capabilities and encouraging business engagement. It also highlighted the potential for India–Russia cooperation in manufacturing, engineering, technology and innovation.

Energy: A Continuing Pillar

Energy remains one of the strongest foundations of the relationship.

India's expanding economy requires reliable and diversified energy partnerships, while Russia possesses extensive experience and capabilities across the energy sector. Continued cooperation can therefore contribute to long-term economic engagement while opening possibilities in new areas of energy technology and infrastructure.

Defence and Technology: Looking Forward

Defence cooperation remains an important part of the India–Russia relationship, supported by decades of institutional and technical engagement.

But the future is also about innovation.

Advanced manufacturing, space, research, engineering, digital technologies and other emerging sectors can provide new avenues for cooperation. The challenge—and opportunity—is to connect established expertise with the requirements of a new generation of technologies.

A Gift with a Deeper Message

Among the memorable moments surrounding the meeting was Prime Minister Modi's presentation of a Russian-language edition of the Thirukkural to President Putin.

Written by the Tamil poet-philosopher Thiruvalluvar, the Thirukkural is one of India's great classical works, offering reflections on ethics, leadership, relationships and human conduct.

Presenting its Russian translation carried a beautiful diplomatic message. It demonstrated how culture can create bridges where geography cannot—and how the relationship between two nations can be strengthened not only through strategic agreements, but also through literature and shared appreciation of ideas.

BRICS and the Wider Partnership

The meeting also took place within the broader framework of India's BRICS Chairship.

For India and Russia, BRICS provides another platform for dialogue on economic development, technology, trade and cooperation among emerging economies. The organisation's expanding membership makes such engagement increasingly diverse and significant.

The Road Ahead

India–Russia relations have demonstrated an ability to evolve while retaining their distinctive foundation of trust.

The next phase can build on that foundation by connecting defence and industry with technology, trade with investment, and diplomatic relations with stronger people-to-people links.

The New Delhi meeting offered another reminder that longstanding partnerships do not remain relevant simply because of their history. They remain relevant when they continue to create opportunities for the future.

And perhaps the image of Modi presenting Putin with the Russian-language Thirukkural captures the relationship beautifully: two countries connected by strategic interests, strengthened by economic opportunity, and enriched by the enduring power of culture.

The importance of India-Indonesia bilateral cooperation in a changing world order

About the Author:

PROF. TRIDIVESH SINGH MAINI,

currently Assistant Professor, has been a faculty member of the Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA) since August 2014. He was also a Public Policy Scholar with The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy, Chennai (November 2013-March 2014). Maini is also a former South Asian Voices (SAV) Visiting Fellow (Winter 2016) with the Stimson Centre, Washington DC.

His research interests include — India's ties with its extended neighbourhood (with a focus on Gulf and Iran), Geo-economics in South Asia, the role of India's states in the country's external relations, The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and BRICS. Maini is a regular contributor for several national and international publications.

Indonesian Trade Minister, Budi Santoso while speaking at the BRICS Trade Ministers' meeting held in Jaipur, on August 6-7, said:

"Indonesia stresses the importance of maintaining a rules-based multilateral trading system through a strong, inclusive and adaptive WTO. At the same time, the BRICS need to continue delivering concrete cooperation that directly benefits the growth of developing countries,"

This clearly underscores the pragmatic and balanced approach of Indonesia towards multilateralism while being cautious of the changing global landscape and its impact on developing countries. Current Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has essentially continued with the foreign policy of his predecessors, while making the necessary tweaks and adjustments, given the changes which are taking place in the global economic and geopolitical environment.

India-Indonesia ties: Bolstered by similar foreign policy approaches

While many commentators and analysts argue that the India-Indonesia relationship is way below its actual potential, one of the important binding factors between India and Indonesia has been the emphasis of both countries on following a balanced foreign policy, while giving priority to the voice of developing countries. During his visit to Indonesia in July

> ***Indonesia stresses the importance of maintaining a rules-based multilateral trading system through a strong, inclusive and adaptive WTO. At the same time, the BRICS need to continue delivering concrete cooperation that directly benefits the growth of developing countries.***

2026, PM Narendra Modi also invoked the important role of both countries in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and underscored how at the Bandung Conference the then PM Jawahar Lal Nehru and Indonesian President Sukarno sent a strong message "that independent nations have the sovereign right to make their own decisions,".

During PM Modi's visit several important agreements were signed to upgrade the bilateral relationship and to strengthen economic and strategic ties. Both India and Indonesia while maintaining good relations with the west have been raising issues pertaining to the Global South – including reform of the existing international economic architecture. Several commentators and analysts have made the argument that both countries are important bridges between the G7 and the Global South.

India and Indonesia and BRICS

Indonesian Vice Finance Minister, Juda Ajung and India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met on the sidelines of the BRICS Finance Ministers meeting (Indonesia had entered BRICS as a full time member in January 2025 and India holds the BRICS Presidency in 2026). The Indonesian Vice Finance Minister and Sitharaman reiterated the important role of both countries in the Global South. Several potential areas of cooperation including trade in local currency were discussed. During PM Modi's Indonesia visit one of the important agreements signed was to link the UPI and Indonesia's QRIS (Quick Response Code Indonesia Standard).

This could give a boost to bilateral economic and people to people relations and is important in the BRICS context where several members are in favour of giving a push to trade in local currencies. Between April 2025 and February 2026, bilateral trade between India and Indonesia was estimated at $22.72 billion.

Conclusion

Given their growing bilateral relationship and convergences on issues pertaining to the Global South, both India and Indonesia are likely to play an important role not just in the BRICS organisation, but in the changing global order. The upcoming BRICS Summit, to be held on September 12-13, in New Delhi, is likely to be impacted by the conflict in West Asia as well as growing economic uncertainty. India needs to work closely with other members including Indonesia to successfully push intra BRICS trade linkages and cooperation in areas like environment, health, technology and education.

India and Belgium Chart a New Strategic

Course, Expanding Ties from Trade to Technology and Defence

Modi–De Wever talks put defence, trade, technology, critical minerals and clean energy at the centre of a widening partnership

India and Belgium are opening a new chapter in their bilateral relationship, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever placing strategic cooperation, economic resilience and emerging technologies at the heart of their engagement.

De Wever arrived in New Delhi on Thursday for a three-day official visit to India, bringing a high-level Belgian delegation that includes Defence and Foreign Trade Minister Theo Francken. His visit marks an important step in strengthening ties between New Delhi and Brussels at a time when geopolitical uncertainty, supply-chain vulnerabilities and technological competition are reshaping international partnerships.

The discussions between Modi and De Wever covered a wide range of issues, with defence, trade, technology, semiconductors, critical minerals, renewable energy and maritime security emerging as key areas for future cooperation.

Defence becomes a growing pillar

Defence cooperation is gaining new prominence in India-Belgium relations. Both countries are seeking closer military engagement, including training, professional exchanges, research and industrial collaboration.

The presence of Belgium's defence minister and a business delegation underlines the growing interest in creating opportunities for defence-industry partnerships. Cooperation in advanced and maritime technologies could further strengthen the security dimension of the relationship.

For India, closer engagement with European defence industries supports its ambition to expand domestic manufacturing and technological capabilities. For Belgium, *The presence of Belgium's defence minister and a business delegation underlines the growing interest in creating opportunities for defence-industry partnerships. Cooperation in advanced and maritime technologies could further strengthen the security dimension of the relationship.*

India's growing defence market presents opportunities for industrial cooperation and investment.

Trade and technology take centre stage

Economic relations remain a foundation of the partnership, but both sides are looking beyond traditional areas of commerce. India and Belgium have set an ambitious objective of doubling bilateral trade over the next five years.

Belgium's longstanding importance to India's diamond industry remains significant, particularly through Antwerp's global trading hub. At the same time, the relationship is expanding into advanced manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, technology, logistics and investment.

Semiconductors and critical minerals are becoming equally important. Cooperation in these sectors could help both countries build more reliable supply chains for industries ranging from electronics and clean energy to defence.

Clean energy adds a new dimension

The green transition is another promising area of cooperation. India and Belgium are exploring opportunities in renewable energy, green hydrogen and green ammonia, linking India's growing clean-energy ambitions with European technology, investment and markets.

Such cooperation could create new commercial opportunities while supporting both countries' efforts to strengthen energy security and accelerate the transition towards lower-carbon economies.

A partnership with wider European significance

The importance of De Wever's visit extends beyond bilateral relations. Belgium is an influential member of the European Union, while India is seeking deeper engagement with Europe on trade, technology, security and strategic supply chains.

The two countries' expanding strategic dialogue can therefore serve as another bridge between India and the wider European community.

With their relationship moving beyond traditional economic cooperation towards defence, technology, clean energy and strategic resources, India and Belgium are positioning their partnership for a changing global environment.

The evolving India-Belgium partnership reflects the changing priorities of modern diplomacy, where economic opportunity increasingly intersects with security, technology and strategic resilience. De Wever's visit signals that New Delhi and Brussels are ready to build their relationship around these shared priorities, giving bilateral ties a stronger and more forward-looking strategic foundation.

India, Liberia Seek New Momentum in Strategic Partnership Across Key Sectors

India and Liberia are looking to deepen bilateral engagement across technology, agriculture, healthcare, mining, energy, trade and investment, education and capacity building, as the two countries seek to expand their development and economic partnership.

Liberian Foreign Minister Sara Beysolow Nyanti held bilateral talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in New Delhi on August 13 during her official visit to India. The discussions covered the full spectrum of India-Liberia relations, alongside regional and multilateral developments.

The talks highlighted the growing scope for cooperation in sectors that are central to Liberia's development priorities and India's engagement with Africa. Both sides discussed opportunities to strengthen partnerships in technology, agriculture, health, mining, energy, trade and investment, education and capacity building.

Jaishankar also congratulated Nyanti on the inauguration and opening of Liberia's Embassy in New Delhi, describing the development as an important step towards strengthening diplomatic engagement between the two countries.

The ministers also exchanged views on cooperation in multilateral forums, particularly on peace, development and strengthening the voice of the Global South. Reformed multilateralism, including reform of the United Nations Security Council, featured prominently in the discussions.

The latest engagement builds on an expanding India-Liberia relationship that has increasingly focused on trade, investment, mining, agriculture, healthcare, education and capacity building. India's development partnership with Liberia has also included cooperation in training and people-to-people exchanges.

With Liberia strengthening its diplomatic presence in New Delhi, the talks signal an opportunity for both countries to give fresh momentum to their economic, development and strategic cooperation, while working together to advance the interests of the Global South.

India Puts Global South at Heart of BRICS 2026 Agenda in Cairo

India has placed a stronger voice for the Global South at the centre of its BRICS 2026 chairship, with New Delhi highlighting closer cooperation with Egypt as a key avenue for advancing shared priorities within the grouping.

Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (Consular, Passport and Visa and Overseas Indian Affairs) Sripriya Ranganathan highlighted India's priorities for its BRICS 2026 Chairship while addressing the inaugural session of the India-Egypt BRICS Partnership Conference in Cairo, the Indian Embassy in Egypt said.

The conference was organised by the Indian Embassy in collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) at the Diplomatic Club in Cairo. The discussions focused on strengthening the India-Egypt partnership through the BRICS platform, under the theme of giving the Global South a stronger voice.

Ranganathan underscored that the India-Egypt Strategic Partnership provides a strong foundation for closer cooperation within BRICS and for advancing the priorities of the Global South, according to the embassy.

The Cairo engagement carries added significance as Egypt is a BRICS member and an important partner for India in Africa and the wider Global South. For New Delhi, closer coordination with Cairo offers an opportunity to translate its BRICS chairship priorities into greater cooperation among developing economies.

The conference also comes during Ranganathan's official visit to Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon from August 16-21, aimed at strengthening India's friendly relations with the three countries and discussing regional and international developments.

The meeting signals India's effort to use its BRICS chairship not only to deepen cooperation among member states but also to promote a more inclusive, representative and equitable international order, with the concerns and aspirations of the Global South receiving greater international attention.

India and Rwanda Launch Joint Trade Committee to Unlock a New Era of Economic Partnership

Inaugural mechanism lays the foundation for stronger trade, investment, and business collaboration between New Delhi and Kigali

India and Rwanda have taken a significant step towards deepening their economic engagement with the launch of the first India–Rwanda Joint Trade Committee (JTC), held in New Delhi on 30–31 July. The inaugural meeting establishes a permanent institutional platform aimed at expanding bilateral trade, attracting investment, and fostering long-term commercial cooperation between the two friendly nations.

A Strategic Platform for Economic Growth

The Indian delegation was led by Amit Kumar, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, while the Rwandan side was headed by Virgile Rwanyagatare, Director General for Asia, Pacific and Middle East Affairs in Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The discussions reflected a shared commitment to transforming strong diplomatic ties into a dynamic economic partnership. Officials from both countries reviewed existing trade relations and identified new opportunities to enhance market access, facilitate investments, and strengthen institutional cooperation.

Expanding Cooperation Across Key Sectors

The two sides explored collaboration in several high-potential sectors, including pharmaceuticals, healthcare, agriculture, information technology, manufacturing, mining, renewable energy, education, and digital innovation. Particular emphasis was placed on promoting business-to-business partnerships, encouraging greater private-sector participation, and creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurs and investors.

Both delegations agreed that sustained engagement between government agencies and industry stakeholders would be essential to unlocking the full potential of bilateral trade.

Strengthening India–Africa Economic Engagement

For India, Rwanda continues to emerge as an important economic partner in East Africa, offering access to regional markets and a business-friendly investment climate. The establishment of the Joint Trade Committee complements India's broader strategy of strengthening economic partnerships across the African continent through trade, technology, capacity building, and sustainable development.

As New Delhi and Kigali seek to diversify their economic relationship, the newly launched JTC is expected to serve as a catalyst for deeper commercial engagement and mutually beneficial growth. By institutionalizing regular dialogue, both countries have reaffirmed their commitment to building a resilient, forward-looking partnership that supports innovation, investment, and shared prosperity.

Sitharaman's North American Mission: India Takes Its Economic Diplomacy to the World

From Canada's boardrooms to the G20 and Wall Street, India puts investment, innovation and economic partnerships at the centre of its global outreach

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman begins a nine-day official visit to Canada and the United States today, travelling from August 25 to September 2 with an agenda that places economic diplomacy at the centre of India's international engagement. The visit will focus on strengthening bilateral economic and financial partnerships, attracting investment and advancing cooperation on shared global economic priorities.

Her first destination will be Toronto, where she is scheduled to participate in the inaugural India–Canada Economic and Financial Dialogue with Canada's Finance and National Revenue Minister François-Philippe Champagne on August 27. Discussions are expected to cover macroeconomic developments, financial-sector cooperation, investment and opportunities in areas including energy, artificial intelligence, critical minerals and resilient supply chains. Progress toward a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will also be an important part of the economic agenda.

The visit comes at an important moment in India–Canada relations. After a period of political strain, both countries are seeking to rebuild engagement around practical areas of mutual interest. Trade between the two countries reached approximately US$8.66 billion in 2025, and the current focus on investment, critical minerals and technology suggests that the relationship could increasingly be driven by economic interests.

Sitharaman will also meet Canadian investors and business leaders, giving India an opportunity to present itself as a destination for long-term capital and manufacturing investment.

From August 28, the Finance Minister will begin the U.S. leg of her visit, covering Chicago, Asheville and New York. In Chicago, she will meet investors and senior corporate executives and discuss India's economic outlook, investment opportunities and potential areas for stronger business partnerships. She will also visit the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Chicago, highlighting India's interest in entrepreneurship, technology commercialisation and innovation.

The most significant multilateral engagement will take place in Asheville, North Carolina, where Sitharaman will lead India's delegation to the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting under the U.S. G20 Presidency from August 31 to September 1. This gives India a platform to participate directly in discussions shaping the global economic agenda.

Her final stop will be New York, where she is scheduled to meet financial-sector leaders and investors and engage with global capital-market institutions.

The significance of this journey goes beyond a ministerial visit. India is increasingly using economic diplomacy as an instrument of national strategy—to attract capital, secure technology, strengthen supply chains, expand market access and position itself within the emerging global economic order.

The Canada and U.S. legs also demonstrate two complementary dimensions of India's approach: bilateral economic engagement and multilateral economic leadership.

At a time when tariffs, supply-chain disruptions, technology competition and geopolitical tensions are reshaping international commerce, India's ability to attract investment while maintaining strategic autonomy will be increasingly important.

Sitharaman's North American mission therefore carries a larger message: India is not merely participating in the global economy; it is seeking a greater role in shaping the economic partnerships and institutions that will define the next decade.

India–Mauritius Maritime Partnership Enters a New Phase as Indian Ocean Security Takes Centre Stage

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan's Mauritius visit underscores India's growing maritime engagement with a key Indian Ocean partner

ndia and Mauritius are moving to deepen their maritime security partnership, with the Indian Ocean emerging as an increasingly important area of strategic cooperation between the two countries.

