

Editorial of the Day – 24.02.2026

Index

1. Stick together- On India and Brazil and their ties (TH) – 01
2. India's new federal compact must be based on principle of non-domination (IE) – 02

1. Stick together- On India and Brazil and their ties (TH)

General Studies 2- International Relation

Topic- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Sub Topic- Important International institutions, agencies and fora - their structure, mandate; South-South Cooperation.

IBSA Dialogue Forum- Strengthening Democratic Multilateralism

1. Introduction

In February 2026, the IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) Dialogue Forum has regained significant geopolitical traction. This resurgence is driven by renewed India-Brazil engagement and the need for a collective response to rising U.S. tariff tensions and global protectionism. As a unique platform of three major democracies from three different continents, IBSA is positioned as the "purest" voice of the Global South, emphasizing a rules-based, equitable international order.

2. Foundational Context

Genesis- Formally established in 2003 via the Brasília Declaration.

Composition- A trilateral grouping of India, Brazil, and South Africa.

Unique Identity- It represents the intersection of three major regional powers and pluralistic democracies from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, distinguishing it from the broader (and now expanded) BRICS.

3. Core Objectives and Institutional Structure

Strategic Goals

South-South Cooperation- Moving beyond the "donor-recipient" model to a partnership-based development model.

Global Governance Reform- Advocating for the urgent reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Multilateral Coordination- Aligning positions within the UN, WTO, and G20 to safeguard the interests of developing nations.

Sustainable Development- Focusing on poverty alleviation, food security, and climate justice.

Organizational Framework

High-Level Summits- Trilateral meetings of Heads of State/Government.

Ministerial Meetings- Regular interactions between Foreign Ministers (Trilateral Commission).

Functional Depth- Operationalized through over 15 sectoral working groups ranging from environment to transport.

4. Key Pillars of Cooperation

The forum operates across diverse functional areas to build collective resilience-

Political & Geopolitical- Coordination on global security, counter-terrorism, and democratic stability.

Trade & Economy- Promoting intra-IBSA trade and supporting SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) and industrial growth.

Defence & Security- The IBSAMAR joint naval exercises serve as a cornerstone for maritime cooperation in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

Energy & Health– Focus on biofuels and renewable energy; ensuring access to affordable medicines and public health equity.

Agriculture– Joint research into food security and rural development models.

5. The IBSA Fund– A Success Story

Known officially as the IBSA Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation, the fund is a globally recognized model–

Purpose– Supports developmental projects in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and post-conflict nations.

Impact– Promotes inclusive growth through localized, sustainable development projects.

Recognition– It has received numerous accolades for its efficiency and for being a pioneer in South–South development assistance.

6. Strategic Importance and Contemporary Relevance

The "Democratic" Advantage

Unlike other groupings, IBSA's common denominator is constitutional democracy, providing a shared language for human rights and the rule of law.

Countering Protectionism (2026 Context)

Amidst rising global protectionism and tariff wars initiated by major economies, IBSA acts as a–

Collective Bargaining Tool– Enhances the negotiating power of emerging markets in the WTO.

Alternative to BRICS– While BRICS has expanded and become more diverse (and complex), IBSA remains a more cohesive, interest-aligned trilateral group.

Global South Leader– Amplifies the voice of developing nations regarding Climate Finance and Digital Sovereignty.

7. Challenges and Obstacles

Institutional Inertia– The need for more consistent summits and a permanent secretariat to maintain momentum.

The "BRICS Overlap"– Frequent questions regarding IBSA's relevance given that all three members are also key players in BRICS.

Domestic Shifts– Divergent political changes within member states can occasionally slow down trilateral initiatives.

8. Conclusion

The IBSA Dialogue Forum remains an indispensable platform for advancing a multipolar world order. By linking three continents through a shared democratic identity, IBSA provides a robust mechanism for South–South cooperation. For India, IBSA is not just a diplomatic forum but a strategic necessity to project leadership in the Global South and ensure that the global governance of the 21st century reflects 21st-century realities.

