

GENERAL STUDIES II

BRICS Parliamentary Forum 2026: Complete UPSC Notes

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India is preparing to host the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in New Delhi on 26–27 October 2026, bringing parliamentary cooperation into focus during its BRICS chairship. The forum provides a platform for legislators to exchange views on inclusive growth, global governance reform, climate resilience, digital technologies and the priorities of emerging economies. This article examines the role of parliamentary diplomacy, the evolution of BRICS, India's strategic interests, opportunities for the Global South, institutional challenges and the way forward. It also includes UPSC Prelims facts, original MCQs and a model GS Paper II Mains answer.

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UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS | 23 OCTOBER 2026 | GS PAPER II

Understand the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, India's chairship, parliamentary diplomacy, multipolarity, inclusive development and international institutional reform.

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GS Paper II

International Organisations

Prelims + Mains

Current Affairs 2026

The 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum is scheduled to take place in New Delhi on 26–27 October 2026. The event draws attention to an important aspect of international relations: parliamentary diplomacy. As India holds the BRICS chairship in 2026, the forum offers an opportunity to strengthen dialogue among lawmakers on global governance, economic resilience, climate action, digital transformation and the developmental priorities of emerging economies.

1. Why Is the BRICS Parliamentary Forum in the News?

India is preparing to host the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in New Delhi on 26–27 October 2026.

The forum follows the broader BRICS leaders' engagement during India's 2026 chairship and provides a platform for parliamentarians to discuss how international priorities can be reflected in domestic policymaking.

Key Themes

- Reforming global governance institutions.
- Strengthening the voice of the Global South.
- Promoting sustainable and inclusive growth.
- Improving cooperation on emerging technologies.
- Supporting economic resilience and diversifying supply chains.
- Encouraging democratic oversight of international commitments.

Important Date Distinction: As of 23 October 2026, the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum is a forthcoming event scheduled for 26–27 October. Its proposed agenda should not be confused with outcomes already adopted.

2. What Is the BRICS Parliamentary Forum?

The BRICS Parliamentary Forum is an inter-parliamentary dialogue platform associated with the BRICS grouping.

It brings together representatives of national legislatures to exchange views on common challenges and explore opportunities for cooperation.

Unlike an executive summit involving heads of state or government, a parliamentary forum places greater emphasis on legislative perspectives, public accountability and institutional learning.

Major Functions

- Promoting dialogue between national legislatures.
- Sharing experiences in lawmaking and public policy.
- Discussing sustainable development and social inclusion.
- Supporting scrutiny of international commitments.
- Encouraging cooperation on technology and economic governance.

Its recommendations generally have political and consultative significance, but do not automatically become binding domestic law.

3. BRICS: Background and Evolution

BRICS emerged as a platform for cooperation among major emerging economies.

The original BRIC countries were Brazil, Russia, India and China. South Africa subsequently joined, creating BRICS.

Over time, the grouping expanded to include additional countries from Asia, Africa and the Middle East.



Important Institutional Milestones

Year	Development
2006	Initial BRIC foreign ministers' meeting.
2009	First BRIC leaders' summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia.
2010–11	South Africa joined the grouping and participated in the 2011 summit.
2014	Agreement to establish the New Development Bank and Contingent Reserve Arrangement.
2024 onwards	Expansion of membership and engagement with additional partner countries.
2026	India chairs BRICS and hosts the 12th Parliamentary Forum.

4. BRICS Membership and Institutional Structure

BRICS operates as an intergovernmental cooperation grouping rather than a supranational organisation with powers comparable to those of the European Union.

Its structure relies heavily on consultation, consensus and cooperation among members.

Important Institutional Components

Leaders' Summit

Provides high-level political direction and identifies common strategic priorities.

Ministerial Meetings

Facilitate cooperation in finance, trade, health, education and other sectors.

Parliamentary Forum

Promotes dialogue among legislators on governance, development and legislative cooperation.

New Development Bank

A multilateral development bank established by BRICS countries to support infrastructure and sustainable development projects.

UPSC Prelims Note: The BRICS Parliamentary Forum is not a global legislature. It cannot directly enact laws binding on all member countries.

5. India's BRICS Chairship in 2026

India's chairship highlights four interconnected priorities: resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability.

A. Resilience

Strengthening economic, technological and institutional capacity to respond to global disruptions.

B. Innovation

Encouraging responsible use of emerging technologies, scientific collaboration and development-oriented innovation.

C. Cooperation

Building practical partnerships in trade, finance, public health, education and connectivity.