Indian Navy Chief Admiral Krishna Swaminathan called on Mauritian Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam on Wednesday during his four-day visit to Mauritius, which began on August 10. The discussions focused on strengthening bilateral maritime engagement and enhancing cooperation between the two countries.

Maritime Security at the Heart of the Partnership

The talks underline the importance India and Mauritius attach to maintaining a secure, stable and rules-based maritime environment in the Indian Ocean. Cooperation between the two countries extends across maritime surveillance, training, capacity building and operational coordination.

For Mauritius, which occupies a strategically significant position in the Indian Ocean, stronger maritime capabilities are crucial to protecting its extensive maritime interests and Exclusive Economic Zone.

Building Capabilities Through Partnership

India has emerged as an important partner in helping Mauritius strengthen its maritime capabilities. Training, professional exchanges, technical assistance and operational cooperation have become important components of the bilateral relationship.

The Indian Navy and Mauritius National Coast Guard have developed close working ties, creating opportunities for greater coordination in areas such as maritime domain awareness, surveillance and responses to emerging maritime challenges.

A Shared Vision for the Indian Ocean

The engagement also reflects India's broader approach towards the Indian Ocean, where partnerships with island nations form an important part of its regional strategy.

Through its MAHASAGAR vision—Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions—India has emphasised collaborative approaches to maritime security, economic development and capacity building with countries across the region.

Beyond Security: A Strategic Partnership

The growing maritime relationship is part of a much wider India-Mauritius partnership encompassing development cooperation, infrastructure, trade, education, technology and people-to-people ties.

Admiral Swaminathan's visit provides another opportunity to translate this longstanding relationship into deeper practical cooperation at sea. With maritime security becoming increasingly central to the stability and prosperity of the Indian Ocean, India and Mauritius are well positioned to strengthen their role as partners in building a safer and more resilient regional maritime environment.

India–Vietnam Deepen Maritime Security Partnership with Stronger Coast Guard Cooperation

India and Vietnam are taking another step towards strengthening maritime security cooperation, with their Coast Guards expanding practical engagement across search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine pollution response and professional capacity building.

The seventh High-Level Meeting between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Vietnam Coast Guard (VCG) provided a platform for both sides to review ongoing cooperation and identify areas for deeper operational coordination. The meeting was co-chaired by ICG Director General Paramesh Sivamani and VCG Vice Commandant Major General Luong Dinh Hung.

The discussions highlighted the importance of sustained cooperation at sea. Both Coast Guards reviewed professional exchanges and ship visits and reaffirmed the value of training programmes, sharing best practices and regular institutional interactions to strengthen mutual trust and interoperability.

The cooperation carries significance beyond bilateral maritime engagement. India and Vietnam share important interests in maintaining safe, secure and sustainable maritime spaces. Effective coordination between their maritime forces can strengthen responses to emergencies, support maritime law enforcement and improve preparedness for marine pollution incidents.

A key element of the partnership is the ability to work together effectively during real-world situations. Regular exercises and professional exchanges help both forces develop greater familiarity with procedures, communication and operational practices.

The next phase of this engagement will move from dialogue to action through the India–Vietnam Coast Guard Joint Exercise SAHYOG-HOPTAC, scheduled to take place at sea. The exercise is expected to provide an opportunity to enhance operational coordination, strengthen interoperability and exchange practical experience.

The evolving Coast Guard relationship reflects the broader depth of India–Vietnam strategic cooperation. It demonstrates how maritime partnerships can translate diplomatic understanding into practical capabilities that contribute to regional security.

As maritime challenges become increasingly interconnected, cooperation built around trust, preparedness and shared responsibility will remain vital.

For India and Vietnam, stronger Coast Guard cooperation is therefore not simply about securing their waters—it is about contributing together to a safer, more secure and sustainable maritime region.

From People's Prosperity to Global Power:

PM Modi's Pro-People, Pro-Growth Vision for a New India

At the ET World Leaders Forum, the Prime Minister presents India's transformation as a model where economic growth, development and empowerment of ordinary citizens move together

A New Economic Philosophy for a Changing World

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address at the Economic Times World Leaders Forum 2026 placed India's economic transformation at the centre of a rapidly changing global order, presenting a vision in which growth is not an end in itself but a means to expand opportunity, improve living standards and strengthen India's role in the world.

Speaking before global business leaders, policymakers and investors, Modi underlined that India's economic journey is increasingly being judged not merely by headline statistics, but by the changes taking place in the lives of ordinary citizens. His message was clear: the next phase of India's development must combine economic expansion with social empowerment, technological progress and greater opportunity.

Pro-People: Growth Must Reach the Common Citizen

A central theme running through Modi's address was the human dimension of economic development.

The Prime Minister pointed to the transformation of millions of Indians through better access to basic services, digital infrastructure, financial inclusion and government support. In his broader development narrative, poverty reduction is not simply about moving people above a statistical poverty line; it is about creating a new class of citizens with aspirations, purchasing power and confidence to participate in India's growth story.

This approach represents a shift from viewing the poor primarily as beneficiaries of welfare to treating them as participants in economic development.

The emphasis on empowerment is particularly significant for India's next stage of growth. Financial access, digital payments, infrastructure and entrepreneurship can give citizens the tools to become consumers, producers, workers and business owners in a rapidly expanding economy.

Pro-Growth: From Regulation to Opportunity

Another important message from Modi's address was the changing relationship between government and enterprise.

The Prime Minister contrasted India's earlier regulatory environment with a new policy approach designed to encourage production, investment and innovation. He highlighted the evolution from what he described as an era of "production-linked punishment" to policies that reward higher production and competitiveness through initiatives such as the Production-Linked Incentive framework.

The larger message is that India wants businesses to see the country not simply as a large consumer market, but as a place where they can manufacture, innovate, invest and build globally competitive enterprises.

That distinction matters. A growing domestic market can create demand, but a productive and competitive industrial ecosystem can create jobs, exports, technology and long-term economic strength.

Pro-Development: Infrastructure as a Force Multiplier

For Modi, development is also increasingly visible in India's physical and digital infrastructure.

Railways, highways, border connectivity, digital public infrastructure and other large-scale investments have become important instruments in reducing the distance between citizens and economic opportunity.

The Prime Minister has repeatedly framed infrastructure not merely as construction activity, but as a way of improving convenience and the quality of everyday life. This philosophy links economic development directly with the citizen experience.

The transformation of infrastructure therefore becomes part of a larger development equation: better connectivity can reduce logistics costs, open new markets, support manufacturing and allow smaller businesses and communities to participate more fully in economic activity.

Manufacturing India, Empowering India

Manufacturing occupied an important place in Modi's economic vision.

The Prime Minister has been pushing the idea of India becoming a major global manufacturing hub, supported by policy incentives, infrastructure, domestic demand and integration with international supply chains.

The growth of sectors such as electronics, defence production and advanced manufacturing is intended to create a deeper industrial base while reducing excessive dependence on imports.

The increase in India's defence exports, highlighted by Modi at the forum, was presented as an example of how policy changes and domestic capability can alter India's economic position.

The ambition goes beyond producing more goods. It is about building Indian companies and technologies capable of competing internationally.

The Digital Citizen at the Heart of Development

India's digital transformation is another pillar of the Prime Minister's development narrative.

Digital infrastructure has increasingly become an instrument for delivering financial services, public benefits and government services at scale. Modi's argument is that technology becomes meaningful when it reduces barriers for ordinary citizens.

This philosophy is particularly relevant as India moves deeper into the era of artificial intelligence.

The challenge for the next decade will not simply be whether India develops world-class AI capabilities, but whether AI, digital services and new technologies reach small businesses, farmers, workers and citizens outside the largest metropolitan centres.

That wider question is already being debated at the ET World Leaders Forum, where business leaders have stressed the need to take AI beyond experimentation and into practical applications across the economy.

Growth With a Global Responsibility

Modi's economic message also carries a wider diplomatic dimension.

India's rise, in his formulation, is not intended to be isolated from the global economy. A stronger India can become a larger contributor to global growth, manufacturing, technology, investment and supply-chain resilience.

This is particularly important at a time when geopolitical tensions, technological disruption and changing trade patterns are forcing businesses and governments to reconsider assumptions about globalisation.

The ET World Leaders Forum itself is taking place against this backdrop, with global leaders discussing AI, geopolitics, demographic change, investment and the changing architecture of the world economy.

India's proposition is therefore increasingly about partnership: attracting global capital and technology while building domestic capabilities and expanding India's contribution to global markets.

Reform Is Becoming a Continuous Process

Perhaps the most significant element of Modi's economic message is the idea that reform cannot be treated as a one-time event.

His broader reform philosophy has been expressed through the mantra of "Reform, Perform, Transform", with the government arguing that India's policy environment must continuously adapt to future opportunities and challenges.

The Prime Minister's earlier ET World Leaders Forum addresses have similarly linked reforms with manufacturing, employment, ease of living and ease of doing business.

The underlying message is straightforward: India cannot become a developed economy by relying on yesterday's policies.

From Fast Growth to Inclusive Prosperity

India's central challenge now is not simply maintaining high growth, but converting that growth into broad-based prosperity.

That means creating productive employment, strengthening manufacturing, expanding opportunities for young people, supporting entrepreneurs, improving human capital and ensuring that smaller cities and rural communities participate in the transformation.

This is where the three ideas — pro-people, pro-growth and pro-development — converge.
Pro-people policies give citizens opportunity and security.
Pro-growth policies create investment, enterprise and employment.
Pro-development policies build the infrastructure, institutions and capabilities that allow both to reinforce each other.

India's Next Chapter: Development With Ambition

Modi's ET World Leaders Forum message ultimately reflects an India that wants to move from being a large emerging economy to becoming a decisive force in the global economy.

The ambition is not limited to becoming larger in economic rankings. It is about building a country where citizens have greater opportunity, businesses have greater confidence, technology creates wider access and infrastructure connects every part of the economy.

For global investors and policymakers, the message is equally significant: India wants its rise to be understood not merely as a story of GDP growth, but as a transformation of people, institutions, industry and national capability.

The road to Viksit Bharat will therefore be measured not only by how quickly India grows, but by how widely the benefits of that growth are shared.

India Stands with Nepal as Devastating Floods Trigger Humanitarian Response

India has extended solidarity and humanitarian support to Nepal following devastating flash floods that have caused widespread destruction and loss of life across parts of the Himalayan nation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Nepalese Prime Minister Balendra Shah and conveyed his condolences over the loss of lives. Modi assured Shah that India stands with the people of Nepal during the crisis and is ready to provide all possible humanitarian assistance. He also said Indian teams are coordinating closely on rescue and relief efforts.

The disaster has severely affected areas including Rasuwa and neighbouring districts, with flooding damaging settlements, bridges and critical infrastructure. Hundreds of people have been reported missing, including Indian nationals and other foreign visitors caught in the affected region.

India's response has extended beyond the Prime Minister's outreach. The Government of India has dispatched 10 tonnes of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) supplies and essential medicines to support Nepal's emergency response. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reaffirmed that India stands with Nepal and its people during the difficult period.

President Droupadi Murmu also conveyed her deepest sympathies to Nepalese President Ramchandra Paudel and the people of Nepal, expressing India's solidarity and readiness to support Nepal's relief and rescue efforts. Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan expressed grief over the loss of lives, offered condolences to bereaved families and prayed for the safe and swift rescue of those still missing.

In Kathmandu, the Embassy of India has remained closely engaged with the Government of Nepal and relevant authorities on rescue and relief efforts, particularly concerning Indian nationals affected by the floods. The Embassy has also activated emergency contact numbers and WhatsApp assistance for Indians seeking information or support.

The coordinated response reflects the depth of India-Nepal relations, where humanitarian cooperation and people-to-people ties remain central to the partnership.

As rescue and relief operations continue, India's message is clear: Nepal will not face this difficult hour alone.

Galloping Beyond Borders: The Spirit of Sport, The Power of Culture

At the 6th World Nomad Games in Kyrgyzstan, India joins Central Asia in celebrating heritage, friendship and the timeless power of sport

From 31 August to 6 September 2026, Bishkek is becoming the stage where sport, culture and diplomacy converge. Kyrgyzstan is hosting the 6th World Nomad Games, an extraordinary international gathering that brings traditional sports and the rich cultural heritage of Central Asia into the global spotlight.

The World Nomad Games are unlike conventional sporting events. Their purpose extends beyond medals and competition. They celebrate the traditions of nomadic societies through horse riding, wrestling, indigenous games, music, crafts and cultural performances. In doing so, they transform ancient practices into a contemporary platform for international dialogue and friendship.

At the heart of the Games is the enduring spirit of the Central Asian steppes. Competitions such as Kok Boru, traditional wrestling, Toguz Korgool, Ordo and Mangala reflect skills and games that have been passed down through generations. What was once part of everyday community life is now being shared with an international audience, demonstrating that cultural heritage can remain dynamic and relevant in the modern world.

India's participation adds a distinctive dimension to this celebration. The country is represented by an 87-member contingent, comprising 73 athletes, 10 cultural representatives and four participants in the scientific programme. The composition of the delegation itself conveys an important message: India's engagement is not limited to sporting competition but embraces culture, traditional knowledge and intellectual exchange.

India and Central Asia share a relationship that stretches back centuries. Trade routes connected the Indian subcontinent with Central Asia, carrying not only goods but also ideas, religions, art, languages and traditions. The historical interaction between the two regions created a rich tapestry of civilisational exchange. The World Nomad Games provide a modern platform to rediscover and reinforce these connections.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence at the opening ceremony in Bishkek further elevates the significance of the occasion. His participation reflects India's commitment to deepening its multifaceted engagement with Kyrgyzstan and the wider Central Asian region. His visit, taking place alongside the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit, brings together two important dimensions of India's foreign policy: strategic engagement and cultural diplomacy.

This is where the true power of sports diplomacy becomes evident. Sport creates a language that transcends political boundaries. Athletes may arrive as competitors, but they leave with new friendships, experiences and a deeper understanding of other cultures. A sporting arena can therefore become an informal diplomatic space where trust is built naturally, away from the formality of negotiating tables.

For India, the World Nomad Games also offer an opportunity to showcase its own diverse sporting and cultural traditions while learning from the heritage of Central Asia. India's indigenous games, martial traditions, performing arts and traditional knowledge fit naturally into the broader conversation about preserving cultural identity in a rapidly changing world.

The significance of Bishkek 2026 therefore goes well beyond the final medal tally. The Games demonstrate how sport can preserve heritage, connect societies and create new avenues for international cooperation.

As horses race across the arenas and athletes compete under their national flags, a larger diplomatic message is taking shape: borders may divide countries, but sport, culture and shared heritage can bring people together.X

For India and Central Asia, the World Nomad Games are not simply a sporting rendezvous. They are a celebration of an enduring civilisational connection – and a powerful reminder that sometimes, the most meaningful diplomacy begins not at the negotiating table, but on the playing field.

PM Modi in Central Asia: India's Strategic Push from Tashkent to Bishkek

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's four-day visit to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan underlines India's growing engagement with Central Asia, as the 26th SCO Summit puts security, connectivity and opportunity at the centre of regional cooperation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his four-day visit to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday after a diplomatic journey that combined bilateral engagement with participation in the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Bishkek.

The visit came at a significant moment for the Eurasian region. The SCO is completing 25 years of its journey, while its member states are facing a rapidly changing geopolitical, economic and security environment.

At Bishkek, Modi joined Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin and other SCO leaders for discussions on regional security, connectivity, economic cooperation and the organisation's future.

For India, the visit was not simply about attending a multilateral summit. It was an opportunity to strengthen relations with Central Asia and reinforce New Delhi's role as an independent and constructive voice in Eurasian affairs.

Central Asia's Growing Importance for India

Central Asia has become increasingly important to India's strategic thinking.

Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan occupy important geographical positions connecting different parts of Eurasia. The region offers opportunities in trade, energy, critical minerals, technology, education and investment.

At the same time, developments in Central Asia have implications for India's security interests, particularly because of the region's proximity to Afghanistan and other areas affected by terrorism and instability.

India's objective is therefore to build relationships that extend beyond political dialogue and create stronger economic and institutional partnerships.

Modi's visit to Uzbekistan highlighted the importance India attaches to this bilateral relationship, while his presence in Bishkek demonstrated the wider regional dimension of New Delhi's Central Asian policy.

Bishkek and the SCO's Next Chapter

The 26th SCO Summit carried particular significance because the organisation was marking its 25th anniversary.

Over the past quarter-century, the SCO has developed from a regional security grouping into a broader platform for cooperation on security, trade, connectivity, technology, culture and development.

India became a full member of the SCO in 2017 and has since sought to contribute to the organisation while protecting its own strategic interests.

