



Global South Matters

# DAKSHIN

## Global South Centre of Excellence



21 Feb - 27 Feb, 2026

### Key Developments in the Global South



#### **Brazilian President Lula calls India a ‘democratic brother of the Global South’, sets \$30 billion trade target**

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Sunday described India as a “democratic brother of the Global South” and set an ambitious target of raising bilateral trade to \$30 billion, underscoring the growing strategic and economic partnership between the two countries. Speaking at the India-Brazil Economic Forum in New Delhi during his fifth visit to India, President Lula highlighted the deep-rooted similarities between the two nations and emphasised that their relationship is built on equality and mutual respect. “What is really more important is that when we’re talking about a negotiation with a country like India, we are not dealing with a coloniser,” Lula said, noting that unlike negotiations with wealthier nations, ties with India are marked by balance, shared aspirations and a common development outlook.

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#### **India trip 'historic', will help lower medicine prices in Brazil: Brazil Health Minister Padilha**

Brazilian Health Minister Alexandre Padilha has described President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's recent visit to India as "historic", calling it a watershed moment in bilateral relations with significant implications for Brazil's pharmaceutical sector and public health system. In an interview, Mr Padilha said the business and political mission deepened productive integration between the two countries and secured a projected BRL 10 billion in investments over the next decade. The investments are aimed at strengthening domestic

production of high-tech medicines in Brazil through partnerships between Indian companies, Brazilian public institutions and private firms.

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### **'India-Israel FTA to unlock untapped trade potential,' says PM Modi at Knesset**

Addressing a special plenary session of Israel’s Parliament, the Knesset, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the expanding scope of India-Israel relations, underlining trade, defence, innovation, and cultural ties as key pillars of the partnership. He said the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries would open new avenues and fully realize the possibilities in bilateral commerce. “That is why our teams are working hard to negotiate an ambitious Free Trade Agreement. It will unlock the vast untapped potential in our trade relationship,” the Prime Minister said, stressing that existing trade levels do not yet reflect the true scale of opportunity.

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### **AI Impact Summit 2026 Concludes with Adoption of New Delhi Declaration**

The AI Impact Summit 2026, held in New Delhi on 18–19 February, concluded with the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact, marking a significant milestone in global cooperation on artificial intelligence. The Declaration has been endorsed by 91 countries and international organisations, reflecting a broad-based global consensus on leveraging AI for economic growth and social good. Guided by the principle of “Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya” (Welfare for all, Happiness for all), the Declaration underscores that the benefits of AI must be equitably shared across humanity. It emphasizes on strengthening international cooperation and multistakeholder engagement, respecting national sovereignty, and advancing AI through accessible and trustworthy frameworks.

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## **IUCN and CGIAR unite to accelerate nature-positive global food systems transformation**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and CGIAR have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to accelerate the transition towards nature-positive global food and agricultural systems. The agreement comes at a pivotal moment as food security, biodiversity loss and climate change increasingly converge to challenge global agriculture. In response, both organisations have committed to deepening collaboration on sustainable production landscapes, ecosystem restoration and the transformation of farming systems worldwide.

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## **Indian Union Minister Piyush Goyal meets ministers from Tajikistan and Cambodia to expand bilateral trade and investment ties**

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal held high-level discussions with ministers from Tajikistan and Cambodia to expand bilateral trade and investment ties across multiple sectors. The meetings focused on deepening economic cooperation and unlocking new business opportunities. He also emphasised the broader dimensions of the partnership, including South-South cooperation and collaboration under BRICS, IBSA, the G20 and the World Trade Organization (WTO). He expressed confidence in the bright future of bilateral ties.

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### **India Kenya agriculture talks held virtually**

India and Kenya held the first India Kenya agriculture talks under the Joint Working Group framework through virtual mode on February 24, 2026. Shri Ajeet Kumar Sahu, Joint Secretary (IC), Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, co-chaired the meeting with Stephen Rono from Kenya’s Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs. The engagement marked a formal step to strengthen bilateral cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors. During the discussions, officials from both countries shared their current priorities and policy focus areas.

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### **Asia-Pacific leaders urge faster SDG Action at Bangkok Forum**

Leaders and development stakeholders from across the Asia-Pacific region have called for accelerated action on water security, energy access, sustainable cities and development partnerships as the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approaches. The message came at the opening of the 13th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. Addressing the gathering, ESCAP Executive Secretary Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana warned that weakening multilateralism could undermine global partnerships, technology transfers and financing critical for sustainable development.