D. Sustainability

Promoting climate resilience, resource efficiency and development pathways that support present and future generations.

These priorities provide a useful framework for understanding India's approach to South–South cooperation.

6. What Is Parliamentary Diplomacy?

Parliamentary diplomacy refers to international engagement undertaken by legislators and parliamentary institutions.

It complements conventional diplomacy conducted by foreign ministries and national executives.

How It Contributes to Governance

- **Representation:** Legislators bring domestic development concerns into international discussions.
- **Accountability:** Parliamentary scrutiny can assess the implementation of government commitments.
- **Policy Learning:** Legislatures can exchange experiences on effective public policies.
- **Legislation:** Domestic lawmaking may support agreed international objectives.
- **Budgetary Oversight:** Legislatures can scrutinise public spending associated with international initiatives.

7. Global Governance Reform and BRICS

A central concern of BRICS is the representation of developing and emerging economies in international institutions.

Many existing institutions were established in a different geopolitical era.

BRICS countries argue that governance arrangements should better reflect contemporary economic and demographic realities.

Institutions Frequently Discussed

Institution	Reform Concern
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United Nations Security Council	Representation, legitimacy and responsiveness.
International Monetary Fund	Quota shares and voting influence.
World Bank	Development financing, governance and lending priorities.
Global Trade Institutions	Fair market access and development-sensitive trade rules.

The objective of reform should be to improve legitimacy, effectiveness and inclusion, rather than merely reproduce existing inequalities under different leadership.

8. Importance for the Global South

The Global South is a broad political and developmental term used for countries that often share concerns about development finance, technology access, inequality and representation.

It is not a formally defined geographical organisation.

Key Concerns

- Access to affordable development finance.
- Fair participation in global trade.
- Technology transfer and digital inclusion.
- Food, energy and health security.
- Climate adaptation and climate finance.
- More equitable global decision-making.

BRICS parliamentary cooperation can help translate these concerns into discussions about practical public policy.

9. Economic Resilience and Supply Chains

Recent global disruptions have highlighted vulnerabilities in international supply chains.

BRICS economies include major producers and consumers of energy, agricultural commodities, industrial goods and critical minerals.

Greater cooperation could support diversified sourcing, logistics resilience and improved economic connectivity.

Potential Areas

- Trade facilitation and customs cooperation.

- Resilient food and fertiliser supply chains.
- Energy security and diversification.
- Cross-border digital payments.
- Industrial technology partnerships.

However, cooperation must account for differences in national interests, trade competitiveness and strategic priorities.

10. Digital Public Infrastructure and BRICS

Digital Public Infrastructure includes shared digital systems that can support identification, payments and secure data exchange.

India's experience with digital payments and public digital platforms offers potential lessons for international cooperation.

Possible Benefits

- Lower transaction costs
- Improved access to public services.
- Greater financial inclusion.
- Support for small businesses.
- More efficient government delivery systems.

Governance Safeguards

Digital cooperation must also address cybersecurity, privacy, interoperability, accessibility and algorithmic accountability.

Technology should support human development without undermining individual rights.

11. Climate Change and Sustainable Development

BRICS countries face different but interconnected climate challenges, including extreme weather, energy transition pressures and adaptation financing gaps.

Parliamentarians can contribute through environmental legislation, public expenditure oversight and scrutiny of national climate programmes.

Priority Areas

- Climate adaptation and disaster resilience.
- Renewable energy deployment.
- Sustainable infrastructure.
- Water and food security.
- Biodiversity protection.
- Just and inclusive energy transitions.

A major challenge is balancing economic development with environmental sustainability.

12. Major Challenges Facing BRICS Parliamentary Cooperation

Challenge	Explanation
Diverse Political Systems	Members have different constitutional structures and legislative powers.
Geopolitical Differences	Strategic rivalries and security disagreements can obstruct consensus.
Economic Asymmetry	Members differ substantially in industrial capacity and economic influence.
Non-Binding Recommendations	Forum discussions require follow-up through national institutions.
Technology Dependence	Concentrated technological capabilities may create unequal partnerships.
Implementation Capacity	Institutional resources and policy priorities differ among countries.

13. The Way Forward

1. Establish Thematic Working Groups

Create regular parliamentary dialogues on climate action, digital governance, development finance and public health.

2. Improve Follow-Up Mechanisms

Encourage periodic reporting on recommendations and voluntary progress reviews.

3. Promote Inclusive Technology

Support affordable digital infrastructure, skills development and secure technology cooperation.