At Bishkek, Modi emphasised that the SCO should move beyond broad visions and work towards measurable outcomes.

His message centred on three pillars: security, connectivity and opportunity.

Security: The Foundation of Stability

Security remains a central concern for India within the SCO.

Terrorism, extremism, organised crime and other cross-border threats continue to challenge the wider region. Such problems cannot be addressed effectively by one country acting alone.

India has consistently advocated stronger international cooperation against terrorism and has argued that there should be no distinction between terrorist organisations based on political considerations.

For New Delhi, regional stability is closely linked to economic development.

A secure region is more capable of attracting investment, expanding trade, developing tourism and strengthening people-to-people relations.

The SCO can play a valuable role by improving cooperation among its members in counter-terrorism, intelligence-sharing and addressing the networks that support extremist activities.

Connectivity: A Key to Greater Trade

Connectivity was the second major element of Modi's message.

India's relations with Central Asia have considerable economic potential, but geography remains a major obstacle. Better transport links, logistics systems, digital networks and commercial routes are essential to increasing trade.

For India, improved connectivity can provide greater access to Central Asian markets while allowing the region to benefit from India's large economy and capabilities in technology, pharmaceuticals, healthcare and services.

Connectivity, however, is also a matter of strategic trust.

India has emphasised that regional infrastructure cooperation should respect sovereignty and territorial integrity and should deliver benefits to all participating countries.

The aim is to create reliable economic links rather than simply build infrastructure.

Opportunity: Making Cooperation People-Centred

The third pillar—opportunity—adds a broader economic and human dimension to India's approach.

Central Asian countries have significant potential in energy, minerals, agriculture and emerging industries. India has strengths in information technology, digital services, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, education and entrepreneurship.

These areas offer considerable scope for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Greater interaction between businesses, universities, researchers and young entrepreneurs can give regional cooperation a stronger foundation.

Diplomacy becomes more meaningful when agreements at the political level translate into opportunities for citizens.

Modi, Xi and Putin: Dialogue Amid Differences

The presence of Modi, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin at the Bishkek summit highlighted the complicated geopolitical environment surrounding the SCO.

India's relationship with Russia remains strategically important, while its relationship with China combines economic engagement with significant strategic differences.

At the 26th SCO Summit in Bishkek, held as the organisation marked its 25th anniversary, India presented a straightforward vision for regional cooperation: security to strengthen stability, connectivity to bring economies closer and opportunity to ensure that cooperation benefits people.

The SCO provides a platform where countries with different interests can continue dialogue.

Modi's engagement with both Xi and Putin demonstrated India's willingness to maintain communication with major powers while preserving its strategic autonomy.

For New Delhi, strategic autonomy means the ability to cooperate with different countries without becoming tied to a single geopolitical bloc.

Peace and Diplomacy in a Divided World

The war in Ukraine also remained part of the wider diplomatic context.

During his meeting with Putin, Modi reiterated India's preference for peace and dialogue and called for an end to the conflict.

India has consistently supported diplomatic efforts to resolve international disputes.

Its approach reflects an attempt to maintain important strategic relationships while encouraging peaceful solutions to major global crises.

The Joint Declaration and the Test of Implementation

The SCO leaders adopted a joint declaration at the Bishkek summit, outlining areas of common understanding and cooperation.

However, the value of any declaration ultimately depends on implementation.

The SCO has the geographical reach and political weight to influence Eurasian affairs. Its credibility will increasingly depend on whether it can deliver practical progress in security, trade, connectivity, technology and economic cooperation.

This makes Modi's call for measurable outcomes especially relevant.

The next phase of the SCO should be judged not simply by the number of declarations adopted, but by the tangible results achieved.

India's Strategic Road Ahead

Modi's four-day Central Asian journey has reinforced India's commitment to deeper engagement with the region.

For New Delhi, Central Asia represents an important combination of strategic location, economic potential and security relevance.

The road ahead will require sustained diplomacy, stronger commercial links, better connectivity and deeper institutional cooperation.

India's challenge is to convert political goodwill into lasting economic and strategic partnerships.

Conclusion

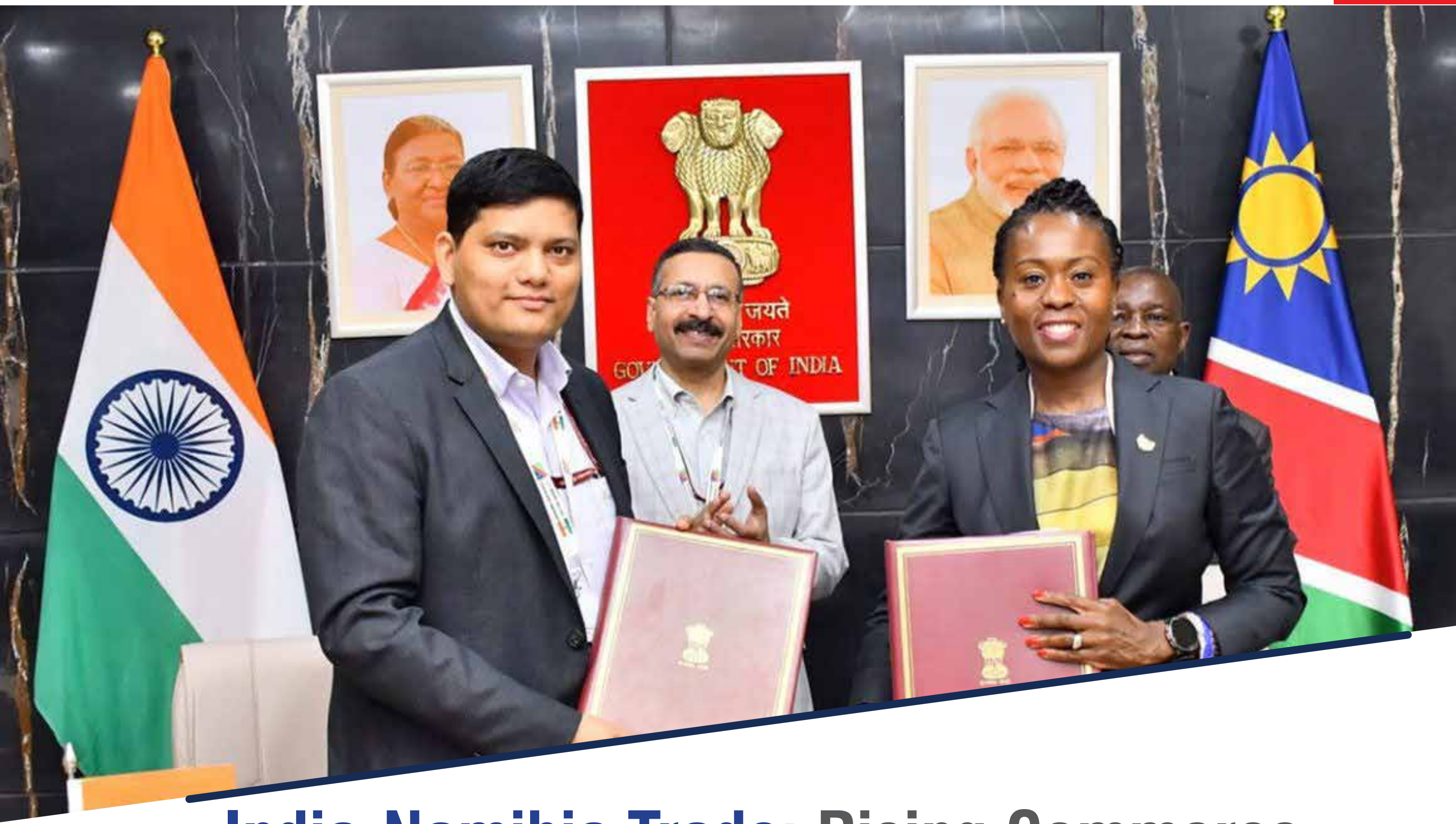
Prime Minister Modi's visit to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan has placed Central Asia firmly within the broader framework of India's international engagement.

At the 26th SCO Summit in Bishkek, held as the organisation marked its 25th anniversary, India presented a straightforward vision for regional cooperation: security to strengthen stability, connectivity to bring economies closer and opportunity to ensure that cooperation benefits people.

The joint declaration adopted by the SCO leaders provides a framework, but implementation will determine its real significance.

For India, the message from Bishkek is clear. New Delhi wants to deepen its Central Asian partnerships, contribute to a more effective SCO and maintain an independent voice in the evolving Eurasian order.

The four-day visit has concluded, but the larger task now is to turn diplomatic commitments into stronger partnerships and measurable results.



India-Namibia Trade: Rising Commerce Opens New Export-Import Opportunities

India and Namibia are looking to unlock greater opportunities for exporters, importers and businesses as the two countries seek to expand their trade and economic partnership.

The two sides discussed ways to widen commercial engagement during the Fourth Session of the India-Namibia Joint Trade Committee (JTC) held in New Delhi on August 10 and 11. The meeting concluded with the signing of the Agreed Minutes by representatives of both countries.

Bilateral merchandise trade increased to USD 592.94 million in 2025-26, up from USD 568.40 million in the previous financial year. The rise points to growing commercial interaction and provides a stronger base for expanding two-way trade.

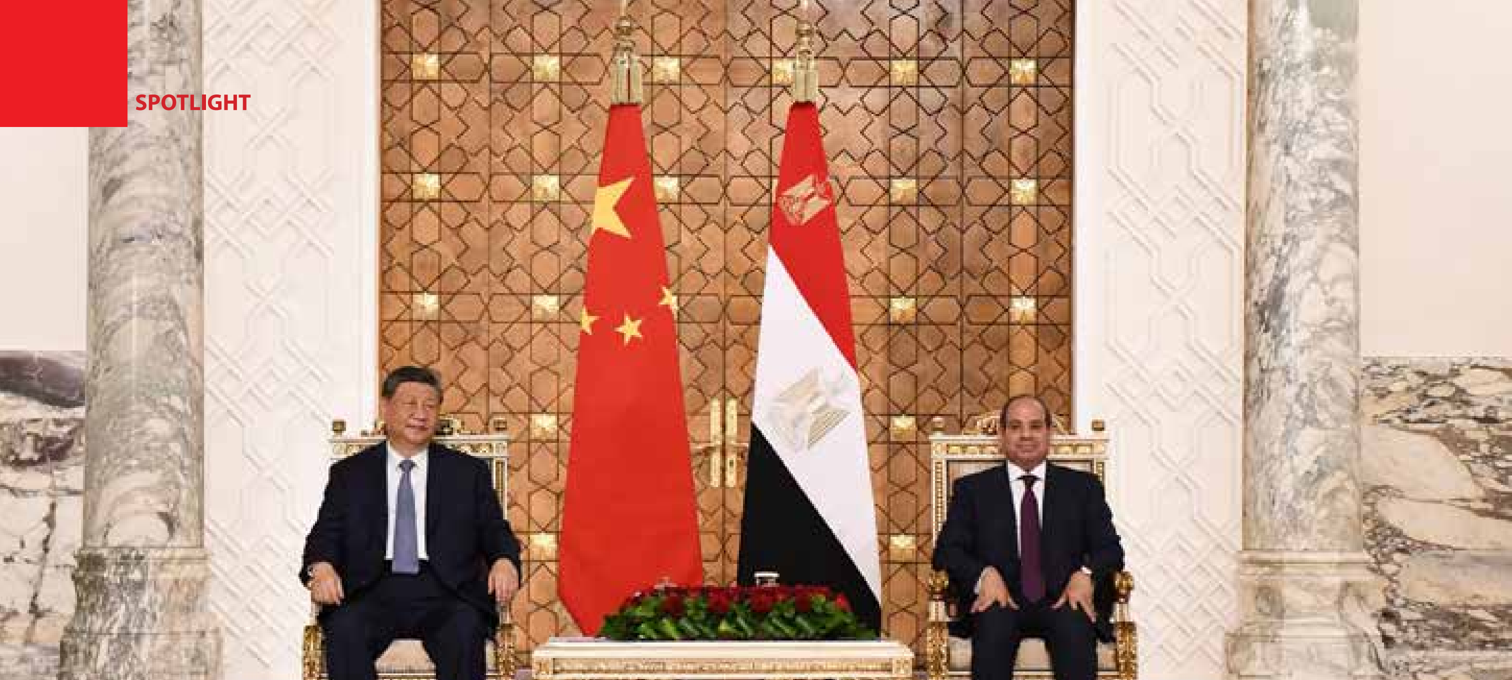
The JTC meeting is particularly significant for businesses seeking to explore new export and import opportunities between the two markets. Greater institutional engagement could help companies identify products with demand in each country, build supply-chain partnerships and explore new investment possibilities.

India's delegation was led by Amit Kumar, Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce, while Namibia was represented by Ndiitah Nghipondoka-Robiati, Executive Director in the Ministry of International Relations and Trade. Yashvir Singh, Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce, delivered the inaugural address.

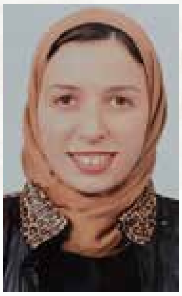
For Indian businesses, Namibia can serve as an important gateway to the wider southern African market, while Namibian exporters can explore India's large and diverse consumer and industrial markets.

The expanding trade relationship also creates scope for cooperation beyond conventional merchandise trade, including investment, value-added processing, technology, logistics and business-to-business partnerships.

With trade approaching the USD 600 million milestone, both countries have an opportunity to move towards a broader and more diversified commercial relationship. Continued dialogue through the JTC could help reduce barriers, connect businesses and turn emerging areas of demand into concrete export-import opportunities.



Xi Jinping's Historic Visit to Egypt:
Forging a New Chapter in a 70-Year Partnership



About the Author:
NESSMA YOUSSEF
is an Egyptian journalist with a specialization in diplomacy and foreign affairs. She serves as a senior editor at the prominent Egyptian daily, and is also known for her expertise as a diplomatic correspondent and writer, focusing on international relations and global tourism.

Xi Jinping's state visit to Cairo marked seven decades of diplomatic ties while setting out an ambitious agenda spanning industry, technology, trade, infrastructure and coordination across the Global South.

When Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Cairo on September 1 for a state visit to Egypt, the occasion carried significance beyond the ceremonial celebration of an established diplomatic relationship. Seventy years after Egypt became the first Arab and African country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1956, the two countries are seeking to take their partnership into a new phase—one increasingly defined by industrial localization, advanced technology, investment and coordination on global affairs.

Xi's September 1–2 visit, held against the backdrop of the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations, brought together two countries that have progressively expanded their relationship from political and diplomatic cooperation into a broad strategic partnership.

That partnership was elevated to the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2014. A decade later, Cairo and Beijing are now seeking to give that framework greater economic and technological depth while strengthening their coordination on regional and international issues.

From diplomatic ties to strategic interdependence

The history of Egypt-China relations has given the two countries a distinctive position within the Arab-African-Asian diplomatic landscape.

Egypt was not only the first Arab country to recognize the People's Republic of China, but also the first African country to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing. Over seven decades, the relationship has evolved alongside major changes in the international system, with both sides emphasizing principles of mutual respect, non-interference, mutual benefit and support for developing countries.

During Xi's visit, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi described the anniversary as an opportunity to look at how the relationship could respond to a changing international environment. He highlighted the progress achieved since the establishment of the comprehensive strategic partnership in 2014, particularly in areas where both countries see localization of industry and technology transfer as priorities.

The emphasis is significant. Rather than focusing exclusively on expanding trade volumes, the current agenda increasingly centers on what Egypt and China can build together.

The next phase: manufacturing, technology and the Suez Canal

One of the most consequential announcements during the visit was the agreement to launch the third phase of expansions of the China-Egypt industrial zone in the Suez Economic Zone.

The new phase is expected to open additional space for cooperation in strategic sectors, including renewable energy, automotive manufacturing, textiles and chemical fibers.

The development reinforces the role that the Suez Canal Economic Zone has come to play in Egypt's economic strategy. Positioned at the intersection of major maritime trade routes and linking Asian, African and European markets, the zone is being developed as more than a logistics hub. Cairo increasingly sees it as a platform for manufacturing, investment and exports.

For Chinese companies, Egypt offers a combination of geographic location, access to regional markets and an expanding industrial infrastructure. For Egypt, deeper Chinese investment can support its objective of increasing domestic manufacturing capacity, attracting technology-intensive industries and integrating local production into international supply chains.

The bilateral agenda is also moving toward more technologically advanced sectors.

The joint statement issued following the visit identified areas ranging from electric vehicles, shipbuilding and renewable energy to cloud computing, data centers, semiconductors, cybersecurity, space applications and remote sensing.

Such areas represent a significant expansion from the traditional focus on infrastructure and construction. They also reflect the growing importance of technological capabilities in shaping economic competitiveness.

