

PSIR & GS-2

DAILY BRIEF

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Briefs, scans the best academic platforms, national newspapers & leading think tanks to pick the most relevant articles & research. It converts them into crisp, high-impact points you can directly use in your mains answers.



PSIR OPTIONAL BY
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| ForumIAS |

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Rebalancing the global order- India's BRICS strategy



Rebalancing the Global Order: India's BRICS Strategyfff

Rebalancing the Global Order: India's BRICS Strategyfff

orfonline.org

Context India hosts the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi and central argument is whether New Delhi can keep BRICS reformist without letting it turn anti-Western.

Facts

- Four practical outcomes are proposed: expanded local-currency trade & payment mechanisms; larger NDB role through increased local currency lending; DPI covering AI governance; and coordination on critical minerals and manufacturing.
- The agenda framed: as humanity first & people centric, make BRICS an instrument of practical economic cooperation rather than an arena for geopolitical polarisation.

Analytical Crux

India's BRICS problem is not weakness but incoherence. The grouping is now large enough to claim it speaks for the Global South. India's presidency focuses on agenda with things members can build together: local currency payments, NDB lending, supply chains in critical mineral and food. New Delhi's line separates it from Moscow & Tehran, because it wants the order rebalanced from inside rather than replaced from outside. China sits inside the same problem, since India must cooperate on institutional reform with the state it competes against elsewhere, so the method is compartmentalisation rather than resolution. The May 2026 ministerial closed with a chair's statement instead of a communique, which is what the divergence costs India when it surfaces.

Verbatim Quotes

"Greater representational diversity does not automatically produce greater strategic cohesion."

India is playing the long game in Central Asia

Firstpost.



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India is playing the long game in Central Asia

Deepening India-Uzbekistan ties are turning connectivity constraints into long-term strategic opportunity



Context The PM's Uzbekistan visit produced a small commercial relationship and a large strategic bet. India should build for Central Asia of future rather than let the Central Asia of today set the limits of its policy.

Facts

India & Uzbekistan elevated relationship to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Current annual bilateral trade - \$1.3 billion & target of \$5 billion by 2030.

Uzbekistan borders every Central Asian republic and Afghanistan, and it is at the demographic & geographic centre of the region.

Analytical Crux

Central Asia policy should be judged on a longer clock than trade figures. Uzbekistan earns Indian attention not for the \$1.3 billion of current trade but for where it sits, bordering every Central Asian republic and Afghanistan, and for the working relationship with Kabul that Tashkent has and Delhi lacks. Because Pakistan blocks the land route and Chabahar waits on the Iran war, India's usable instruments are pharmaceuticals, software, UPI, medical education and uranium bought under safeguards. The uranium agreement carries a domestic argument as well, since Meghalaya's assembly resisting mining at home. Tashkent is courting Pakistan as well. There is need for India to occupy the space China and Russia leave open rather than to match Chinese spending.

South’s muted voice as political power shifts North

The south’s muted voice as political power shifts north

Even though the national movement was dominated by leaders from northern, western and eastern India, the voice of the southern region has never felt as stifled in national politics and policy as it feels today. True, Gandhi, Nehru, Netaji and Patel were the tallest of leaders. Neither C. Rajagopalachari of Madras, nor T. Prakasam of Andhra, nor indeed E.M.S. Namboodiripad (EMS) of (Kerala) Kerala had their kind of national presence. Nor are the various resistance movements and anti-British revolts of the south valorised across the country, especially in northern India. Yet, the presence of a galaxy of leaders from the south in its leadership ranks helped the original Indian National Congress to be seen as an all-inclusive umbrella party in which political voices from different parts of the country felt included.

A north-dominated political landscape Blame it on demographics or the penchant for a 'national' language, parliamentary politics seems to have contributed to the political domination of northern India over southern India. Both the Indian National Congress and the Jana Sangh, and its later avatar, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), have been dominated by leadership from the north. In the nearly eight decades of India's independent existence, only one Prime Minister from the south completed a full term in office. Other Prime Ministers from south India have been seen, at best, merely as placeholders. The domination of the so-called Nehru-Gandhi family in the Congress party, and the ideological dominance of Hindi and the political dominance of the Hindi heartland in the BJP, have cast a long shadow over southern political leadership.

The Congress party could at least make the claim that it had powerful regional leaders from the south, such as K. Kamaraj and C. Subramaniam in Tamil Nadu; Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, Kasu Brahmananda Reddy, Marri Chenna Reddy, and Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy in Andhra Pradesh; S. Nijalingappa, Devaraj Urs, and S.M. Krishna in Karnataka; and K. Karunakaran in Kerala. The BJP, to date, does not have a south Indian political leader of any stature in its leadership ranks. The one person who rose from within the party ranks – B.S. Yediyurappa – has quickly faded away.

If political leaders of some distinction from the south have made a mark on national politics, they have been from regional political parties or national parties with a markedly regional presence – M.G. Ramachandran and Jayalalithaa in Tamil Nadu; Namboodiripad in Kerala; N.T. Rama Rao (NTR) in Andhra Pradesh; K. Chandrashekar Rao in Telangana; and H.D. Deve Gowda, Ramakrishna Hegde, and Siddaramaiah in Karnataka. National political parties have rarely provided the political space for their southern leaders to acquire a national profile. When one of them did, such as P. V. Narasimha



Sanjaya Baru
Former newspaper editor and a former Member of the National Security Advisory Board of India



Parakala Prabhakar
Political economist and the author of 'The Crooked Timber of New India'

The south's 'political retreat' from its once-influential national role comes amid growing anxieties over representation and federalism

Rao, the first south Indian Prime Minister (perhaps largely because of his Hindi-speaking skills), the Congress party denied him his due place in its pantheon of Prime Ministers.

