

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

BRICS - FROM ANTI-WESTERN BLOC TO PLATFORM FOR REFORMING GLOBAL ORDER

- **India and Brazil** particularly oppose transforming BRICS into an anti-Western bloc. Both seek a **larger role** in an international system that can provide greater trade, technology, investment and diplomatic influence.
- The political orientation of BRICS members towards the West exists on a spectrum -
 - **Iran** lies closest to the anti-Western pole, with resistance to US influence deeply embedded in its foreign-policy identity.
 - **Russia and China** are in strategic competition with the West but continue to seek recognition, influence and a greater role in shaping the international order.
 - India, Brazil and several **newer members** favour strategic autonomy, institutional reform and greater representation rather than confrontation with the West.

India - Non-Western Does Not Mean Anti-Western:

- As a post-colonial developing country, India seeks strategic autonomy and does not want to become a geopolitical appendage of the US or Europe.
- At the same time, India's partnerships with the US, Europe, Japan and Australia have expanded significantly in trade, technology, defence and other areas.
- India's simultaneous participation in **BRICS** and the **Quad** reflects this multi-alignment.
- India therefore has an interest in keeping BRICS focused on reforming global governance rather than constructing geopolitical confrontation.

Russia and China - Competition with the West, Not Complete Separation:

- **Russia's** conflict with the West has become deep and structural, particularly due to the Ukraine war, NATO's role in European security and Western sanctions.
- **China** presents a different contradiction. Beijing challenges US primacy in Asia, seeks to reduce vulnerabilities arising from Western technology restrictions and supports a more representative international order.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

New Members Complicating the Anti-Western Narrative:

- The newer BRICS members also weaken the idea of a unified anti-Western bloc -
 - **Egypt** maintains important security ties with the US.
 - **UAE** has extensive economic and strategic relations with the US and Europe.
 - **Indonesia** follows a “free and active” foreign policy, preserving strategic manoeuvring space among competing major powers.
- These countries seek strategic autonomy, stronger ties with China and a greater Global South voice, but do not necessarily seek membership in an anti-Western alliance.
- **Iran** remains the major exception, as resistance to US and Israeli influence is central to the Islamic Republic's political identity.

Way Forward for India:

- India's diplomatic task at the summit is to ensure that **autonomy** from the United States is not equated with **antagonism** towards it.
- New Delhi should position BRICS as -
 - A platform for **reforming global governance**, rather than dismantling it.
 - A mechanism for enhancing the voice and representation of the Global South.
 - A **forum for multipolarity** and strategic autonomy, rather than bloc politics.
 - A vehicle for cooperation in areas such as development finance, technology, trade and alternative payment mechanisms, without forcing ideological uniformity.
 - A complement to India's other partnerships, including the Quad, rather than their geopolitical counterweight.

Conclusion:

- BRICS is united less by opposition to the West than by **dissatisfaction** with the unequal distribution of power in the existing international system.
- Its members have divergent strategic interests and varying relationships with the West.
- India can best advance its interests by promoting BRICS as a **reformist, inclusive and multipolar platform**—one that seeks a more representative international order without turning strategic autonomy into anti-Western confrontation.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC) – WITHDRAWALS & CHALLENGES TO GLOBAL JUSTICE

- The ICC was established under the **Rome Statute**, which came into force in **2002**.
- Headquartered in **The Hague, Netherlands**, it is a court of last resort for prosecuting individuals accused of the most serious international crimes.
- Its jurisdiction covers four core crimes: Genocide, Crimes against humanity, War crimes, & Crime of aggression.
- The principle of **complementarity** is central to the ICC. The court generally intervenes when national authorities are **unable or unwilling to genuinely investigate or prosecute** serious crimes.
- Unlike a domestic criminal court, the **ICC does not have its own police force**. Its ability to investigate, arrest and prosecute suspects therefore depends significantly on cooperation from states.

Current Crisis Facing the ICC

- **Growing U.S. Pressure**
 - The United States has significantly increased pressure on the ICC. In July 2026, U.S. Secretary of State **Marco Rubio** announced what he described as a campaign to dismantle the threat posed by the court to U.S. sovereignty.
 - The U.S. administration has also sanctioned ICC personnel and organisations associated with the court.
 - Washington has also encouraged ICC member states that benefit from U.S. security arrangements to reconsider their membership.
- **Countries Announcing Withdrawal**
 - **Chad specifically cited U.S. pressure** in announcing its decision to withdraw.
 - Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, all governed by military juntas, have instead accused the ICC of **selective justice and neo-colonialism**.
 - Venezuela has similarly criticised the court.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

New Members and Continuing Relevance

- Despite the withdrawals, the ICC continues to attract countries seeking international accountability.
- **Ukraine joined the ICC in 2025**, having previously accepted the court's jurisdiction over crimes committed on its territory following the outbreak of hostilities with Russia in 2014. Ukraine has presented ICC membership as part of its effort to ensure accountability for serious international crimes.
- This demonstrates the contradictory pressures facing the ICC: while some governments are moving away from the institution, others view it as an important mechanism for addressing grave violations of international law.