Beyond infrastructure: a new industrial equation

Chinese participation in major Egyptian infrastructure, transportation and energy projects has been one of the most visible dimensions of bilateral economic cooperation.

The new agenda, however, points toward a broader economic equation in which Egypt seeks to benefit not only from Chinese capital and infrastructure expertise, but also from technology transfer, skills development and localized production.

The two governments have agreed to deepen the alignment between Egypt Vision 2030 and China's Belt and Road

Initiative, with the stated objective of helping Egypt develop into a regional hub for industry, logistics, clean energy and the digital economy.

This alignment could give the bilateral relationship a more strategic economic dimension.

Instead of simply connecting Chinese companies to the Egyptian market, the model envisages Egypt as a potential bridge between Asia, Africa and Europe, with Chinese investment contributing to production and services that can serve markets beyond Egypt itself.

The focus on electric vehicles, renewable-energy equipment, desalination, advanced technologies and critical-mineral supply chains suggests that the partnership is also being shaped by global shifts in energy, manufacturing and technology.

Trade and finance: seeking a more balanced relationship

Trade remains another important component of the relationship, although both sides acknowledge the need for greater balance.

During the visit, the two countries agreed to encourage wider use of local currencies in trade and investment and welcomed the renewal and expansion of their currency-swap arrangement.

The two governments also agreed to encourage greater access for Egyptian products to the Chinese market and to continue consultations on the Early Harvest Agreement.

These measures point to a broader effort to make bilateral economic relations more resilient and diversified.

For Egypt, expanding exports to China remains an important objective in addressing trade imbalances. For China, Egypt represents a strategically located market and production base at a time when Beijing continues to strengthen economic links with Africa and the wider developing world.

The financial dimension is also gaining importance, with both sides highlighting cooperation involving Chinese panda bonds, local-currency arrangements and financing for infrastructure, industrial investment and green and digital transformation.

Tourism and culture: the human dimension

Economic cooperation was only one part of the agenda.

The visit also highlighted tourism, culture, education, scientific research and youth exchanges as important components of the relationship.

China expressed support for increasing the number of Chinese tourists visiting Egypt, as well as cooperation in hotel development and resort management.

The cultural dimension was particularly visible when President Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, visited the Grand Egyptian Museum alongside President El-Sisi and his wife, Entissar El-Sisi.

The visit offered a symbolic meeting between two ancient civilizations. Xi expressed his admiration for Egyptian civilization and praised the Grand Egyptian Museum as a major cultural institution reflecting the importance of Egypt's contribution to human history.

The symbolism was particularly relevant in a year marking not only seven decades of diplomatic relations but also China's designation of 2026 as the Year of China-Africa Cultural and Human Exchanges.

For both countries, cultural diplomacy complements the expanding economic relationship by creating a broader foundation for people-to-people ties.

Egypt and China on the regional stage

The significance of Xi's visit also extended well beyond bilateral relations.

Cairo and Beijing used the occasion to reinforce their political coordination on major regional and international issues, including the conflicts and crises affecting the Middle East and Africa.

The two sides reiterated support for diplomatic solutions to international disputes and emphasized the importance of de-escalation in the Middle East.

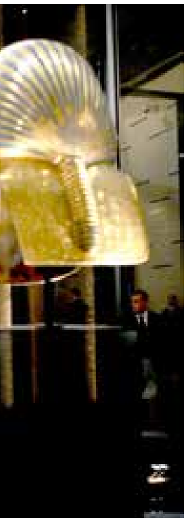
The Palestinian issue occupied a prominent place in their discussions. Both countries reaffirmed support for a two-state solution, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the rejection of plans to forcibly displace Palestinians.

They also called for maintaining the ceasefire in Gaza and facilitating the unrestricted delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The two governments discussed the security of the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa, stressing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of regional states and the importance of ensuring freedom of navigation and international trade.

They also expressed support for efforts to end the war in Sudan and launch an inclusive political process under Sudanese ownership.

These positions highlight an important feature of the Egypt-



China relationship: bilateral cooperation is increasingly intertwined with their respective roles in regional diplomacy.

A partnership shaped by the Global South

Perhaps the broader strategic message of the visit lies in the two countries' shared emphasis on the role of developing countries in the international system.

Egypt and China agreed to strengthen coordination in international organizations and forums, including the United Nations, BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, while cooperating on issues such as climate change, food security, energy and the digital economy.

The two sides also called for greater representation of developing countries in international decision-making and reform of global institutions, including international financial institutions.

For Cairo, closer coordination with Beijing offers an additional avenue for pursuing a foreign policy centered on strategic balance and diversified international partnerships.

For Beijing, Egypt occupies a distinctive position as a major Arab and African state, a key player in the Middle East and a country with longstanding relationships across the developing world.

The two governments explicitly described their comprehensive strategic partnership as a model of cooperation between major developing countries based on mutual respect, non-interference, mutual benefit and common development.

Seventy years on, looking toward the next seventy

The significance of Xi Jinping's visit ultimately lies not only in the agreements signed or the ceremonies held, but in the direction they reveal.

After seven decades of diplomatic relations, Egypt and China are attempting to move their partnership beyond traditional infrastructure and trade toward a more complex relationship encompassing advanced technology, industrial localization, renewable energy, digital transformation, finance, tourism and high-value manufacturing.

The third phase of the China-Egypt industrial zone, the expansion of cooperation in emerging technologies, renewed financial arrangements and the institutionalization of cooperation across multiple sectors all point toward a relationship that is becoming increasingly multidimensional.

At the same time, their coordination on Palestine, the Red Sea, Sudan, the Horn of Africa and reform of the international system demonstrates that the partnership is not confined to economics.

Egypt and China are entering the next phase of their relationship at a moment when the global order is undergoing profound change. Their shared emphasis on sovereignty, development, multilateralism and a stronger voice for the Global South provides the political foundation for deeper cooperation.

Seventy years after Cairo and Beijing established diplomatic ties, the relationship is therefore no longer defined simply by the history that brought them together. Increasingly, it is being shaped by a shared calculation about where their economic interests, strategic priorities and visions of the international system can converge.

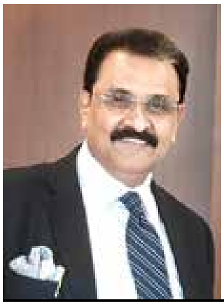
The challenge now is to translate that convergence into concrete projects, greater two-way trade, technology transfer and sustainable investment.

If that happens, the anniversary year may come to be remembered not merely as a celebration of seven decades of friendship, but as the point at which Egypt-China relations began a new chapter.

From People's Prosperity to Global Power:

PM Modi's Pro-People, Pro-Growth Vision for a New India

Great powers are not built abroad alone; they are first built through the prosperity, capability and confidence of their people.



About the Author:
PROF. DR P K RAJPUT
MBA, PHD, FIASST, FIAECT, FGCPR(USA), MLESM
- *Former Sr. Vice President, Cadila Pharma Ltd., Ahmedabad*
- *Director of the Board, CliMed Research Solutions, India*
- *Chairman of the Board of Studies at Scinova International Frontier Research, UK*
- *Life Member of Leadership Excellence Harvard Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts (USA)*

India's rise as a global power is being built not only in diplomatic capitals, but in the aspirations of millions, expanding infrastructure, a strengthening manufacturing base and the digital architecture transforming everyday economic life.

The central proposition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development vision is compelling: **prosperity at home is the pathway to power abroad.**

As India advances towards ***Viksit Bharat 2047,*** the ambition extends beyond higher GDP rankings. It is about creating an economy where growth generates opportunity, opportunity enables empowerment, empowerment strengthens productivity, and national capability translates into global influence.

The question is no longer simply whether India can grow, but whether it can sustain rapid growth while expanding prosperity, opportunity and capability across a nation of extraordinary scale.

India's pro-people, pro-growth approach seeks to make welfare, infrastructure, manufacturing, technology and economic expansion mutually reinforcing.

Ultimately, the success of this transformation will be measured by **productivity, employment, human capability and quality of life.**

That is the journey; from **people's prosperity to global power.**

Beyond Growth Numbers: Building National Capability

India's economic momentum has positioned it among the world's most significant growth stories, even as geopolitical tensions, supply-chain disruptions and global uncertainty continue to challenge the international economy. The first quarter of FY 2026–27 recorded **7.8%** growth, while gross fixed capital formation expanded by **11.9%,** underscoring the importance of investment in sustaining momentum.

Yet India's transformation cannot be measured by quarterly statistics alone. The more important question is: **What kind of economy is India building?**

The answer increasingly lies in diversification. India is developing multiple engines of growth; domestic consumption, infrastructure, manufacturing, services, entrepreneurship, technology and exports. This broader economic base can strengthen resilience while reducing dependence on any single sector or external market.

Public investment in roads, railways, airports, logistics, energy and digital infrastructure is designed not only to build assets, but also to reduce business costs, attract private investment and enhance competitiveness.

Ultimately, growth must create opportunity. India's objective is not simply a larger economy, but a more capable, productive and empowered society; where prosperity strengthens national capability.

From Welfare to Empowerment

The defining feature of India's pro-people development approach is its growing emphasis on empowerment rather than assistance alone. Welfare can address immediate deprivation; empowerment builds lasting capability, choice and economic participation.

Over the past decade, financial inclusion, basic services and digital connectivity have increasingly worked together to expand citizens' opportunities. Bank accounts connect households to the formal economy; digital identity and direct benefit transfers improve access and delivery; electricity, housing, sanitation and roads strengthen dignity, productivity and connectivity; while skills and digital access expand employability and economic opportunity.

Individually, these interventions may appear distinct. Collectively, they represent architecture of economic inclusion, gradually shifting citizens from being recipients of support to active participants in development.

Initiatives such as **Jan Dhan, Aadhaar** and mobile connectivity have helped integrate millions into formal financial and digital systems, strengthening the foundations for broader economic participation. The emergence of a growing aspirational middle class further reflects this transition from deprivation towards opportunity.

Women-led development adds another dimension. Initiatives such as ***Lakhpati Didi*** signal a shift from viewing women primarily as beneficiaries to recognising them as entrepreneurs, income earners and creators of prosperity.

The deeper objective is clear: not merely better living conditions, but greater economic choices, capability and dignity for every citizen.

Infrastructure: The Physical Architecture of a Rising India

Infrastructure has become one of the most visible foundations of India's transformation. Expressways, railways, airports, ports, industrial corridors and digital networks are not merely physical assets; they are economic multipliers that reduce logistics costs, connect producers with markets, create employment opportunities and integrate regions into national and global supply chains.

India's expanding transport infrastructure is therefore central to its competitiveness. Efficient connectivity enables factories to access raw materials, energy and markets, while modern ports, railways and airports facilitate trade, investment, tourism and regional growth.

The ***PM Gati Shakti*** framework reflects a shift towards integrated infrastructure planning, bringing greater coordination across sectors and ministries rather than developing projects in isolation.

Infrastructure also has a powerful social dimension. Better roads connect rural communities with schools, hospitals and markets; electricity and irrigation support productivity; and digital connectivity opens access to education, finance and the knowledge economy.

For businesses, reliable infrastructure creates confidence, encourages investment and enables industrial expansion.

For citizens, it expands opportunity and mobility.

For India, infrastructure is therefore not simply about building faster or bigger—it is about building the economic arteries of a future global power.

Manufacturing: From Market Power to Production Power

India's vast domestic market has long been a major economic advantage. The next strategic ambition is to convert **market strength into production strength,** making manufacturing a pillar of employment, exports, technology, supply-chain resilience and strategic autonomy.

Make in India marked an important shift in national ambition. India seeks not merely to consume what the world produces, but increasingly to **produce, design, innovate and export** for global markets.

As companies diversify supply chains and economies seek alternatives to concentrated production centres, India has an opportunity to emerge as a trusted manufacturing and technology partner. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) framework has become an important instrument in encouraging investment, expanding production and strengthening domestic industrial capabilities across sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobiles and telecommunications.

The transformation of electronics manufacturing is particularly significant, demonstrating how policy, investment, market scale and global demand can converge.

However, the next phase must move beyond assembly towards greater domestic value addition, component ecosystems, R&D and stronger university to industry collaboration.

The ambition should evolve from ***Made in India*** towards **Designed in India, Developed in India and Innovated in India.**

India's semiconductor push further reflects the strategic importance of technology and economic security.

A manufacturing renaissance combining scale, skills, technology and innovation could become a powerful engine of long-term prosperity and global competitiveness.

MSMEs: Democratising Growth and Entrepreneurship

India's transformation will not be built by large corporations alone. Millions of micro, small and medium enterprises will determine whether growth becomes geographically and socially inclusive.

MSMEs represent the distributed strength of the Indian economy as they exist across industrial towns, districts and smaller cities.

Digital technology is expanding their possibilities through digital payments; cloud-based tools are ready to improve management.

Digital records can support formalisation and access to finance and technology can help smaller manufacturers participate in sophisticated supply chains.

The next challenge is to help these enterprises scale.

They need better access to capital, technology, skills, professional management and international markets.

India must also ensure that the benefits of Industry 4.0 do not remain concentrated among the largest companies.

Tier-II and Tier-III industrial clusters must become part of the country's technological transformation.

The real democratisation of prosperity will occur when innovation becomes geographically distributed and entrepreneurship is not limited by location.

Digital Transformation: The Great Development Multiplier

Perhaps the most distinctive dimension of India's development story is its remarkable digital transformation. **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** is reshaping the relationship between citizens, businesses and the state, creating platforms capable of delivering services at unprecedented scale.

The combination of digital identity, financial inclusion, mobile connectivity and instant payments has expanded economic participation. Citizens can access benefits directly, small businesses can accept digital payments, entrepreneurs can reach wider markets, startups can build innovative services, and patients can access healthcare remotely.

Platforms such as ***e-Sanjeevani*** and the ***Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)*** demonstrate how technology can expand access rather than simply digitise existing systems. In this sense, digital infrastructure has become a powerful development multiplier.

The next phase will be even more consequential. Artificial intelligence, automation, cloud computing, cyber-security and advanced data systems will increasingly shape productivity, innovation and global competitiveness.

India's large technology workforce, expanding digital ecosystem and vast domestic market provide significant advantages. Yet inclusion must remain central.

Rural connectivity, digital skills, cyber-security and responsible data governance will be essential.

The true measure of India's digital transformation will not be the sophistication of its technology, but how widely its benefits reach.

Youth and Human Capital: The Decisive Strategic Asset

India's demographic dividend can become a powerful engine of national development; but demographics alone do not create prosperity. Human capability does.

As artificial intelligence, automation and digital technologies reshape the future of work, young Indians will need more than academic qualifications. Technological literacy, creativity, critical thinking, communication, adaptability, leadership and emotional intelligence will increasingly define success.

India's universities and skill-development institutions must therefore strengthen industry linkages, align education with emerging opportunities and become centres of research and innovation. Professionals must embrace lifelong learning and the ability to learn, unlearn and relearn.

Human capital is not merely a social-policy priority; it is a strategic national asset. India's global competitiveness will ultimately depend on a workforce capable of operating, improving and innovating in a technology-driven economy.

From Domestic Prosperity to Global Power

India's domestic transformation and global rise are increasingly interconnected. A stronger economy enhances diplomatic influence and strategic confidence, while manufacturing, technology and modern infrastructure strengthen competitiveness, self-reliance and global relevance. Human capital drives innovation and productivity, while resilient supply chains and diversified resources reduce strategic vulnerabilities.

Foreign policy is therefore increasingly intertwined with economic and technological priorities. Strategic autonomy in the twenty-first century means economic resilience as much as diplomatic independence. India's objective is not isolation, but greater resilience through deeper global engagement and diversified partnerships.

Yet ambition must be matched by execution. The critical challenge is ensuring that rapid growth generates sufficient quality employment, strengthens skills, expands manufacturing and improves productivity. Infrastructure must be efficiently implemented, cities must become more sustainable, and climate, water and environmental pressures must remain central to long-term planning.

India's transformation must also be broad-based thus reaching rural communities, smaller cities, MSMEs and diverse social groups rather than remaining concentrated in major urban centres or large corporations.

Ultimately, India's global influence will depend on the strength, resilience and inclusiveness it builds at home. Global power begins with domestic capability.

Conclusion: Prosperity at Home, Power Abroad

India's journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047 represents one of the most consequential national transformation projects of the twenty-first century. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, economic growth, social empowerment, infrastructure, manufacturing and digital transformation are increasingly converging into a broader vision of national capability.

The strength of this approach lies in its interconnectedness: growth creates resources; resources build infrastructure and human capability; infrastructure creates opportunity; opportunity fuels enterprise; enterprise generates employment and prosperity; and prosperity strengthens national confidence and global influence.

India's rise, therefore, is about more than becoming a larger economy. It is about transforming its vast population into productive human capital, its market into manufacturing strength, and its technological capabilities into inclusive growth and international influence.