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### **AfDB approves \$200m loan to boost Nigeria's agricultural productivity**

The Board of Directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group has approved a \$200 million loan to scale up priority agricultural investments in Nigeria. The AfDB said the financing would support the second phase of the Federal Government's National Agricultural Growth Scheme–Agro-Pocket (NAGS-AP). According to the statement, this aims at boosting productivity, strengthening value chains and accelerating climate-smart, data-driven farming.

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### **Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal calls for ambitious India-Brazil trade surge beyond USD 15 Billion, deeper ties in defence, renewables, pharma and emerging tech**

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal addressed the Plenary Session of the India–Brazil Business Forum in New Delhi, highlighting the expanding cooperation between India and Brazil across sectors. Referring to the growth in bilateral trade by 25 per cent in the past year to reach USD 15 billion, he described the current level as suboptimal and called for greater ambition in further strengthening economic engagement between the two countries. Referring to higher benchmarks set by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he expressed confidence that both nations can grow faster, grow bigger and grow together for shared prosperity. Highlighting the India–Brazil partnership, the Minister described the two countries as natural partners, bound by democracy, diversity and shared aspirations for development.

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## **Rice Department of Thailand and IRRI discuss cooperation for advancing rice production in Thailand and Africa**

In an open house meeting, Thailand's Rice Department and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) held talks on a new cooperation agenda that draws on lessons from Tung Kula Rong Hai, Roi Et province, one of Thailand's drought-prone rice areas. Mr. Anon Nantri, Director-General of the Rice Department, acknowledged IRRI's support to Thailand throughout the decades by means of research and technical cooperation, including work on low-carbon rice production, methane measurement methods, and technologies aimed at helping farmers cut production costs. Both sides pointed to shared priorities: reducing straw burning, lowering greenhouse gas emissions from rice farming, and using practical technologies to reduce rice production costs.

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## **Union Agriculture Minister holds bilateral meeting with Brazil counterparts to deepen India–Brazil cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors**

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Carlos Fávaro, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil, and H.E. Mr. Luiz Paulo Teixeira Ferreira, Minister of Agrarian Development and Family Agriculture of Brazil, at New Delhi, where both sides discussed the status of ongoing cooperation and also outlined the future areas of collaboration. Mr. Luiz Paulo Teixeira Ferreira highlighted the importance of bilateral cooperation in the agriculture and allied sector and underscored that there are lots of areas where mutual cooperation will be beneficial.

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## **Africa, Venezuela Move to Formalize Global South Energy Cooperation**

The African Energy Chamber (AEC) advanced a structured program of cooperation with Venezuela during a high-level working visit aimed at aligning both regions on hydrocarbon development, trade expansion and capacity building. The visit opened with meetings with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela’s Vice Minister for Africa, Yuri Pimentel, where discussions focused on formalizing stronger South–South collaboration across upstream investment, gas monetization and downstream industrial development. As major hydrocarbon regions navigating similar developmental pressures, both sides emphasized a shared priority: using oil and gas resources to confront energy poverty and accelerate industrialization.

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## **Azerbaijan explores agricultural cooperation with Qatar, Saudi Arabia**

Azerbaijan has advanced discussions on agricultural sector cooperation with Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Azad Jafarli, Chief of Staff at Azerbaijan's Ministry of Agriculture, visited Doha from February 11–14, 2026, to participate in the International Agricultural Exhibition “AgriteQ 2026”. “The meeting addressed the establishment of a joint working group to identify areas of cooperation in agriculture and facilitate practical activities, including regular participation in international exhibitions and fairs hosted by both countries. The goal is to strengthen links between enterprises in agriculture and processing sectors, boost trade turnover, increase exports of fruits and vegetables to Qatar, and exchange information on agricultural products with export potential,” the ministry said.

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### **From Regulatory Guardrails to Adaptive Governance in the Global South AI Impact Summit | 16 February 2026 | New Delhi**

The AI Impact Summit main event convened policymakers, regulators, researchers, clinicians, development partners, and technology experts to deliberate on the evolving governance landscape for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in health. Organised by DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS, ICMR, and HealthAI, the session focused on transitioning from conventional regulatory guardrails toward adaptive governance models capable of delivering safe, trusted, and scalable AI solutions in the Global South.

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### **Panel Discussion: Building an AI-Ready Primary Health Care Workforce AI Impact Summit | 18 February 2026 | New Delhi**

The panel discussion convened distinguished leaders from academia, government, global health institutions, and policy research organizations to examine how primary healthcare systems must adapt to the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Participants agreed that while AI presents opportunities to enhance diagnostics, decision-support, data management, and service delivery, sustainable transformation requires parallel reform in workforce training, governance structures, digital literacy, and institutional culture, particularly in Global South contexts.

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