4. Strengthen Global South Representation

Develop constructive proposals for institutional reform that improve representation and effectiveness.

5. Protect Strategic Autonomy

Maintain issue-based cooperation while respecting national sovereignty and diverse foreign policy positions.

6. Focus on Measurable Outcomes

Prioritise practical improvements in trade, development finance, public services and climate resilience.

14. UPSC Prelims: Quick Revision Facts

- BRIC originally included Brazil, Russia, India and China.
- The first BRIC leaders' summit took place in 2009.
- South Africa joined the grouping in 2010.
- The New Development Bank was established under the 2014 Fortaleza agreements.
- The NDB headquarters is in Shanghai, China.
- The BRICS Parliamentary Forum is an inter-parliamentary dialogue platform.
- The 12th Parliamentary Forum is scheduled in New Delhi on 26–27 October 2026.
- India holds the BRICS chairship in 2026.
- The forum's recommendations are not automatically binding domestic laws.
- BRICS is distinct from the G7, G20 and the United Nations.

15. Original UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Question 1. With reference to the BRICS Parliamentary Forum, consider the following statements:

1. It facilitates cooperation among legislators of BRICS countries.
2. Its resolutions automatically become legally binding on all member states.
3. It can promote discussions on sustainable development and governance reform.

Which statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct. The forum facilitates legislative dialogue and discussion of shared development challenges.

Statement 2 is incorrect because parliamentary forum recommendations do not automatically become binding national laws.

Question 2. Consider the following:

1. New Development Bank
2. Contingent Reserve Arrangement
3. BRICS Parliamentary Forum

Which of the above are associated with BRICS?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3.

All three are associated with the broader BRICS cooperation architecture, although they perform different functions.

Question 3. With reference to India's BRICS chairship in 2026, which of the following themes are relevant?

1. Resilience
2. Innovation
3. Cooperation

4. Sustainability

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4.

These four themes form the broad framework of India's 2023 BRICS chairship priorities.

16. UPSC Mains Practice Question

GS Paper II | 15 Marks | 250 Words

"Parliamentary diplomacy can strengthen the democratic legitimacy and implementation of multilateral commitments." Discuss this statement in the context of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum and India's engagement with the Global South.

Model Answer Framework

Introduction

The BRICS Parliamentary Forum complements executive-level multilateral diplomacy by facilitating dialogue among national legislatures. Its significance has increased with BRICS expansion and the growing developmental aspirations of emerging economies.

Significance

- Parliamentary engagement can improve representation of domestic concerns.
- Legislative scrutiny can strengthen accountability for international commitments.
- Policy exchanges can support climate, digital and development reforms.
- Dialogue can strengthen the collective voice of developing economies.

Challenges

- Diverse political systems and legislative powers.
- Geopolitical differences among members.
- Non-binding nature of forum recommendations.
- Unequal institutional and technological capacities.

Way Forward

BRICS should encourage regular thematic parliamentary working groups, voluntary implementation reviews, greater transparency and development-focused cooperation.

Conclusion

Parliamentary diplomacy cannot replace executive negotiations, but it can improve public accountability, institutional learning and the domestic relevance of international cooperation.

17. Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum?

It is an inter-parliamentary dialogue meeting associated with BRICS, scheduled in New Delhi on 26–27 October 2026.

What is the main purpose of the forum?

To encourage cooperation among parliamentarians on global governance, development and legislative priorities.

Which country chairs BRICS in 2026?

India holds the BRICS chairship in 2026.

What are India's chairship priorities?

Resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability.

Is the Parliamentary Forum the same as the BRICS Summit?

No. The leaders' summit brings together national leaders, while the Parliamentary Forum focuses on dialogue among legislators.

Are BRICS Parliamentary Forum decisions legally binding?

No. Recommendations normally require appropriate domestic legal or policy action before implementation.

18. Conclusion

The 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum provides an opportunity to strengthen parliamentary cooperation during India's 2026 BRICS chairship.

Its significance extends beyond diplomatic symbolism. Legislative dialogue can support policy learning, public accountability and a more inclusive approach to global governance.

However, practical results will depend on sustained institutional engagement, realistic priorities and follow-up action within member countries.

For UPSC aspirants, the forum is a valuable example of the relationship between international organisations, parliamentary institutions, strategic autonomy and the aspirations of the Global South.

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Educational Disclaimer: This article provides independent educational analysis for UPSC preparation. Information is presented as of 23 October 2026. The Parliamentary Forum scheduled for 26–27 October is a forthcoming event, and its final outcomes should be verified after the meeting.

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