As India approaches 2047, the defining measure will not simply be how much it has grown, but how capable, productive, innovative, inclusive and resilient it has become.

Ultimately, a nation's global stature is rooted in the strength and confidence of its people.

That is the promise of New India: prosperity that empowers, growth that includes and national capability that earns India a defining place in the global order.

"India's journey towards global power will be measured not merely by the scale of its economy, but by the strength of its people and the value it brings to the world."

Addis Ababa to Host UN Permanent Forum

on People of African Descent in 2027, for the First Time in Africa

About the Author:
GEBREEGZIABHER TADELE (Usafi's Public Media Officer For African Affairs)
is a journalist from Tigray, Ethiopia, with more than 12 years of experience in journalism and media. He has received professional training and certificates from leading international media organizations and academic institutions, including CNN Academy, AFP, Reuters, and NBCU Academy.

He is also engaged in global peace and advocacy initiatives and has received recognition and certifications from organizations including the Institute for Economics & Peace, Global Peace Chain, International Diplomats, and United Leaders Global.

Addis Ababa is set to make history in 2027 as the host city of the sixth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent (PFPAD), marking the first time the high-level forum will be held on the African continent.

The announcement has generated enthusiasm among advocates, civil society organizations and African stakeholders who see the decision as an important opportunity to strengthen Africa's role in global discussions concerning people of African descent.

The decision to hold the 2027 session in Addis Ababa was made during the Forum's fifth session, held from 14–17 April 2026 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The upcoming session is expected to bring together representatives of governments, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations and people of African descent from around the world. The Forum serves as a consultative mechanism focused on improving the safety, quality of life and livelihoods of people of African descent, while providing advice and recommendations to the UN Human Rights Council.

A Historic Moment for Africa

Hosting the Permanent Forum in Addis Ababa represents more than a change of venue. It provides an opportunity for African institutions, communities and young people to engage more directly with international conversations on

> *Hosting the Permanent Forum in Addis Ababa represents more than a change of venue. It provides an opportunity for African institutions, communities and young people to engage more directly with international conversations on human rights, equality, development and the rights of people of African descent.*

human rights, equality, development and the rights of people of African descent.

Addis Ababa, home to the African Union and one of the continent's major diplomatic centers, offers a strategic setting for strengthening connections between African institutions and international stakeholders.

For Africa's youth, the event could also provide an important platform to move from participation to meaningful engagement.

Africa is the world's youngest continent, yet young people are often positioned primarily as beneficiaries of development initiatives rather than as partners in designing and implementing solutions.

The 2027 PFPAD session could help change that dynamic by creating opportunities for young Africans to engage with policymakers, international organizations, civil society, development institutions and other stakeholders.

Youth Participation Must Go Beyond Attendance

Professor Solomon Belette the founder of US Africa Initiatives (USAFI) LLC and president of USAFI Impact, the non profit arm USAFI, states that the significance of hosting an international platform in Africa should be measured not simply by where the meeting takes place, but by who participates and whose voices influence the discussions.

"Young people should not be invited simply to fill seats in conference rooms. They should be given meaningful opportunities to speak, challenge ideas, build partnerships, and present solutions," Solomon said.

Nurhussein Ali, a member of the USAFI team, similarly emphasized the importance of creating genuine opportunities for African youth.

"When Africa's youth are given a real platform, we do more than participate in the conversation—we bring the energy, ideas, and solutions needed to move that conversation forward."

Helena Alemu, USAFI chief of Youth and women Initiatives(YAWI) says that "PFPAD 2027 will provide a platform for different constituencies in Africa that USAFI is working with to provide meaningful input in helping shape the issues and priorities for constructive action."

USAFI says the Forum could help establish stronger connections between African youth and policymakers, development institutions, civil society, private-sector leaders and international partners.

Beyond the Conference

Advocates say the long-term impact of the 2027 Forum should extend beyond the conference itself.

They are calling for the event to generate lasting youth networks, partnerships, policy engagement and practical opportunities for young Africans.

The hosting of PFPAD in Addis Ababa could also strengthen continental ownership of discussions affecting people of African descent and reinforce Africa's contribution to international efforts addressing discrimination, inequality and human rights.

The exact dates, venue arrangements, registration procedures and participation guidelines for the 2027 session are expected to be confirmed through official announcements closer to the event.

As preparations move forward, stakeholders are urging organizers and participating institutions to ensure that African youth and civil society are given meaningful opportunities to contribute.

From Addis Ababa, the message could be clear: Africa's youth are not waiting for the future - they are helping build it now.

India and the Global South: From Voice to Influence

About the Author:
PROF. (DR.) HEBATALLAH ADAM
Full Professor of Economics
Academic Dean, Jindal School of International Affairs
Founder and President of Jindal Centre for the Global South
O.P. Jindal Global University, India
Founder and President of Global South Research Foundation (GSRF)
President of OBS International Relations Chapter
Email: Dr.adamheba@gmail.com, Dhadam@jgu.edu.in

India-Global South relations are moving to a new phase. Throughout the post-colonial era, India's impact was primarily political- and normative-oriented. It was a strong voice for decolonisation, strategic autonomy, an equitable international economic order and increased representation of developing nations in international institutions. The voice was important because it was that of an emerging nation in a world economy dominated by the West. However, this is not the case in India now. It has grown much more influential, technologically advanced, diplomatic and strategic. What India can do is not merely lend a voice to the Global South, but also put it on the policy agenda, market, technologies and institutions that will shape the future of the "developing world".

The two concepts – voice and influence – are key. Voice can provide political visibility and normative legitimacy, and power to influence outcomes. It is not only military or diplomatic power that can be used to achieve that, it is also trade and investment, development finance, technology, energy partnerships, infrastructure and control over key networks in a more geoeconomic world. It is an opportunity as well as a responsibility for India. However, India's growing economic strength will add to the credibility of this sustained interest in South-South cooperation if it is applied in a manner that expands the choice and productive capacities of the countries in the south and not traditional dependency.

India's Global South diplomacy during its G20 presidency was an important sign of this newfound aspiration. The Voice of Global South Summit was convened by India, and gathered 125 developing countries, which was an attempt to establish a forum where the voice of nations not generally part of the global power block can shape the global agenda. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to the Global South for an "equivalent voice" was more than a diplomatic turn of phrase, it was India's bid to link its own international ascendance to the broader call for a voice more representative of the Global South. The permanent membership of the African Union was a tangible institutional manifestation of that ambition, during the G20 presidency. Diplomatic advocacy had been found to bring an institutional result in India. The next is to make such influence systematic, predictable in non-diplomatic times.

Africa is likely to play a key role in that transition. India-Africa economic engagement has grown significantly, bilaterally valued at $89 billion in 2025, and cumulative investment of India in Africa estimated at $75 billion. India has also agreed to disburse 196 Lines of Credit for over USD 12 billion for 42 African nations for projects in areas as diverse as power, transport, agriculture, water and digital connectivity. These are not just significant numbers, but more importantly the instruments of engagement that India has evolved over time. Development cooperation is increasingly linked to trade, investment and technology, which can lead to mutually beneficial relationships.

Another field where the Indian model can gain a more prominent strategic edge is in development finance. The Lines of Credit in India have given a great support to finance development projects and are also helpful for Indian exports and businesses. The $40 million credit facility granted to the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development by the Exim Bank of India is a good example of such arrangements. The time now is to increase the developmental aspect of this financing, aligning more emphasis on transparency, local participation, technology transfer and measurable development outcomes. Development partnerships that are explicitly locally owned and financially sustainable can offer a unique alternative to the conception that infrastructure and finance inevitably lead into new forms of strategic dependency.

India's experience with the South-South cooperation is also an important asset here. In India, the development partnerships have always had a component of training, capacity building and knowledge transfer in addition to any other physical infrastructure. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund project in the northern Cameroon region is a good example. The Barefoot College was involved in the training of women from rural communities to install and maintain solar systems where the local communities were a part of managing the projects. As a result of the project, over 12,000 people have been reached, and more than 1,300 people have been trained, and 1,000 solar kits have been distributed by the project's completion.

The increasing capabilities of Indian technologies can expand the impact of its South-South cooperation efforts. Digital cooperation can provide opportunities for sharing institutional capacity to support financial inclusion, and public service delivery. Digital cooperation, if used with proper focus on data governance, sovereignty, and local ownership, can be one of the most crucial tools by which India can support the Global South development goals.

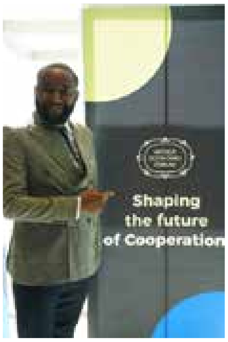
The other field where India's economic interests and Global South diplomacy are increasingly intertwined is energy. India's dependence on imported energy makes diversification a strategic necessity, while many African countries possess significant oil, gas and renewable-energy resources. This mutual interest is reflected in India's recent initiatives to strengthen energy partnerships with African producers. However, it is important that India shift from a buyer-supplier relation with African countries to wider energy partnerships that integrates energy investment, renewable technologies, infrastructure, skills and climate finance. The Global South requires transition that does not perpetuate the history of unequal global economic power-sharing; and India can join the conversation by showing how technological cooperation could make the energy transition more accessible for developing countries.

The Global South trust in Indian development cooperation will increasingly rely on whether the partner countries have a sense of ownership over projects, whether funding is sustainable, whether local capacities are built, and whether Indian commercial interests are in line with development priorities.

This is why the Indian leadership of the Global South in the coming years is to be seen not as a contest for the biggest share of influence in the developing world, but as an attempt to develop a more capable and interconnected Global South. India added value would be to establish platforms, partnerships and institutions through which developing countries can follow their own development agenda under greater economic and technological autonomy.

The differences lie in the possibility of representation vs agency. India has clearly shown its commitment to speaking for the developing world in international forums. Its next challenge is to develop the institutional, economic and capacity-building mechanisms that enable developing countries to be more influential. This is the shift from voice to influence, and this is going to be India's next phase of engagement with the Global South.

From Dialogue to Deal-Making: Why Africa Needs a New Economic Partnership Architecture



About the Author:
BILLY ISSA *Founder & Host of The Africa Economic Forum is the Founder and Host of The Africa Economic Forum, an economic-diplomacy and investment platform connecting governments, investors, corporations, development partners and strategic institutions around structured African opportunities.*

Africa's economic future will not be secured by capital alone. It will be secured by the quality of the partnerships, institutions and transactions that convert capital into productive capacity.

Across the continent, governments are seeking investment for energy, infrastructure, agriculture, critical minerals, technology, healthcare, logistics and industrial development. International investors, development finance institutions, sovereign funds and corporations are also looking for credible opportunities.

Yet a persistent gap remains between available capital and projects capable of attracting, absorbing and deploying that capital effectively. This is often described as a financing gap. In many cases, however, it is also a structuring and trust problem.

Investors need clearer project information, reliable local partners, appropriate financing instruments, risk-mitigation mechanisms and a better understanding of the policy and commercial environment. Governments and project owners need access to serious capital partners and the technical capabilities required to move from concept to implementation.

The Africa Economic Forum was created in response to this challenge. It is designed as an economic-diplomacy and investment platform where governments, institutions, investors, corporations, technology providers and execution partners can examine opportunities together and develop practical pathways towards implementation.

The objective is to move beyond general declarations of interest. A credible investment platform must help answer practical questions: What is the project? Where is it located? What stage has it reached? What financing is required? Which partners are needed? What are the regulatory, foreign-exchange, infrastructure and execution considerations? What must happen next for the opportunity to become investable?

The 2026 edition of The Africa Economic Forum will take place in Kinshasa on 10-11 November. Its programme will address investment geopolitics, financial and digital sovereignty, energy, agriculture, critical minerals, infrastructure, technology, health, tourism and intra-African trade.

AEF follows a two-stage process. Before the event, it mobilises governments, institutions, investors, project owners, technology companies and strategic partners around defined investment priorities. Project owners and institutions may submit relevant information in the period leading up to the Forum. This information can then be reviewed and prepared for possible inclusion in the AEF Deal Book.

The Deal Book is a working instrument for investor review and structured discussion. It is not a declaration that every submitted project has completed due diligence, received investment approval or secured financing. Its purpose is to help participants identify which opportunities merit deeper conversations at the Forum.

At the Forum, capital providers, project stakeholders, technology companies, EPC partners and local institutions can meet around these opportunities. They can assess commercial viability, discuss financing and technology requirements, identify risks and determine whether further due diligence or structuring is appropriate. Any investment, supply, EPC or financing agreement remains subject to separate negotiations and the relevant approvals of the parties involved.

This model reflects a broader shift in Africa's engagement with global capital. African countries are seeking partnerships that support local value creation, technology transfer, industrialisation, employment and stronger participation in global value chains. International partners need reliable channels through which they can understand local priorities and identify credible counterparts.

Economic diplomacy can provide that bridge when it is connected to concrete outcomes. Diplomatic dialogue should open pathways for investment. Investment should support productive sectors. Projects should create local value. Partnerships should be measured by implementation, not only by the visibility of the announcement.

Kinshasa offers an important setting for this conversation. The Democratic Republic of the Congo occupies a central position in discussions on critical minerals, energy, agriculture, infrastructure and regional economic transformation. Its potential must be considered alongside the governance, financing, logistics, skills and execution conditions required to build sustainable value chains.

The next phase of Africa's economic transformation will depend on the ability of African institutions and international partners to sit at the same table with greater clarity and a stronger execution focus. The Africa Economic Forum seeks to create that table in Kinshasa: a place where priorities are understood, opportunities are examined, partnerships are shaped and the next steps towards investment can be defined.

The African century will not be built through rhetoric alone. It will be built through structured cooperation, accountable institutions and transactions that deliver value on the ground.

How Economic Diplomacy Is Reshaping Global Trade Relationships

About the Author
SHAMMI THAKUR
is more than 15 years of experience in market research, strategic intelligence, industry analysis, forecasting, and competitive insights. He leads research across diverse industries, translating market developments and emerging trends into actionable insights for businesses and decision-makers.

Trade relationships are increasingly being built around what countries need from one another beyond imports and exports. Recent moves by India with Rwanda, Belgium, and other partners show how investment, supply chains, technology, and strategic resources are entering trade discussions once handled largely through tariff and market-access negotiations.

Trade Ties Gain a Strategic Dimension

India and Rwanda's first Joint Trade Committee, launched in July, established a formal mechanism to address trade and investment opportunities across pharmaceuticals, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, renewable energy and digital sectors. The arrangement gives a longstanding diplomatic relationship a more practical economic framework.

India's engagement with Belgium points to an even broader approach. Recent talks covered trade alongside semiconductors, critical minerals, clean energy, technology and defence, while both sides set an objective of doubling bilateral trade over the next five years. Economic cooperation is consequently being linked with industrial capacity and strategic resilience.

Supply Chains Become Part of the Equation

Physical trade infrastructure is gaining similar importance. Ports, freight networks and logistics services increasingly determine how reliably goods can move when geopolitical or commercial disruptions strain established routes. The India logistics market is estimated at USD 281.74 billion in 2026, with continued growth projected through 2032. The scale reflects an economic system in which logistics capacity is closely tied to manufacturing, domestic distribution, and international trade.

From Market Access to Strategic Options

Economic diplomacy is therefore acquiring a broader purpose. Trade agreements still matter, but durable partnerships increasingly depend on investment links, reliable supply chains and access to critical capabilities. For governments, stronger economic ties can provide not only larger markets, but greater room to respond when global trade is disrupted.

Transformative Agri-Food and Blue Economy
Models for National Food Security, Rural Livelihoods, and Sovereign Resilience in Sri Lanka

About the Author
PROFESSOR MONI MADASWAMY
Professor Emeritus (Informatics and e-Governance) and ChairmanCentre for Agricultural Informatics and e-Governance Research Studies (CAIRS) Centre for Health Informatics and Computing (CHIC)Shobhit Institute of Engineering and Technology (Deemed to-be University), Meerut Chief Advisor, International Chamber of Agricultural Plantation Industry and Farmer Producer Organisation (ICAPIFPO), Colombo, Sri Lanka & Former Director General, National Informatics Centre (NIC), Government of India

Abstract
This paper details a comprehensive structural transformation framework designed to transition the national economy of Sri Lanka from short-term crisis mitigation to long-term sovereign resilience. At its core, the study introduces Transformative Agri-Food and Blue Economy Models for National Food Security, Rural Livelihoods, and Sovereign Resilience in Sri Lanka, positioning these combined structures as the primary engines for macroeconomic stabilization. Rather than treating terrestrial farming and maritime systems as isolated sectors, this framework bridges them into a unified policy ecosystem. These models leverage data-driven precision tools across land assets while aggressively unlocking the untapped economic, energy, and protein potential of Sri Lanka's massive ocean parameters.

