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**DAILY EDITORIAL
ANALYSIS**

TOPIC

**INDIA'S BRICS PRESIDENCY:
' PRIORITIES & STRATEGIC
SIGNIFICANCE**

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Context

- India's presidency of BRICS comes at a time of **global uncertainty marked by geopolitical tensions, economic fragmentation, and technological disruptions**, aimed to utilise the potential of BRICS countries together for greater global welfare.

BRICS

- Originally **BRIC** (2001, coined by Jim O'Neill), and became **BRICS in 2010** with the inclusion of South Africa.
- Members:** Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, and membership was *expanded to include* Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Indonesia.
- Objectives:**
 - Promote **multipolar world order**
 - Reform **global financial institutions like IMF, World Bank, UNSC**
 - Enhance **South-South cooperation**
 - Support **sustainable development and inclusive growth**

Significance

- The total GDP of the BRICS nations in nominal dollar terms as of 2026 is over US\$ 32 trillion, accounting for 28–30% of global GDP.
- In Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms, the BRICS is US\$ 78 trillion, representing more than 40% of global GDP, **surpassing the G7's 27.8% share** in PPP terms.

Institutional Mechanisms

- New Development Bank (NDB), 2014**
 - Headquarter:** Shanghai
 - Purpose:** Finance infrastructure & sustainable development projects
 - Seen as an alternative to World Bank/IMF dominance
- Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA):**
 - Provides liquidity support during financial crises
 - Helps reduce dependence on Western-led financial systems

BRICS Presidency

- BRICS Presidency refers to the **annual rotating chairmanship**, where one member country leads the forum for a year.
 - Each country acts as **chair (host) for one year**
- It rotates among members in **alphabetical order**.

India's Presidency of BRICS

- India assumed the BRICS Presidency on 1 January 2026, **for the fourth time** since the grouping's inception in 2009.
- India's BRICS Chairship** is guided by the theme '*Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability*', reflecting a people-centric and humanity-first approach articulated by the Prime Minister of India at the **Rio Summit (2025)**.

Key Priorities Under India's Presidency

- Institutional Strengthening:** India seeks to evolve BRICS from a **consultative platform to an implementation-oriented institution**.

- ♦ It reiterated the **need for reforms in multilateral institutions** such as the UNSC, the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO, so that global decision-making structures better reflect contemporary economic and geopolitical realities.
- **Economic and Financial Cooperation:** Key emerging focus areas under India's presidency include **financial innovation**, particularly the proposal to link BRICS central bank digital currencies, trade facilitation in national currencies, infrastructure development, and sustainable finance.
 - ♦ India focuses on **reform without destabilisation**, supporting **calibrated local currency settlements** where economically viable, rather than ideological resistance to the dollar-based system.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** Particularly in semiconductors, critical minerals, and pharmaceuticals, should be a priority on the agenda.
 - ♦ Recent export controls on critical minerals and technology may have serious repercussions for global supply chains and for BRICS integration.
- **Climate Action and Sustainable Development:** India is expected to advance climate action, disaster risk reduction and support for SDGs, consistent with international commitments under COP30 and future climate forums.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):** India's own DPI ecosystem like Aadhaar, UPI, CoWIN positions it uniquely to lead the BRICS conversation on **technology governance and digital cooperation**.
 - ♦ Climate, health, and clean energy are the top priorities, with India committed to a people-centric, climate-oriented presidency centred on resilience and sustainable growth.

Challenges India Needs To Navigate

- **Managing Internal Contradictions:** BRICS's rapid expansion has increased its weight along with its **heterogeneity**.
 - ♦ Fissures in the Transatlantic Partnership between Europe and the US, as well as within NATO, have significantly enhanced uncertainty in global affairs, making **BRICS consensus-building harder**.
- **Divergent Interests Among Members:** India's interests and priorities within BRICS differ significantly from those of China and Russia.
 - ♦ China favours rapid expansion to shape a new world order.
 - ♦ Russia supports expansion primarily to counter the West.
 - ♦ India favours a more cautious approach to prevent losing influence or diluting its leadership.
- **Preventing Geopolitical Drift:** India intends to prevent BRICS from turning into an ideological bloc against the West, preserving strategic autonomy and allowing partnerships outside BRICS.

India as Voice of the Global South

- India's BRICS presidency is an extension of its broader foreign policy doctrine i.e. **strategic autonomy combined with active multilateralism**.
 - ♦ India has positioned itself as a bridge between the developed and developing worlds.
- Geopolitically, India's BRICS chairship is positioned as a stabilising and consensus-building effort within an increasingly multipolar world.
 - ♦ India has emphasised **South-South cooperation**, reform of global governance institutions, poverty alleviation, climate transition, and development financing, while avoiding confrontational postures.

Conclusion

- India's 2026 presidency of BRICS, at a time of weakening global governance, protectionist policies, and heightened uncertainty, carries renewed hopes and expectations of collaboration, governance, and delivery.
- India is well-suited to build coherence in an increasingly heterogeneous grouping that is consultative, incremental, and consensus-driven.

Source: LM

Daily Mains Practice Question

- [Q] Examine the key priorities of India's BRICS Presidency and analyze its strategic significance in shaping a multipolar global order.