Source– https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/stick-together-on-india-and-brazil-and-their-ties/article70667887.ece#google_vignette

2. India's new federal compact must be based on principle of non-domination (IE)

General Studies 2– Governance

Topics– Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health.

Sub Topic– Recent developments in Indian Medicine and Research; Public Health Infrastructure and Policy.

A New Federal Compact– Principle of Non-Domination

1. Introduction

In an era described as the dakshinayan phase—where innovative socio-economic models are emerging from Southern states—the Tamil Nadu government-appointed High-Level Committee, chaired by Justice (ret'd) Kurian Joseph, has submitted a report advocating for a "structural reset" of Indian

federalism. The report argues that the current trend of centralization is no longer an "inherited reflex" but a troubling pattern that threatens the "compositional" character of the Indian state.

2. The Call for a "Structural Reset"

The report moves beyond merely reiterating old suggestions, offering a plea for a new federal compact based on principled power distribution–

Beyond the Founding Anxieties– While the original Constitution leaned toward centralization due to post-partition anxieties, the report argues that maintaining this stance today is an institutional distortion.

Federalism and Democracy– It posits that a federation that trusts its states and respects subsidiarity does not weaken sovereignty; rather, it deepens democracy.

Negotiated Accommodation– Unity should be sustained by consent and negotiated accommodation rather than command and enforced uniformity.

3. Dimensions of the Proposed Federal Reset

The article highlights specific reform proposals across four major arenas–

A. Constitutional Reset

Territorial Integrity– Reforming the "draconian power" of the Centre to redraw state boundaries (Article 3) without meaningful state consultation.

Amendment Powers– Checking the Centre's primacy in amending the Constitution without involving states.

Office of the Governor– Proposing a constitutional code to curb the "arbitrariness and partisanship" often displayed by Governors.

Anti-Defection– Eliminating loopholes in current anti-defection laws.

Elections– Transferring the responsibility of assembly elections to State Election Commissions.

B. Sectoral & Functional Reset

Education– Recommending that education be restored to the State List.

State Subjects– Checking central encroachment on state-specific subjects like Health and Agriculture.

C. Fiscal & Representation Reset

GST Reform– Detailed examination and multiple options for reworking the GST regime to restore fiscal balance.

Delimitation– Rejecting the "One Nation, One Election" idea and advocating for a permanent freeze on delimitation based on the ground of balance of power rather than just population metrics.

D. Cultural Reset

Linguistic Uniformity– Challenging the misconception that national unity requires a single language.

Language Equality– Resisting the hegemony of Hindi while advocating for a spirit where all Indian languages are placed on an equal footing.

4. Civilizational and Philosophical Context

The article provides a unique philosophical justification for these reforms–

"Compositional" Character– Unlike the "coming together" federation of the US, India is a "holding together" federation where unity is constituted *through* its regional units.

Salad Bowl vs. Melting Pot– India is described as a "salad bowl" where each piece retains its distinct identity, rather than a "melting pot" that erases diversity.

Deshachar– Rooted in the Indian tradition of respecting local customs (deshachar), proving that the only way to rule the subcontinent is to respect its inherent diversity.

5. The Way Forward– Principles of a New Compact

A frank discussion on the balance of power between Hindi and non-Hindi states is proposed–

Guarantee for Non-Hindi States– A guarantee of non-imposition of Hindi and a freeze on their political representation as it stood in 1971.

Commitment from Southern/Western States– A commitment to continue an equitable distribution of federal revenues to support poorer states in the Hindi heartland and Eastern India.

6. Conclusion

The core of the Justice Kurian Joseph Committee report is the principle of political, cultural, and economic non-domination. It asserts that a just republic cannot be built on enforced uniformity but on a "new federal compact" that recognizes diversity as the very core of the Indian philosophical and constitutional tradition.

Source- <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/yogendra-yadav-writes-indias-new-federal-compact-must-be-based-on-principle-of-non-domination-10548244/>