Drawing from the strategic mandates established at the 39th Annual Conference of the Organisation of Professional Associations (OPA) of Sri Lanka under the paradigm "Envisioning Sri Lanka – Beyond Recovery," and integrating the master 10-point architectural roadmap designed by Professor Moni Madaswamy, this study examines the profound productivity mismatches within the primary sector. Specifically, we analyse the structural gap wherein over 30% of the national workforce yields barely 7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

To rectify this asymmetry, we present an integrated operational blueprint centred on four foundational pillars: Blue Economy Integration, Inclusive Growth, Resilient Baselines, and Technology-Driven Execution. Governed by the One Health paradigm—which asserts that human biological immunity is biochemically bound to soil and aquatic vitality—this framework outlines a scalable path toward national self-sufficiency, digital village commerce, blended asset mobilization, and international leadership in climate-smart infrastructure by the year 2030.

1. Introduction: The Strategic Vision
Socio-economic shocks require a fundamental re-evaluation of national economic design. Traditional macroeconomic stabilization efforts typically prioritize short-term liquidity,

debt restructuring, and fiscal consolidation. However, true stabilization cannot be achieved merely by returning to pre-crisis vulnerabilities.

As articulated by Professor Moni Madaswamy and supported at the 39th OPA Annual Conference in 2026, Sri Lanka faces a critical historic turning point. The strategic vision shifts the national objective away from defensive crisis management toward the proactive construction of a resilient, insulated baseline. This framework defines a clear roadmap spanning 2026 to 2030, establishing a future where structural anti-fragility protects national sovereignty against external supply shocks, institutional inefficiencies, and climate change.

2. The Core Strategic Baseline: The 10-Point Master Framework

The structural overhaul of Sri Lanka's primary economy operates through a highly integrated, 10-tiered macro framework designed to systematically guide the nation from basic digital adoption to comprehensive digital sovereignty.

1. **Strategic Vision:** Grounded in Professor Moni Madaswamy's overarching techno economic architecture.

2. **Correcting Structural Imbalances:** Directly addressing the productivity chasm between labour input and GDP output.

3. **The Digital Agriculture Framework:** Deploying the seven specialized programmatic pillars for a data-driven economy.

4. **The Central Lifeline:** Establishing an integrated farm-health telemetry ecosystem driven by the One Health paradigm.

5. **Academia & STEAM Human Capital:** Activating a network of 17 public and private universities to cultivate specialized talent.

6. **1,400 Village AgriTech Startups:** Creating decentralized computing and innovation edge labs within the heart of rural communities.

7. **Commodity Networks & Mushnomics:** Organizing 9 specialized commodity systems backed by circular, waste-to-wealth energy structures.

8. **Fisheries & The Blue Economy Engine:** Maximizing offshore potential through satellite tracking and Marine Spatial Planning.

9. **Real-Time Data & Trustworthy Governance:** Transitioning public services under the strict mandate of ISO 56002:2019 compliance.

10. **Global South Leadership:** Establishing the ICISA platform to secure blended capital and act as a knowledge beacon for SIDS nations.

3. The Sovereign Agricultural Informatics Paradigm

Agricultural Informatics emerges directly from Agricultural Engineering (AE), Agricultural Statistics (AS), and Agricultural Economics (AgEc) as its core structural base. By synthesizing these foundational pillars with the emerging powers of Data Science and Information Science, Agricultural Informatics transforms domain knowledge in Agriculture and Allied Sectors through Agricultural Sciences into actionable Agricultural wisdom.

Through this integration, Agricultural Sciences becomes a dominant, field-level force—positioned directly alongside the farmer, the farm, the animal, the pond, and the end consumer.

This synthesis creates an active, round-the-clock (24× 7) decision-support ecosystem tailored specifically to the operational needs of small and marginal holders across Sri Lanka. By eliminating topsoil degradation, monitoring real-time ecosystem health metrics at the edge, and scaling low-cost interventions across plant, animal, soil, and aquatic vectors, this integrated framework establishes a sustainable pathway for national resilience. As structured pilot deployments generate the requisite empirical and clinical evidence, Agricultural Informatics provides the definitive operational roadmap to secure food, nutrition, health, and economic security—turning the national vision of Sri Lanka into an edge-verified reality through Higher Education Institutions (17 Public and Private Universities).

4. Diagnosing the Structural Asymmetry: The Primary Sector Gap

The primary structural bottleneck in the domestic economy lies in the extreme misallocation of labour relative to economic output within the primary sector (agriculture and coastal production).

- **Workforce Engagement:** >30% of the national workforce is tied to primary sector labour.

- **GDP Contribution:** This massive labour allocation results in barely ~7% of the national Gross Domestic Product.

- **Systemic Weaknesses:** The sector remains crippled by high post-harvest losses, lack of digitized cold-chain logistics, and severe vulnerability to extreme climate shocks.

5. Agro-Climatic Intelligence & Regional

Resource Optimization

To bridge the primary sector gap effectively, the master strategy moves away from blanket policies. Instead, it introduces precise, data-driven interventions tailored to the natural geography of the island:

- **The 7 Agro-Climatic Zones:** The framework maps out and codes Sri Lanka's unique Agro-Climatic Zones, managing them by their specific regional ecosystem profiles. These profiles are defined by unique combinations of rainfall patterns and elevation categories (Wet, Dry, and Intermediate Zones cross-referenced with Low-Country, Mid-Country, and Up-Country topographies).

- **Targeted Regional Cultivation:** Value chain tracking systems align crops directly with ideal growing conditions (e.g., dedicated optimization zones for Paddy, Tea, and Coconut).

- **Dual-Engine Monetization:** By matching these distinct regional landscapes with digital connectivity, the framework drives simultaneous development in Climate-Smart Agriculture and regional Agri-Tourism.

6. The Digital Agriculture Framework: Seven Pillars

To transition the agricultural landscape into an automated, highly protected ecosystem, the framework adapts the core architectural principles formulated in the Government of India's Inter-Ministerial Committee Report on Doubling Farmers' Income (DFI-2018). Tailored systematically for Sri Lanka's rural infrastructure, the strategy deploys seven specialized structural mission modes:

1. **Digitalized Agriculture:** Accelerating the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI), automated machinery, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, and modern tech infrastructure directly within fields to elevate baseline output. Crucially, this pillar is architected as an all-inclusive system covering the country's three structural agricultural realities:

   o **Irrigated Agriculture:** Optimizing water-use efficiency, command area tracking, and automated sluice scheduling grid frameworks.

   o **Rainfed Agriculture:** Deploying precision soil-moisture telemetry, root-zone sensor networks, and adaptive dry-zone agronomy software.

   o **Tribal Agriculture:** Preserving indigenous land knowledge while introducing low-cost, decentralized technical tools, chemical-free input tracking systems, and direct village market portals.

2. **Digitalized Agro-Meteorological Advisories:** Deploying hyper-local weather forecasting grids and micro-climate analytics to insulate producers from extreme weather events.

3. **Digitalized Agricultural-Resource Information Systems:** Integrating advanced geographic information systems (GIS) and spatial planning tools to optimize crop distribution.

4. **Digitalized Agricultural Value Chains:** Establishing direct digital producer-to-market platforms, removing inefficient intermediaries, and eliminating logistics leaks.

5. **Digitalized Access to Inputs, Finance & Markets:** Streamlining rural access to high-quality crop inputs, digital micro-credit lines, weather-indexed insurance, and transparent banking channels.

6. **Digitalized Integrated Land & Water Management:** Monitoring critical environmental resources through

tech systems focused on aquifer recharge, watershed monitoring, and soil organic carbon tracking.

7. **Digitalized Integrated Farm Health Management System:** Serving as the comprehensive baseline programmatic lifeline. This module builds real-time telemetry pipelines to simultaneously manage, track, and remediate 7 core health vectors:

Soil Health -> Water Health -> Plant Health -> Livestock Health -> -> Fisheries Health -> Environment Health -> Human Health (Allopathy + AYUSH)

Note: The Human Health vector systematically synthesizes mainstream Allopathic medicine with AYUSH systems (comprising Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) to form a unified medical and predictive preventative telemetry grid.

7. The Central Lifeline: Integrated Farm-Health Management

Serving as the strategic centre of the entire architecture, the 7th Pillar establishes a "Central Lifeline" that connects agro-industrial outputs with public safety through a real-time ecosystem telemetry framework:

- Ecosystem Telemetry: Deploying a unified OneHealth / EcoHealth Data System to concurrently monitor the 7 interconnected health vectors established in the framework block.

- Scientific Grounding: Grounded in the One Health paradigm, which recognizes that human biological immunity—whether protected through Allopathy or optimized via alternative AYUSH medical frameworks—is biochemically bound to soil vitality, clean air, and aquatic health (cf. Dr. Alexis Carrel, 1935).

8. Academia, Human Capital, & Decentralized Startups

The technical modernization of the primary economy requires a strong institutional foundation, a highly specialized workforce, and decentralized regional execution.

- **University Network Nodes:** Activating the network of 17 Public and Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to serve as local operational nerve centres.

- The Global 'GRIN' Revolution: Training STEAM graduates to join the international agricultural technology shift by building core fluencies across four high-tech quadrants: Genetics, Robotics, Informatics, and Nanotechnology.

- **1,400 Village Edge Labs:** The framework coordinates networks linking HEIs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and rural enterprise zones to drive development across 1,400 localized AgriTech Startups, bringing digital innovation straight to the last mile.

- **Farming-as-a-Service (FaaS):** Organizing local labs into flexible FaaS models across clusters of 10 to 15 Grama Niladhari Divisions to share high-cost technological assets among smallholders.

9. Commodity Networks, Mushnomics, & The Blue Economy Engine

The framework deploys dedicated data tracking, processing, and distribution networks across both land commodities and marine wealth.

- **Land Commodities & Circularity:** Managing Staples, Horticulture, and Plantation crops via digital networks. This includes Mushnomics, a circular economy

framework that processes crop residues and biomass into organic inputs, protein, and biogas.

- **The Blue Economy Engine:** Given that Sri Lanka's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is nearly 8x larger than its landmass (alongside 12,000+ inland reservoirs), the strategy deploys Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), seaweed mariculture, satellite oceanography (SST/ Chlorophyll mapping), and standard financial structures for Blue Carbon Credits to generate global carbon offsets.

10. Real-Time Data & Trustworthy Governance

To transition this framework into a lived reality, the strategy targets and resolves long-standing administrative and infrastructural limitations:

- **Digital Governance Shift:** Shifting from simple online government to legally backed, transparent, and trustworthy digital governance under ISO 56002:2019 compliance.

- **Key Components:** Enforcing strict legal certainty, blockchain transparency, citizen-centric services, data privacy, and accountability across all digital value chains via the "One Village One Product" (OVOP) network design.

11. Global Positioning & Blended Capital Frameworks

The final strategic architecture scales these domestic

achievements into the global arena, generating programmatic funding channels while securing Sri Lanka's position as an international leader in sustainable engineering.

- **Global Beacon (ICISA):** Establishing the International Centre on Island Smart Agriculture and Ocean Economy (ICISA) in Sri Lanka to serve as a research hub for Global South Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

- **Blended Capital Mobilization:** Tapping directly into international assets via the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) loans from the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) to fund infrastructure without adding to sovereign debt.

12. Relevance to the Global South & Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

The transformational roadmap conceptualized within this framework holds structural relevance across the broader Global South and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The socioeconomic asymmetries, ecological vulnerabilities, and institutional frictions targeted by this model represent shared macro-systemic challenges that require uniform technical modernizations.

- **Breaking the Low-Yield Labor Trap:** Developing economies routinely encounter low primary sector productivity loops, anchoring huge blocks of human capital to highly volatile, low-margin traditional operations. The integration of the Agricultural Informatics Paradigm provides a model to upskill rural segments into precision operators, changing them from manual field labourers into high-value data stewards.

- **Climate-Adaptive Defences:** The Global South faces the absolute brunt of extreme climate shifts—soil organic layer degradation, monsoonal disruptions, and volatile marine thermal currents. Top-down, generalized frameworks fail at the regional scale. Utilizing localized, data-driven parameters across unique Agro-Climatic Intelligence Zones establishes an engineering baseline capable of supporting edge-verified, predictive agricultural manoeuvres.

- **Decentralizing Infrastructure via Edge Hubs:** Conventional economic models lead to high metropolitan centralization, forcing rural decay and mass urban migration. Replicating the 1,400 Village Edge Labs and Farming-as-a-Service (FaaS) delivery models offers a concrete template for distributing physical computing assets, connectivity infrastructure, and specialized enterprise networks evenly across regional zones.

- **The Quintuple Helix & 5W1H Execution Matrix:**

This framework provides a structured execution template for grass-roots digitalization. By utilizing the Quintuple Helix Innovation Model, local programs seamlessly weave together HEIs, government policies, industries, civil societies, and local environmental systems into a collaborative pipeline. This architecture is operationalized via the 5W1H Framework (What, Where, When, Why, Who, How), turning abstract data networks into highly localized guidelines for the farmer, the farm, the livestock grid, the production pond, and the consumer.

- **Bottom-Up Regional Agronomy Integration:** Rather than restricting digital infrastructure to narrow individual identification indexes, the strategy prioritizes a comprehensive bottom-up approach. It systematically collects Agronomy Data from the entire ecosystem (including regions outside individual farmers' fields). By anchoring these resources into an Edge Computing network managed by the 1,400 Village Labs, the model protects hyper-local environmental data and guarantees true technology sovereignty.

- **Sovereignty Over Supply Networks:** Dependence on volatile international trade networks exposes developing territories to severe external pricing pressures and foreign exchange turbulence. Merging unified Sector-Wide Informatics Platforms with specialized trade vehicles like ICAPIFPO bridges local production with direct global market pathways, protecting food security and safeguarding domestic maritime wealth.

13. Corporate Service Ecosystem (ICAPIFPO)

The strategic implementation of this multi-layered framework is driven commercially and institutionally by the International Chamber of Agricultural Plantation, Industry & Farmer Producer Organization (ICAPIFPO). Operating under the directive "Empowering Farmers. Transforming Agriculture. Together We Grow, Together We Prosper," the operational services and steering leadership are structured as follows:

- Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) Development: Aggregating smallholder and marginal producers into robust corporate clusters to command economies of scale.

- Agricultural & Plantation Consultancy: Injecting crop agronomy data and specialized management consulting lines to optimize estate and smallholder land yields.

- Modern Farming & Smart Agriculture Solutions: Deploying targeted drone telemetry, autonomous field assets, and remote crop monitors into regional production systems.

- Value Chain & Supply Chain Development: Eliminating value loss by optimizing route planning and establishing temperature-tracked storage nodes.

- Export & International Trade Facilitation: Navigating sanitary, phytosanitary, and trade barriers to open seamless paths into high-value overseas channels for local producers.

- Farmer Capacity Building & Training: Providing ongoing on-site training to upskill traditional human capital into certified technical operators.

- Investment & Agricultural Plantation Development: Mapping and channelling private corporate venture funding directly into rural startup incubators.

- Sustainable Agriculture & Green Initiatives: Ensuring that all localized agribusiness setups comply with environmental conservation goals through organic input transformations and alternative bio-gas grids.

The accountability and rollout of the ICAPIFPO transformational matrix are overseen by a multidisciplinary board of international professionals.

14. Acknowledgements

The author expresses sincere gratitude to Dr. H. E. M. N. Sardar Ali – Founder & Chairman ICAPIFCO, for generously sponsoring participation and supporting the dissemination of this transformational framework. Special, elevated recognition is due to Shri Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra, Hon'ble Chancellor of Shobhit University Meerut for his proactive, far-sighted, and consistent support in promoting Agricultural Informatics as a core structural R&D, Academic, and e-Governance programme.

Furthermore, the author acknowledges the Chancellor's historic decision to sign strategic Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) and the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) to institutionalize and scale "Agricultural

Informatics" within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Through this visionary initiative, Shobhit University Meerut stands as the first academic institution in the entire Global South to establish a dedicated, centralized Centre for Agricultural Informatics and e-Governance Research Studies (CAIRS) within its campus, forging the baseline roadmap for regional data sovereignty.

15. Conclusion

The structural stabilization of the national economy requires transitioning away from defensive crisis response toward a proactive, automated, and insulated baseline. By systematically channelling raw agricultural inputs through the structural pipeline—FARM → DATA → KNOWLEDGE → ENTERPRISE → VALUE CHAIN → BLUE ECONOMY → JOBS → RESILIENCE—this master architecture establishes a self-reinforcing economic loop that bridges the primary sector productivity gap, transforms traditional manual labour into future-ready technical roles, and converts raw ecosystem telemetry into protected national wealth.