Significance and Challenges

- The ICC represents an important development in **international criminal law**, particularly the principle that individuals, including political and military leaders, can potentially be held accountable for international crimes.
- However, its effectiveness is constrained by:
 - Dependence on state cooperation for arrests and evidence
 - Non-universal membership
 - Political opposition from powerful states
 - Allegations of selective enforcement
 - Limited independent enforcement capacity

Way Forward

- Strengthening the ICC requires greater consistency in the application of international criminal law, stronger cooperation among member states and greater transparency in institutional decision-making.
- At the same time, concerns regarding selectivity need to be addressed through **uniform legal standards and credible, independent investigations**, irrespective of the political identity or geographical location of the accused.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

DIGITAL INDIA LAND RECORDS MODERNIZATION PROGRAMME (DILRMP) 3.0



- It is aimed at **integrating land records, maps, registrations** and related data **through a GIS-based digital framework.**
 - The Government of India in 2008, merged **Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR)** and the **Computerization of Land Records (CLR)** and named it as **National Land Records Modernization Program (NLRMP).**
 - NLRMP was brought under the “Digital India” ambit and re-named as **Digital India Land Records Modernization Program (DILRMP) in 2016.**
- **Time Period:** It is five year initiative i.e 2026-31.
- **Funding:** It is a **central sector scheme** with 100% central funding.
- **Implemented by:** The Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development, real-time progress monitored by an upgraded **DILRMP-MIS dashboard.**
- **Features:**
 - **Universal Bhu-Aadhaar (ULPIN):** A framework to assign a **14-digit unique identification number to every land parcel** in the country, ensuring secure and unmistakable identity for all properties.
 - **Digitisation of Maps and Georeferencing:** Complete digitization of **cadastral maps** embedded with exact geographical coordinates.
 - **Paperless Property Registration:** The introduction of **end-to-end online, paperless registration** and a new Registration Repository. The Ministry also plans to upgrade 75 Sub-Registrar Offices (SROs) into **modern 'Registration Seva Kendras'.**
 - **Integrated Revenue Courts:** A modern, paperless **case management system (RCCMS)** integrated directly with land records to track disputes and cut down the time and cost of legal battles.
 - **NAKSHA Pilot for Urban Areas:** Completion of NAKSHA Pilot.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

COPPER



Copper prices have surged in recent months to hit a record high of \$14,708 per tonne.

- Copper is a naturally occurring chemical element with the symbol Cu.
- **Occurrence:** It is found as a free metal in nature. It also occurs in minerals like chalcocite, chalcopyrite, and bornite.
- **Properties**
 - **Physical Properties:** It is known for its high conductivity, malleability, and corrosion resistance.
 - **Recyclability:** Copper is 100% recyclable without any loss in quality, making it an eco-friendly metal.
- **Major Copper Reserves in India and World**
 - **Rajasthan:** Khetri and Jhunjhunu belt.
 - **Madhya Pradesh:** Malanjkhand mine, the largest open-pit copper mine in India.
 - **Jharkhand:** Singhbhum copper belt.
 - **Major Countries with Copper Reserve:** Chile, Australia, Peru and Russia

Applications of Copper:

- **Electrical Industry:** Used in wiring, motors, and transformers due to its high conductivity.
- **Construction:** Roofing, plumbing, and heating systems utilize copper.
- **Automobile Industry:** Essential for wiring, radiators, and connectors.
- **Electronics:** It is used in integrated circuits and semiconductors rely heavily on copper.
- **Renewable Energy:** It is crucial for wind turbines, solar panels, and electric vehicles.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

CHINA-INDIA TIES AND THE BRICS SUMMIT: HOW THE BILATERAL FAULT LINE SHAPES THE GROUPING

Chinese President Xi Jinping is arriving in India to attend the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi. This is his third visit since becoming President and his first in seven years.

