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India's BRICS Chairship 2026 and the NSA Meeting in New Delhi

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WHY IN NEWS

India is hosting the BRICS National Security Advisers' (NSA) Meeting in New Delhi on June 22-23, 2026, chaired by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval. The meeting takes place during India's 2026 BRICS Chairship and carries the theme "Non-traditional security challenges confronting the world today".

The NSA Meeting is among the flagship engagements of India's Chairship year. It signals that the security pillar of BRICS, long overshadowed by the grouping's economic and financial agenda, has matured into a regular consultative channel among the world's largest emerging economies.

WHAT IS BRICS?

BRICS began as an investment thesis. The acronym "BRIC" was coined by economist Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs in 2001 to describe four fast-growing economies: Brazil, Russia, India and China. The first formal BRIC summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, in 2009. South Africa joined in 2010, making it BRICS.

A major expansion took effect from January 1, 2024, when new members were admitted. As of 2026, BRICS has 11 members.

The Eleven Members

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FOUNDING FIVE	NEWER MEMBERS
Brazil	Egypt
Russia	Ethiopia
India	Iran
China	Indonesia
South Africa	Saudi Arabia
	United Arab Emirates

The grouping now accounts for a large share of the world’s population, land area and a rising share of global GDP measured in purchasing power parity. It positions itself as a platform for the Global South and for reform of global governance institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the UN Security Council.

INDIA’S 2026 CHAIRSHIP

India assumed the rotating BRICS Chairship for 2026. This is India’s fourth time chairing the grouping, having earlier done so in 2012, 2016 and 2021. The theme for India’s 2026 Chairship is “Building for Resilience (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/resilience/>), Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability”.

The NSA Meeting

The NSA Meeting in New Delhi is chaired by NSA Ajit Doval. Its agenda includes a review of the BRICS Joint Working Groups, notably those on counter-terrorism and on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and emerging-technology security. The chosen theme, non-traditional security, reflects the growing salience (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/salience/>) of cyber threats, terrorism financing, technology-enabled crime, and supply-chain vulnerabilities.

China is to be represented by its Foreign Minister, who also functions as the country’s senior security interlocutor (<https://ujijari.com/vocab/interlocutor/>). A bilateral meeting between Doval and his Chinese counterpart Wang is expected on the margins, continuing the dialogue on the boundary question and broader stabilisation of India-China ties.

WHY THE NSA TRACK MATTERS

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DIMENSION	SIGNIFICANCE
Counter-terrorism	BRICS has a Working Group on counter-terrorism with multiple subgroups; India pushes a zero-tolerance line
Cyber and ICT security	Emerging-tech security cooperation addresses critical-infrastructure and data risks
Strategic autonomy (https://ujivari.com/terms/strategic-autonomy/)	The NSA channel lets India engage Russia and China without Western mediation
Global South voice	Security agenda framed around concerns of developing economies

ANALYSIS AND WAY FORWARD

For India, BRICS is an exercise in strategic autonomy. It allows New Delhi to sit at the same table as Moscow and Beijing while simultaneously deepening ties with the West through the Quad and the G20. The challenge is to keep BRICS issue-based and developmental rather than letting it harden into an explicitly anti-Western bloc, which would dilute India's **multi-alignment** (<https://ujivari.com/terms/multi-alignment/>).

The way forward lies in operationalising concrete deliverables: an effective counter-terrorism mechanism, interoperable digital public infrastructure, and credible reform demands for **multilateral** (<https://ujivari.com/vocab/multilateral/>) institutions. India's task as Chair is to balance the divergent interests of an enlarged and more heterogeneous membership while keeping the grouping coherent.

UPSC RELEVANCE

- **GS2 (International Relations):** India and groupings involving its interests; **bilateral** (<https://ujivari.com/vocab/bilateral/>), regional and global groupings.
- **Prelims:** BRICS membership and expansion, summit history, India's Chairship years.
- **Mains:** "BRICS is increasingly a platform of the Global South." Examine India's interests and constraints within an expanded BRICS.
- **Link to strategic autonomy and multi-alignment** (<https://ujivari.com/vocab/multi-alignment/>) doctrine.

FACTS CORNER

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BRICS has 11 members as of 2026: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

“BRIC” was coined by Jim O’Neill of Goldman Sachs in 2001; the first BRIC summit was in 2009 at Yekaterinburg.

South Africa joined in 2010; the latest expansion took effect from January 1, 2024.

India chairs BRICS in 2026 for the fourth time (after 2012, 2016, 2021).

India’s 2026 theme: “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability”.

The NSA Meeting (June 22-23, 2026) is chaired by NSA Ajit Doval; theme “Non-traditional security challenges confronting the world today”.

Sources: *Ministry of External Affairs* (<https://www.mea.gov.in>), *Press Information Bureau* (<https://pib.gov.in>), *The Hindu* (<https://www.thehindu.com>)

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