Ultimately, this Strategic Framework for Sri Lanka's Digital Agri-Food Transformation (2030), driven by the DFI Foundation, unified by the One Health Telemetry framework, and structured under Professor Moni Madaswamy's 7-tiered design, provides a definitive roadmap for structural economic reform. By systematically correcting the primary sector gap, training a GRIN-fluent youth workforce, and managing land and ocean capital through legally sound digital governance, Sri Lanka can build an insulated baseline. Through disciplined policy execution, professional collaboration, and open infrastructure investments, the nation can secure its economic sovereignty and build a Digitally Inclusive & Innovative Agri-Food Ecosystem by 2030 in Sri Lanka.

India–UAE: The New Food Corridor

From Indian farms to global markets, the India–UAE Food Cluster is opening new possibilities in agriculture, food processing, agri-technology and investment.

About the Author
VIJAY KUMAR JHA
is a Dubai-based international trader specializing in agricultural commodities, connecting producers and markets across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, strengthening India–UAE trade relations.

A New Dimension of Partnership

India and the United Arab Emirates have built a dynamic economic relationship across trade, investment, infrastructure and technology. Now, agriculture and food are emerging as another important frontier.

The opportunity is particularly significant because the two countries bring complementary strengths. India has a vast agricultural base, experienced farmers, a growing food-processing sector and a rapidly developing agri-tech ecosystem. The UAE brings investment, advanced logistics, global market access and an ambition to strengthen its long-term food-security ecosystem.

Together, these strengths can create a new model of agricultural partnership.

The Food Cluster Takes Centre Stage

A significant recent development is the India–UAE Food Cluster initiative, which brought together more than 32 Emirati and Indian companies in Andhra Pradesh for a business forum focused on partnerships in food, agriculture and agri-technology.

The initiative represents an important shift—from simply trading agricultural products towards building deeper commercial connections between producers, processors, investors, technology companies and distributors.

Andhra Pradesh provides a natural setting for this cooperation, with its strong agricultural and horticultural base and growing food-processing potential.

From Farm to Value Chain

The future of agricultural cooperation is not only about

increasing exports. It is about creating greater value before products reach international markets.

Investment in food processing, packaging, cold storage, warehousing and logistics can help Indian agricultural products reach consumers with greater efficiency and quality. It can also create opportunities for farmers and businesses to participate in higher-value segments of the food economy.

For UAE investors, India's expanding food and agricultural ecosystem offers a large and diverse market with considerable long-term potential.

Technology Meets Agriculture

Agri-technology could become one of the most exciting areas of cooperation.

Precision farming, smart irrigation, digital marketplaces, artificial intelligence, supply-chain monitoring, food traceability and modern cold-chain solutions are transforming agriculture worldwide.

India's growing technology capabilities and the UAE's investment and innovation ecosystem can work together to develop solutions that benefit producers while improving efficiency across the food supply chain.

Strengthening Food Security

The partnership also has an important food-security dimension.

The UAE is seeking reliable and diversified sources of food, while India is looking to expand agricultural exports, strengthen supply chains and create greater opportunities for its farming and food-processing communities.

A stronger connection between the two ecosystems can contribute to both objectives—creating dependable commercial channels while encouraging investment in agricultural infrastructure and technology.

A Corridor of Investment

The emerging food corridor is therefore much more than a movement of agricultural products between two countries.

It can connect farmers with investors, technology with agriculture, processing with logistics and Indian production with international markets.

This integrated approach could encourage new businesses, joint ventures and technology partnerships while creating employment and strengthening rural value chains.

The Road Ahead

The India–UAE Food Cluster initiative demonstrates how bilateral relations can translate into practical economic opportunities.

As cooperation expands, the focus can increasingly move towards value-added agriculture, sustainable production, agri-tech, food processing and international distribution.

The UAE can serve as a gateway to Gulf and global markets, while India can provide the scale, talent and agricultural strength needed to support a growing food ecosystem.

The new India–UAE food corridor is not simply about moving food from one market to another. It is about building a connected ecosystem where agriculture, technology, investment and logistics come together to create shared prosperity.

ON THE OCCASION OF ARMENIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY — 21 SEPTEMBER

DIPLOMAT TODAY WISHES

Diplomat Today extends its warmest greetings and heartfelt wishes to the Government and people of the Republic of Armenia on this special occasion. May Armenia continue to flourish in peace, prosperity and progress, and may the enduring friendship between India and Armenia grow ever stronger, bringing our peoples closer and opening new avenues for meaningful cooperation and shared opportunities.

Warmest wishes to Armenia on its Independence Day!

DIPLOMAT TODAY

Navigating the World's Diplomatic Waves

https://diplomattoday.com

September 2026 | Volume 03 | Issue 03 | ₹ 250

COUNTRY DOSSIER

INDIA–ARMENIA

A Partnership Rooted In Friendship, Driven By The Future

Armenia at 35: A nation redefining its strategic partnerships

About the Author:

PROF. DR P K RAJPUT

MBA, PHD, FIASST, FIAECT, FGCPR(USA), MLE℠

- *Former Sr. Vice President, Cadila Pharma Ltd., Ahmedabad*
- *Director of the Board, CliMed Research Solutions, India*
- *Chairman of the Board of Studies at Scinova International Frontier Research, UK*
- *Life Member of Leadership Excellence Harvard Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts (USA)*

"For nations situated at geopolitical crossroads, sovereignty is strengthened not by isolation or permanent alignment, but by the ability to build many partnerships while retaining the freedom to shape their own strategic choices."

Thirty-five years after independence, Armenia stands at a consequential moment in its modern history. Emerging from the Soviet Union in 1991, the country faced insecurity, closed borders, restricted connectivity and the strategic constraints of being a small, landlocked state. These realities shaped a security architecture deeply anchored in its relationship with Russia.

Today, that geopolitical framework is changing. The South Caucasus is experiencing a significant strategic transition, with shifting regional power dynamics, evolving security assumptions and renewed prospects for Armenia-Azerbaijan normalisation. At the same time, growing connectivity linking Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific is creating new opportunities.

Against this backdrop, Armenia is redefining its strategic partnerships through diversification rather than exclusive alignment.

Yerevan is strengthening engagement with the European Union and the United States, expanding cooperation with India and France, maintaining vital ties with Iran and Georgia, while recalibrating its relationship with Russia.

For Armenia at 35, independence increasingly means more choices, stronger resilience and greater strategic autonomy.

From Strategic Dependence to Strategic Choice

For much of the post-independence era, Russia served as

Armenia's principal security partner, supported by historical ties, defence arrangements, economic interdependence and regional realities. Yet recent strategic shocks have exposed the vulnerabilities of excessive reliance on a single security framework.

Armenia's decision to freeze participation in the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation marked a significant reassessment of its security assumptions.

Nevertheless, Russia remains important through trade, energy, infrastructure, human connections and Armenia's continued participation in the Eurasian Economic Union.

This makes Armenia's transition less a geopolitical "pivot" than an exercise in managed diversification.

Yerevan is not necessarily seeking to replace Russia with another dominant power. Instead, it is building a broader network of partnerships to preserve greater strategic flexibility.

For a small state amid competing powers, diversification can reduce vulnerability; but the challenge remains to expand partnerships without becoming an arena for their rivalry.

Peace: The Foundation of a New Strategic Geography

Armenia's evolving external relationships cannot be separated from its changing relationship with Azerbaijan. For decades, conflict shaped the South Caucasus, influencing defence priorities, external partnerships, transport routes, investment and national policy.

The movement towards peace therefore carries implications far beyond bilateral diplomacy. The Washington Joint Declaration of August 2025 marked an important step toward a new regional framework, while subsequent Armenia-US cooperation has increasingly linked peace to connectivity and economic development.

For Armenia, a sustainable settlement could transform its strategic geography. Reduced tensions could enable greater focus on economic development, institutional strengthening and regional integration. Open transport routes could reduce isolation, connect markets and encourage investment.

Yet diplomacy requires realism. Agreements alone cannot erase decades of mistrust. Sustainable peace will require implementation, institutional mechanisms, public confidence and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

For Armenia, peace is not the end of diplomacy; it is the beginning of a new strategic future.

The European Union: Partnership Becoming Strategic

Armenia's relationship with the European Union has emerged as a significant pillar of its diversification strategy. The first-ever Armenia–EU Summit, held in Yerevan on 4–5 May 2026, underscored growing cooperation in connectivity, energy, transport, digital transformation, economic development and institutional resilience.

For Armenia, Europe offers more than diplomatic engagement; it offers an institutional partnership that can strengthen long-term national capacity. Governance, infrastructure, energy transition, technology, trade and investment are increasingly integral to Armenia's resilience and strategic autonomy.

This relationship should therefore be viewed beyond the traditional prism of geopolitical alignment. Its deeper significance lies in helping Armenia build the capabilities required to make independent choices in a complex regional environment.

Sovereignty in the twenty-first century depends not only on defence, but also on economic competitiveness, technological capacity, energy security and strong institutions.

Ultimately, the partnership will be measured not by declarations signed, but by the resilience and opportunities it creates for Armenia.

The United States: A Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

Armenia's relationship with the United States has entered a significant new phase. In May 2026, the two countries adopted a Charter on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, establishing a framework for deeper cooperation in diplomacy, economic development, energy, critical minerals, emerging technologies, education, science, defence and security.

The partnership reflects a broader transformation in contemporary strategic thinking: security is increasingly multidimensional. Artificial intelligence, semiconductors, energy resilience, critical minerals and infrastructure can be as strategically consequential as traditional defence capabilities.

For Armenia, engagement with the United States is therefore increasingly about building long-term national capacity and strategic resilience. Cooperation surrounding the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) adds an important connectivity dimension.

If implemented effectively, such initiatives could help transform the South Caucasus into a more integrated economic corridor.

The strategic imperative for Armenia is clear: ensure international investment strengthens sovereignty, national jurisdiction, connectivity and sustainable economic opportunity.

India: From Friendship to Strategic Convergence

Among Armenia's emerging partnerships, India deserves particular attention. The relationship is gaining strategic depth through political dialogue, defence cooperation, technology, pharmaceuticals, education and innovation.

For Armenia, India represents an important pillar of strategic diversification, while its strengths in digital technology, healthcare, higher education and pharmaceuticals complement Armenia's ambition to build a knowledge-driven economy.

The partnership's greatest potential lies beyond transactional cooperation as joint research, university collaborations, pharmaceutical ventures, digital innovation and commercial investment could create a deeper, more sustainable relationship.

Its strongest foundation, however, will be institutional and people-to-people engagement. The most enduring partnerships are built not only by governments, but through businesses, universities, institutions and people.

France and the Expansion of Security Partnerships

France has emerged as an increasingly important partner for Armenia through defence cooperation, political dialogue and diplomatic engagement. Alongside India, this reflects Yerevan's broader strategy of security diversification, reducing excessive reliance on a single defence partner while building greater flexibility and resilience.

However, diversification also demands stronger institutional capacity. New partnerships must enhance interoperability, long-term capabilities and sustainable security planning.

Ultimately, a network of partners can strengthen Armenia's security only when Yerevan retains the institutional capacity to coordinate these relationships effectively and ensure they serve its own national interests and strategic priorities.

Russia: Recalibration Rather Than a Simple Rupture

Despite Armenia's growing engagement with Europe, the United States and other partners, Russia remains a consequential factor. Deep historical, economic, infrastructural and human connections make a simple "rupture" an incomplete description of the relationship.

The more accurate term is recalibration. Yerevan is seeking greater strategic autonomy while recognising Moscow's continuing regional and economic significance. Armenia's future relationship with Russia will depend on adapting to a new reality in which Yerevan pursues multiple partnerships rather than exclusive dependence.

Strategic maturity will require Armenia to maintain diplomatic channels while firmly protecting its sovereign choices. In international diplomacy, difficult relationships are not always resolved by ending them. Sometimes, they are redefined.

Iran and Georgia: The Strategic Importance of Geography

Armenia's global partnerships cannot overshadow the strategic importance of its immediate neighbourhood. Iran remains vital for energy, trade and southern connectivity, while Georgia serves as Armenia's principal gateway to the Black Sea and European markets. Together, they underline the importance of geography in Armenia's foreign policy.

As regional connectivity expands, Yerevan must balance broader international partnerships with the interests and realities of its neighbours.

Armenia's future will not be shaped only in Washington, Brussels, Moscow or New Delhi, but also through relationships with those closest to its borders. Regional stability cannot be outsourced.

Connectivity: Turning Geography into Opportunity

One of the most ambitious elements of Armenia's strategic vision is transforming geography from a constraint into an advantage. For decades, its landlocked position and restricted transport routes contributed to economic vulnerability.

The Crossroads of Peace vision offers a different possibility: connecting transport, energy and communication networks across the South Caucasus based on sovereignty, jurisdiction, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

Connectivity is more than infrastructure; it is strategic. Roads connect markets, railways connect economies and digital networks connect societies, while energy links can foster interdependence and stability.

Yet connectivity must strengthen, not diminish, sovereignty. If successfully implemented, Armenia could evolve from a country constrained by regional barriers into a bridge linking regions, markets and opportunities.

Such a transformation could become one of the most significant achievements of Armenia's post-independence journey.

The Real Test: Strategic Autonomy

Armenia's evolving partnerships ultimately aim at strategic autonomy; not isolation or neutrality, but the capacity to make independent national decisions without excessive dependence on any single power.

Achieving this requires more than diplomacy. A competitive economy, technological capability, energy security, strong institutions, human capital and social cohesion are equally essential. Foreign policy can create opportunities; domestic strength determines whether they become sustainable national advantages. That is the real test of Armenia's sovereignty at 35.

A New Chapter in Armenian Statecraft

Thirty-five years after independence, Armenia is entering a new chapter in its statecraft. The road ahead remains challenging: peace requires implementation, regional normalisation demands trust, connectivity needs investment and relations with Russia require careful management.

Yet Armenia also has a strategic opportunity. The European Union and United States offer expanding institutional and economic partnerships, while India and France add important dimensions. Iran and Georgia remain indispensable regional partners and Russia continues to matter despite recalibration.

Armenia's transformation is not about replacing one partner with another, but building a broader architecture of relationships. At 35, its defining challenge is to engage East, West, the Global South and its neighbourhood according to its national interests.

Its greatest achievement could be a mature model of sovereignty, built on diversification, resilience, connectivity and strategic purpose.

"Armenia's future will not be defined by the alliances it chooses, but by the strategic space it creates between them; turning partnerships into resilience, connectivity into opportunity and independence into enduring sovereignty."

Bishkek Talks: Modi and Pashinyan Discuss Stronger India – Armenia Tie

Leaders meet on the sidelines of the SCO Summit and exchange views on regional and global developments

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Monday, 31 August, on the sidelines of the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

The two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen and expand bilateral relations between India and Armenia. Their meeting provided an opportunity to review areas of mutual interest and exchange views on developments affecting the region and the wider international community.

According to information shared following the meeting, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Pashinyan also discussed regional and global developments, including the situation in West Asia.

India and Armenia maintain friendly and expanding bilateral relations, with cooperation developing across several areas. The two countries have continued high-level engagement and exchanges in recent years, alongside cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The Bishkek meeting took place as leaders gathered for the 26th SCO Summit, providing an important setting for bilateral discussions alongside the multilateral summit programme.

The two leaders' conversation comes at a time of significant developments in West Asia and continued international attention on regional stability. Their exchange of views reflects the importance of regular dialogue between India and Armenia on regional and global issues.

Prime Minister Modi's meeting with Pashinyan was among his bilateral engagements on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Bishkek. The discussions reaffirmed the two countries' interest in further strengthening their bilateral relationship while maintaining dialogue on important regional and international developments.

India and Armenia Strengthen Defence Cooperation with Focus on Training and Technology

New Delhi and Yerevan explore new opportunities in capacity building, military-technical cooperation and defence research

India and Armenia are seeking to further strengthen their bilateral defence relationship, with cooperation in training, capacity building, military-technical engagement and defence research and development receiving particular attention during high-level discussions in Yerevan.

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh visited Armenia from August 17 to 18 and held meetings with senior Armenian defence officials to review ongoing cooperation and discuss opportunities for expanding bilateral engagement.

High-Level Defence Discussions

During the two-day visit, Singh met Armenian Deputy Defence Minister Karen Brutyan and First Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of General Staff Edward Asryan.

The meetings provided an opportunity for both sides to discuss the broad range of existing defence cooperation and identify areas where bilateral engagement can be further developed.

Focus on Capacity Building and Training

Capacity building and training were among the key areas discussed. Greater exchanges of expertise and professional training can contribute to strengthening institutional capabilities and creating deeper links between the defence establishments of the two countries.

Such cooperation also provides opportunities for sharing experiences and best practices in areas of mutual interest.

Expanding Military-Technical Cooperation

The two sides also discussed military-technical cooperation, an area that offers scope for greater technical engagement and knowledge sharing.

As defence requirements and technologies continue to evolve, cooperation in technical fields can create opportunities for both countries to develop stronger professional and institutional partnerships.