While the stated purpose is the summit, the visit carries deep bilateral significance because of the 2020 border standoff that pushed relations to a low point. Experts argue that the China-India fault line, combined with a turbulent global environment, will heavily influence the summit's outcome.

China's Rising Assertiveness

- China's rise is not just economic. It has grown militarily with ambitions to displace the US as the leading global power. This is reflected in its aggressive posture in the South China Sea, the Indo-Pacific and along its border with India.
- India has borne the brunt of repeated border confrontations. After the 1962 war and the 1967 clashes in Sikkim, major standoffs include:
 - 2013: Depsang, Ladakh
 - 2014: Chumar, Ladakh, 2017: Doklam
 - 2020 onwards: Eastern Ladakh, still ongoing with about 50,000 Indian troops deployed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)
 - The June 2020 clashes killed 20 Indian defence personnel, including a Colonel-rank officer, and at least four Chinese personnel.

India's Strategic Signalling

- By hosting the summit, India also signals to the US that it has alternative partners in areas ranging from technology to fuel security:
 - The UAE and Saudi Arabia are investing in the Indian economy.
 - Russia has stepped in as an energy supplier amid the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.
 - Brazil is ready to partner on critical minerals.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

Conclusion

Xi Jinping's visit offers a cautious opening for India-China ties, driven by shared pressures from US tariffs and the West Asia conflict.

Yet deep distrust over the border, trade imbalances and China-Pakistan collusion persists. The summit's success depends on whether the two Asian giants can set aside rivalry to keep BRICS coherent and functional.

THIRUKKURAL



Recently, the Prime Minister of India gifted Russian President a translated version of the traditional Tamil text Thirukkural during their bilateral meeting at BRICS.

- It is authored by the **poet-philosopher Thiruvalluvar**(also known as “Valluvar”).
- It is considered a seminal work of **ancient Tamil literature and philosophy** and regarded as an **influential work on ethics**.
- It was composed more than two millennia ago (between 300 BCE and 500 BCE).
- Thirukkural, which translates to “**sacred verses**” or “**sacred couplets**” in English, consists of **1,330 stanzas or couplets**, each of seven words called “**kurals**”.
- These are arranged into **133 chapters, each containing 10 couplets**.
- It is divided into three books:
 - **The Book of Virtue (Dharma):** It deals with **morality** (aram) and values of an individual. It has 38 chapters.
 - **The Book of Polity:** It is filled with **teachings regarding materialism** (porul) and socio-economic values. This has 70 chapters.
 - **The Book of Love:** It has details teachings of love (inbam). It has 25 chapters.
- **Themes of Thirukkural**
 - It **emphasises moral conduct** and speaks of the realities of human life.
 - Thiruvalluvar warned that a life devoid of morality leads to misery, as individuals become dominated by jealousy, greed, wrath, and harshness.

Current Affairs - 12 September 2026

- Thiruvalluvar discouraged divisions based on religion, caste, creed, and race.
- To elevate human life and social well-being, he outlines certain virtues, such as **spirituality, charity, and love**.
- The concept of God, delineated in the very first chapter titled Kadavul Vazhthu (The Praise of God), is distinctive.
- For him, **God is “pure intelligence” and omniscient**, and embodies wisdom, compassion, morality, and love.
- The **topic of love** (inbam) is categorised in two forms: **Kalaviyal and Karpiyal**.

Kalaviyal refers to **pre-marital love** and is subsequently tied to marriage without any ceremony, whereas **Karpiyal** refers to **traditional marital love**.

His verses portray love not just as **passion** but as a **source of tranquil joy**.



KEY FACTS ABOUT LIPULEKH PASS

- It is a **high-altitude mountain pass** located in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, in India's Kumaon region.
- It sits at the **intersection of three international borders: India** to the south and west, **China (Tibet Autonomous Region)** to the north and east, and **Nepal** to the west.
- It is the **first Indian border post opened for trade with China in 1992**.
- **Other passes:** This was followed by the opening of **Shipki La Pass, Himachal Pradesh**, in 1994 and **Nathu La Pass, Sikkim**, in 2006.
- **Significance:**
 - **Strategic Location:** Lies at the **tri-junction** of India, Nepal, and China, making it geographically significant.
 - **Ancient Trade Route:** Lipulekh Pass has been utilized for centuries as a trade route, connecting the Indian subcontinent with the Tibetan plateau.
 - **Religious Significance:** It is a **key corridor for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra** and plays an important role in connecting border communities, especially tribal groups such as the Bhotiyas who depend on cross-border trade.