Southern leaders and delimitation It is against this background that one must evaluate the role of southern politicians in the delimitation issue. It is a pity that they have not been able to speak with one voice on this issue at the recently concluded 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council. Except for the strong intervention of Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, the meeting could very well have been a gathering of the Chief Secretaries of the southern States. Mr. Shivakumar made a powerful intervention, categorically demanding that the use of the 1971 Census data for delimitation be continued for another 25 years.

He also called for the Lok Sabha's strength to be retained at the present 543 seats and for women's reservation to be implemented. His Congress colleague, Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan of Kerala, made only a tepid mention of delimitation. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay seemed to have revised his earlier strong opposition to delimitation. He wound down his position to seeking an assurance that the States should not be denied their present proportional share of representation in the Lok Sabha. The Telangana Chief Minister, A. Revanth Reddy of the Congress, missed the meeting and deputed the Deputy Chief Minister.

The rest of the demands and issues raised by the southern Chief Ministers were to do with financial devolutions, river water disputes and such other administrative issues. The most politically consequential issue of delimitation did not heat up the meeting. Nor has it been able to compel the five southern Chief Ministers to close ranks and come together on a common platform.

Indeed, even on other issues, the varying degrees of dependence of the southern States on New Delhi have made each of them not only supplicate for funds at the Delhi darbar but also echo some of the ideological obsessions of the BJP. Both N. Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan (Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, respectively) have become even more communal in their political articulation than some of the BJP's allies in the NDA. Mr. Naidu's desperation for financial support from Delhi has diminished his political stature as a representative of a proud Telugu people, a role that Mr. Naidu's party, the Telugu Desam Party, once embodied.

NTR once famously said, "The Centre is a conceptual myth", pricking the balloon of national self-importance of Delhi's power elite. His was a powerful voice, along with other Chief Ministers of Opposition-ruled states, for federalism. That prompted Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to appoint the Sarkaria Commission on

Centre-State relations in June 1983. At the time, the Sarkaria Commission's report was widely reported and discussed. Last year, the then Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government in Tamil Nadu appointed another committee on Centre-State relations, chaired by Justice Kurian Joseph. It did not receive the attention it deserved, either in the media or even among the southern political leadership. This is a reflection of southern Chief Ministers abdicating their responsibility. Their readiness to ingratiate themselves with the Union government merely to secure funds has further weakened their voice at the national level.

In Kerala, powerful Chief Ministers such as EMS and K. Karunakaran made their presence felt nationally. EMS played a vital role in 1968-69 in mobilising K. Brahmananda Reddy (Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh) and Mohanlal Sukhadia (Chief Minister of Rajasthan) to get the National Development Council to endorse the Gadgil Formula for the distribution of Plan funds between States. Contrast that with the submissive approach of Pinarayi Vijayan (former Kerala Chief Minister and senior leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)) to the Union government. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the NDC has not met even once. There has been hardly any disquiet over this expressed by anyone across the political spectrum. Over the past two decades, the leadership of both the CPM-led and Congress-led alliances has been weak-kneed and unable to make its presence felt nationally.

Shrinking space Southern, or peninsular, India's political presence in the Indian federation is weak even with the present distribution of seats in the Lok Sabha. But successive national leaderships – first of the Congress and later of the Janata Party and the coalitions led by various Janata Parivar parties – were not entirely dismissive of southern concerns, whether on matters of language, Centre-State relations, allocation of funds, railway lines, or other issues. Whatever the outcome, the south did not feel that its voice was being stifled. Overall, there was arguably less Hindi-heartland-centric policy direction. Moreover, those parties had a consequential presence in the southern States and included influential leaders from the region.

As it is, the entire southern region could be rendered politically inconsequential by the strength of just two and a half States to three States from the Hindi heartland in the Lok Sabha. If scenarios like this enter the political discourse in the south, the delimitation design that the BJP-led Union government is now pushing will only heighten political anxieties in the region. When that happens, those anxieties will overwhelm the present crop of supplicant Chief Ministers.

Context Southern India has never felt as unheard in national politics as it does now, and the cause is no longer demography but readiness of southern CMs to trade their political voice for central funds.

Facts

Nearly 8 decades of independence, only one PM from the south has completed a full term; other southern PMs have been placeholders.

EMS, Brahmananda Reddy and Sukhadia moved NDC to endorse the Gadgil Formula in 1968-69.

Analytical Crux

The South's weakness in national politics is partly self-inflicted. Demography and the pull of a national language explain the older half of it, and since in 8 decades only one southern PM has completed a full term and both national parties have been led from the north. What has changed is that the 5 southern CMs no longer close ranks, and the 31st Southern Zonal Council showed it, with Shivakumar pressing the 1971 Census basis and the 543 seat ceiling while Kerala was tepid, Tamil Nadu has softened and Telangana did not turn up. States that must ask Delhi over representation. The EMS and NTR used NDC and federalism argument to force a national hearing and got the Sarkaria Commission out of it, against a present in which the NDC has not met once and a state appointed committee on Centre-State relations passed without notice.

- GS Paper II, 2026: *How far has the Indian federal framework been successful in accommodating regional and cultural diversities? Highlight the role of asymmetric federalism and suggest measures to make dispute resolution mechanisms more effective.*
- GS Paper II, 2026: *"BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.*
- PSIR Paper I, 2025: *The decision to conduct Population Census-2027 has reopened the debate on delimitation in India. Discuss its various aspects.*
- PSIR Paper II, 2025: *India maintains strong ties with countries that will assure a free and open Indo-Pacific and guarantee greater connectivity with rest of the world. Analyze.*
- PSIR Paper II, 2025: *Global South-sensitive model of globalization would prevent the danger emanating from overcentralized globalization. Discuss.*
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