Encouraging Defence Research and Innovation

Defence research and development was another important component of the discussions. Cooperation in R&D can encourage exchanges between experts and institutions while supporting innovation and the development of relevant defence capabilities.

For India, such engagement also complements its broader approach of strengthening international defence partnerships through technology, training and capacity development.

Building a Long-Term Partnership

The latest visit reflects the steady development of India-Armenia defence relations and the shared interest in expanding practical cooperation.

By placing emphasis on training, capacity building, technical cooperation and research, India and Armenia are creating additional avenues for long-term engagement and professional exchange.

The discussions in Yerevan underline the two countries' commitment to maintaining regular dialogue and strengthening their defence partnership through mutually beneficial cooperation.

Beyond Trade: Can Armenia and India Build a New Eurasian Economic Bridge?

From pharmaceuticals and digital technology to connectivity, agriculture and emerging industries, the next chapter of Armenia–India relations could transform a promising partnership into a powerful economic corridor.

Armenia and India are entering a new phase in their relationship. Traditionally built on diplomatic goodwill and cultural ties, the partnership is increasingly developing a strong economic and strategic dimension. The key question now is how Yerevan and New Delhi can convert this growing convergence into sustainable business opportunities.

Bilateral trade has been expanding, but its overall volume remains modest compared with the potential of two economies seeking new markets and greater diversification. Pharmaceuticals, textiles, electronics, food products, jewellery and industrial goods already form important components of India - Armenia commerce. The next opportunity lies in moving from trade in goods toward investment, joint production and technology partnerships.

Pharmaceuticals and healthcare could become an early growth engine. India's globally competitive pharmaceutical industry, combined with Armenia's growing healthcare and manufacturing ambitions, creates opportunities for joint ventures, technology transfer and regional distribution. Greater cooperation in medical regulation and healthcare innovation could further strengthen this sector.

Technology presents an even wider horizon. Armenia has developed a dynamic IT and engineering ecosystem, while India possesses enormous capabilities in software, fintech, digital public infrastructure and emerging technologies. Cooperation in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital services and start-ups could create a new generation of India–Armenia economic links.

Connectivity, however, may prove decisive. Armenia's position in the South Caucasus, combined with India's interest in strengthening links toward Europe and Eurasia, gives transport corridors strategic importance. The International North-South Transport Corridor, the Chabahar route and Armenia's "Crossroads of Peace" initiative could create new possibilities for trade and logistics.

Agriculture is another promising but underdeveloped area. Indian expertise in irrigation, agricultural technology, food processing and digital farming could support Armenia's agricultural modernization, while Armenian producers could gain access to wider regional markets.

Renewable energy, mining, critical minerals, engineering, tourism and education could provide additional avenues for cooperation.

The challenge now is implementation. Faster customs procedures, stronger business-to-business networks, investment facilitation, improved connectivity and practical financing mechanisms will be essential.

For India, Armenia can become more than a market—it can serve as a gateway to the South Caucasus and Eurasia. For Armenia, India represents a major source of technology, expertise, investment and access to one of the world's largest economies.

The opportunity is therefore bigger than bilateral trade. If investment, innovation and connectivity move together, India and Armenia could build an economic bridge linking South Asia with the South Caucasus—and give their strategic partnership a powerful commercial future.

Armenia at the Crossroads of a New South Caucasus

As trade routes evolve, borders gradually open to new possibilities and regional relationships take new shape, Armenia is discovering how geography can become an opportunity for connection rather than simply a challenge to overcome.

The South Caucasus has always been a meeting point—of cultures, civilizations, commercial routes and political interests. Today, the region is experiencing another period of transformation, and Armenia is emerging as an important part of that story.

For Yerevan, the future is increasingly about connectivity.

Armenia maintains longstanding economic, cultural and people-to-people links with Russia, while its relationship with the European Union is gaining new dimensions through cooperation in trade, investment, education, technology and institutional development. These relationships need not be viewed solely through the language of geopolitical competition. For Armenia, they can represent different channels through which the country connects with a rapidly changing world.

Its immediate neighbourhood offers another set of possibilities.

Relations with Azerbaijan remain fundamental to the long-term stability and economic future of the South Caucasus. Progress toward lasting peace could have implications far beyond politics, creating opportunities for transportation, commerce and regional cooperation.

Türkiye is another important piece of this emerging picture. Greater economic interaction and improved regional connectivity could eventually create new opportunities in tourism, trade and logistics, while offering businesses on both sides access to wider markets.

To the south, Iran remains an important partner and gateway. Armenia's relationship with Iran provides a valuable connection toward the Persian Gulf and beyond, giving the country another dimension in its efforts to expand regional trade and transportation links.

These relationships place Armenia at an intriguing intersection of different economic spaces.

The opportunity is to transform that intersection into a platform.

Transport corridors, digital connectivity, energy cooperation, tourism and cross-border commerce could gradually give the South Caucasus a stronger economic identity. Armenia, with its location and growing interest in technology and innovation, has the potential to participate actively in this transformation.

But the country's regional importance will ultimately depend not simply on where it is located, but on how effectively it connects people, businesses, ideas and markets.

This is perhaps the most interesting aspect of Armenia's next chapter. Its story need not be defined by choosing between different directions. It can be about creating more directions.

Europe, Russia, Iran, Türkiye and Azerbaijan are all part of Armenia's wider regional environment, but the future can also bring new connections with Central Asia, India, the Gulf and the wider global economy.

The South Caucasus is changing and Armenia has an opportunity to help shape what comes next.

Armenia's Next Chapter: When a Small Nation Thinks at Global Scale

Armenia is discovering a new kind of economic geography - one where talent travels through technology, ideas cross borders instantly, and a worldwide diaspora can become an extension of the national innovation ecosystem.

What does it mean to be a competitive nation in the digital age?

For Armenia, the answer may not lie in becoming larger, but in becoming smarter, faster and more connected.

The country is quietly cultivating an economic model in which human talent becomes infrastructure. Its young generation is increasingly entering fields such as software, artificial intelligence, engineering, cybersecurity, fintech and creative technology - industries where physical distance matters far less than expertise and imagination.

This creates an intriguing possibility: Armenia can turn its small scale into an advantage.

A compact country can experiment quickly. Universities can connect more closely with businesses. Start-ups can test ideas in a concentrated ecosystem before reaching international markets. Young entrepreneurs can build Armenian companies with global ambitions from the very beginning.

But the real innovation may be happening at the intersection of technology and education.

The future Armenian classroom need not simply produce graduates. It can become a launchpad for problem-solvers, researchers and entrepreneurs. Coding, digital literacy, scientific research and entrepreneurial thinking can increasingly complement traditional disciplines, creating a workforce prepared not merely for today's jobs, but for industries that may not yet exist.

Then comes Armenia's remarkable global network: its diaspora.

Rather than viewing the diaspora simply as a source of remittances or investment, Armenia has an opportunity to treat it as a distributed national innovation network. An Armenian technology professional in California, an entrepreneur in Paris, a scientist in Germany or an investor in Dubai can become part of the same ecosystem as a young founder in Yerevan.

Technology makes that possible.

The resulting model could be powerful: talent at home connected to expertise abroad; universities linked with industry; start-ups connected to international capital; and Armenian ideas reaching customers far beyond the country's borders.

The implications extend well beyond technology. Digital agriculture can bring precision and efficiency to farming. Smart infrastructure can reshape urban life. Digital healthcare can connect expertise with communities. Creative industries can turn culture and identity into globally marketable products.

The ambition should not be to create another technology hub simply because other countries have done so. Armenia's opportunity is to create its own model of a digitally connected small nation-one built around agility, education, entrepreneurship and global networks.

The next Armenian success story may therefore not be defined by a factory, a mine or a physical border.

It may begin with a young person, a laptop, an idea—and a network that reaches the world.

In the new economic geography, Armenia's greatest strategic asset may be its ability to make distance irrelevant.

From Partnership to Possibility: India and Armenia's New Defence & Technology Horizon

From defence platforms and professional training to research, innovation and industrial cooperation, India and Armenia are opening a new chapter in a relationship increasingly shaped by technology and shared expertise.

India and Armenia are giving new momentum to a defence relationship built on mutual trust, practical cooperation and an expanding exchange of expertise. What began with defence equipment and military engagement is gradually developing into a broader partnership involving training, technology, research and industrial capabilities.

The significance of this evolution lies in its long-term potential. Modern defence cooperation is no longer defined solely by platforms and equipment. It increasingly depends on the ability to develop skills, share knowledge, encourage innovation and create strong institutional links.

A significant milestone came during Indian Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh's visit to Armenia on August 17–18, 2026. His meetings with Armenia's defence leadership covered military and military-technical cooperation, capacity building, training and defence research and development. The two sides also exchanged the Terms of Reference for institutionalising Joint Services Staff Talks between the Indian and Armenian armed forces.

During the visit, cooperation was further expanded through an agreement focused on joint collaboration, innovation and research, while discussions with Armenia's Ministry of High-Tech Industry explored possibilities in defence research and development. The visit demonstrated how the relationship is moving toward a more structured and technology-oriented phase.

Technology as the Next Frontier

Technology could become the defining opportunity of the next phase.

India's expanding defence manufacturing and research ecosystem offers extensive experience in engineering, electronics, communications and advanced systems. Armenia, meanwhile, has a strong tradition of scientific education, engineering and technology entrepreneurship. Bringing these strengths together could create opportunities for research partnerships, technical cooperation and innovation.

Training is another important pillar. Military education and professional exchanges allow institutions to share experience while developing a deeper understanding of modern operational and technological requirements. The IT laboratory established with Indian assistance at Armenia's Military Academy is one example of how cooperation can extend into skills and digital capabilities.

There is also considerable scope for the private sector. Defence companies, technology firms, universities and research institutions can increasingly become participants in the relationship, exploring areas such as advanced electronics, cybersecurity, unmanned systems, communications and other emerging technologies.

Such cooperation can create value beyond defence itself. Technologies developed for security and strategic applications often have wider relevance across engineering, communications, manufacturing and the digital economy.

The India-Armenia partnership therefore has the potential to develop into an ecosystem rather than remain limited to individual projects.

India brings scale, a growing defence-industrial base and extensive research capabilities. Armenia brings technical talent, an agile technology environment and a strong interest in innovation.

The opportunity ahead is to connect these strengths—turning defence cooperation into a platform for knowledge, technology and industrial partnership.

India and Armenia: From Enduring Friendship to a Partnership for the Future

The Modi–Pashinyan meeting in Bishkek reflects a relationship expanding across commerce, technology, connectivity, education and culture—with new possibilities emerging for both nations.

A Relationship with Depth

India and Armenia may be separated by geography, but their relationship has developed through something more enduring: mutual respect, cultural affinity and a long-standing tradition of friendly engagement.

Today, that relationship is entering a more ambitious phase.

The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on 31 August 2026, on the sidelines of the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, provided a timely opportunity to look at how far India–Armenia relations have evolved—and where they can go next.

The meeting highlighted the breadth of cooperation between the two countries and the shared interest in expanding it further.

Beyond Traditional Diplomacy

Modern bilateral relationships are increasingly measured not only by political dialogue, but by the connections they create between businesses, universities, technology communities and people.

India and Armenia are building precisely such a network.

Defence cooperation remains an important part of the relationship, but the wider agenda is becoming increasingly diverse. Pharmaceuticals, information technology, agriculture, mining, infrastructure, education, tourism and investment all offer avenues for closer engagement.

This broadening gives the partnership greater resilience and creates opportunities for cooperation across generations.

A New Economic Horizon

Trade and investment could become one of the most promising dimensions of the next chapter.

India's large and diversified economy offers Armenian businesses access to an enormous market, while Armenia can provide Indian companies with new opportunities in the South Caucasus and surrounding markets.

The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on 31 August 2026, on the sidelines of the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, provided a timely opportunity to look at how far India–Armenia relations have evolved—and where they can go next.

Pharmaceuticals are particularly promising. India's global strength in medicine and healthcare can complement Armenia's growing interest in developing its healthcare and manufacturing capabilities.

Technology, food processing, agriculture and renewable energy can similarly provide opportunities for Indian expertise and Armenian entrepreneurship to meet.

Technology Connects the Distance

Technology may ultimately become one of the strongest bridges between the two countries.

India's experience in digital services, fintech, software and digital public infrastructure can complement Armenia's growing technology and engineering community.

The opportunity extends beyond established companies. Start-ups, universities, researchers and young entrepreneurs can become important participants in the relationship, creating partnerships that are based on innovation, knowledge and shared ambition.

Connectivity Creates Opportunity

Geography can sometimes appear to separate countries. Connectivity can change that equation.

India and Armenia have a growing interest in developing stronger links across Eurasia. Transport corridors, logistics networks and digital connectivity can create new channels for commerce and interaction.

The TRIPP project adds another dimension to this conversation, with the potential to contribute to wider connectivity and economic cooperation.

For Armenia, stronger connections can reinforce its role as a meeting point between different markets. For India, they can create additional opportunities to engage with the South Caucasus.

People at the Heart of Partnership

Ultimately, the strongest bilateral relationships are built by people.

Indian students, Armenian professionals, entrepreneurs, academics, artists and tourists can create connections that formal agreements alone cannot achieve.

Education and cultural exchanges can therefore play a quiet but powerful role in shaping the future of the relationship.

Every student exchange, business partnership and cultural interaction adds another layer to the India–Armenia story.

Looking Towards the Next Chapter

The Modi–Pashinyan meeting in Bishkek comes at an interesting moment for bilateral relations.

The foundation is already strong. The opportunity now is to broaden it.

India and Armenia can build a partnership that brings together commerce and culture, technology and education, connectivity and investment.

The future of the relationship will not be defined by one agreement or one meeting. It will be shaped by the connections created afterwards.

India and Armenia have a friendship with history. Their next opportunity is to give that friendship a future measured in innovation, prosperity and shared possibilities.

DIPLOMAT TODAY
NAVIGATING THE WORLD'S DIPLOMATIC WAVES

DIPLOMAT TODAY MAGAZINE

Focuses on Diplomacy, Bilateral Relations, International Trade and Cultural Change. These are the main topics for Diplomat Today – a new consulate media platform where readers looks for diplomatic happenings, incisive opinions and a fresh perspective on India's bilateral relations with other countries.

Subscribe Magazine Now

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I would like to subscribe Diplomat Today (Print Issue - bimonthly) editions for the period:

From____________________ **to**________________________ **year (S).**

1 year (12 Issues) - ₹3000 | 2 Years (24 Issues) - ₹5500

The payment shall be made via Cheque/DD in the name of Digital Business Media (OPC) Pvt Ltd along with your contact numbers, complete address with Pin Code and be couriered at any below

Work Office:

Digital Business Media (OPC) Pvt Ltd
1111, 11th Floor, Indra Prakash Building Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi – 110001
Whatsapp: 8178133868 | Email: contact@dbandm.com
dbandmpublisher@gmail.com

Registered Office:

Digital Business Media (OPC) Pvt Ltd

J 207, Adore, Sector 86, Faridabad – 121002, Haryana. Opposite: Accord Hospital
GST No.: 06AAHCD5562G1ZN

Bank Details:

Bank Account Number: 39093545936 | Bank Name: State Bank of India | IFS Code: SBIN0050582
Swift Code: SBININBB383 | Branch Code: 50582 | Address: 133, Sector 9, Faridabad, Haryana 121001
GST No.: 06AAHCD5562G1ZN

Name (in Block Letters)____________________ Designation:____________

Company: ______________________________

Phone ________________ Mobile: ________________

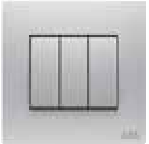
Email (Official): ______________ Email (Personal):________________

Mailing Address:____________________ ____________

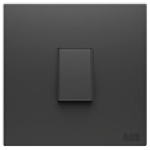
Pin Code____________________

APP

Automation & Power Products Ltd

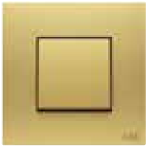


— ST - Stainless Steel



— SB - Silk Black

— AG - Antique Gold



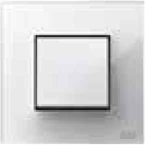
— MG - Matt Gold

NEW

— DU - Dune Sand

NEW

— MO - Mocha Brown



— WG - White Glass

— BG - Black Glass

Millenium

Quality, sophistication, and exclusivity have defined ABB's signature range Millenium for years.

Millenium collection is a grid type system enabling combination of colours and products of different dimension and functionality. Six painted colors over stainless steel plates and two Chemically Strengthened Glass (CSG) finishes complete the color palette.

ABB TE doble Hitachi Energy

AUTOMATION & POWER PRODUCTS LTD
Lot 211, Moka Business Center Mauritius, Tel:(230)433 3036/433 3039 info@appltd.tech Web: www.appltd.tech