INDIAN FILMMAKERS

Young filmmakers are infusing new elements to the art of making stories for the celluloid and raising expectations from the Gen Z. The two filmmakers under spotlight are nagaland's Theja Rio' for his internationally acclaimed film Angh and the Anupriya Nagar, producer of Hanuman Ansh, a movie based on the life of a Saint Neem karoli Baba and which is breaking all records of the Box office. Rio not only made a film in a Konyak, a language spoken by a small group of people of a tribe but also a story from the remotest corner of India. The film is Rio's first directorial venture and most of its cast faced a camera for the first time. And yet, at the Toronto International Film Festival this month, this quiet film won the Platform Prize, a major juried award and is now in the race for Oscars.Anupriya is not a trained filmmaker; An economics graduate, she put in her all savings in the film on a spiritual guru who have followers from many western countries and heads of the companies. The film is characterized by simplicity in scripting, characters filmmaking and no wonder it's winning hearts of cine-goers. The film made on a budget of Rs 2 crore has already done a Rs 3.77 crore business on the box office. Both these young filmmakers are proving that given a chance, the Gen Z would set new standards in creativity beating the Bollywood's cartels which promote nepotism and rarely give a change to directors like Rio and producers like Anupriya to work in the industry. So Indian Gen Z are not jusr protesting but are into creative fields and unleashing their originality. Their success is a lesson to all the youngsters who make vulgar reels on social media and think of themselves as revolutionaries.

India in the emerging multipolar world order

Devender Singh Aswal

The architecture of global power that took shape after the Cold War no longer holds. Nations are regrouping and realigning under the pressure of geopolitical upheaval and domestic imperatives, while technology is rewriting the very meaning of sovereignty and economic interdependence buckles under new strategic rivalries. As the world's largest democracy, India's choices now carry weight far beyond its borders — shaping international security, trade, technology governance, climate action and the development priorities of the Global South. Its simultaneous engagement with the G20, BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the QUAD, alongside bilateral partnerships spanning divergent geopolitical camps, is the clearest expression of this multi-aligned approach. Indiancurrent events

The institutions built to manage global affairs no longer mirror today's distribution of power. The UN Security Council needs reform, and the Global South deserves a stronger voice in international financial and trade bodies. India's push for a permanent seat should be framed not merely as a claim to status commensurate with its growth trajectory, but as part of a broader effort to ensure Asia, Africa, Latin America and the wider developing world are properly represented in institutions whose decisions shape peace, finance, trade, technology and sustainable development.

That role as a rule-shaper extends into climate diplomacy. India's position rests on common but differentiated responsibility — climate justice demands real climate finance, technology transfer and resilient infrastructure, not just ambitious pledges, particularly for communities most exposed to environmental change. Development that hollows out its own ecological base cannot last, and environmental policy that ignores jobs, poverty and energy access will not hold public trust either. The task is to fuse economic progress with environmental and social responsibility, not treat them as competing goals.

In an emerging multipolar order, India is positioning itself as one of its central poles, drawing on capability, relationships and geography rather than choosing sides. Its foreign policy can no longer be framed as East versus West; it must engage East, West, North and South at once, without surrendering strategic autonomy. That requires diplomacy supple enough to bend with circumstance — recalling Henry Kissinger's observation that nuance, flexibility and occasional ambiguity are the tools of the trade.

Technology has become one of the sharpest instruments of geopolitical power. Artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum computing, telecommunications, satellites, digital platforms and cross-border data flows now shape a nation's economic, strategic and military weight — and whoever controls critical technology and data infrastructure will command disproportionate influence over the coming order. India's Digital Public Infrastructure — its identity, payments and public-service systems — has already shown what this can look like at scale, drawing global attention. But modern economies run on interconnected digital networks for banking, energy, transport, healthcare and governance, which makes them vulnerable: a single cyberattack on critical infrastructure can cause disruption no army could match, demanding constantly evolving cyber defences. Data, meanwhile, is both an economic asset and a matter of identity and privacy, and reconciling innovation with security and individual rights is arguably the hardest of these challenges - with artificial intelligence posing the most complex test of all. Indiancurrent events

Trade and economic resilience are now inseparable from national security.

Recent global shocks exposed how dangerous it is to depend on narrow sources for energy, medicines, semiconductors, critical minerals and defence equipment, pushing economic diplomacy from a supporting role into a central strategic instrument. India's exports are already feeling the strain of US sanctions, sharpened by the Sanctioning of Russia and Iran Act of 2026, which hands President Trump discretionary power to penalise not just Moscow but any country - India and China included — buying Russian energy. Yet confident, steady leadership can weather such headwinds: India remains the world's largest sovereign democratic republic, on course to become its third-largest economy, and no external pressure can indefinitely check that trajectory.

A stronger global voice also demands an impenetrable shield of national security - secure borders, freedom from infiltration and the capacity to respond decisively to emerging threats. That no longer means conventional military readiness alone; nations now face cross-border terrorism, cyberattacks, organised transnational crime, information warfare, economic coercion, infrastructure attacks and threats from space, all under the umbrella of hybrid warfare that no single armed force can handle alone.

It demands tighter coordination among security agencies, technology institutions, financial regulators and civil society, rather than leaving the burden to the armed forces alone, while space itself - vital to communications, navigation, weather forecasting, banking, disaster response and defence —becomes a domain India must actively protect through responsible conduct and hardened assets. As Kautilya wrote two millennia ago, the treasury is the foundation of the army, and the army the instrument that protects the state; economic strength remains the bedrock of both security and strategic autonomy, and no nation sustains the latter without the former.

India's ambition to become a developed nation by 2047 depends on growth that is not just high but fair — avoiding a K-shaped economy that widens disparities and breeds discontent. Spending on education, health, research and defence should be read as investment in national capability, not expenditure, since economic development, technology, human capital and security reinforce one another.

Ultimately, India cannot shape global rules without economic and technological strength, and it cannot sustain that strength without secure borders, resilient supply chains, energy security and dependable partnerships. Its influence will be measured not by GDP, military size or seats at the table, but by the principles it upholds, the trust it earns and the solutions it delivers to a fracturing world. Indiancurrent events

The writer is former Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha, and a Member of the Supreme Court Bar Association. The article is an abridged version of the keynote address delivered by him at the National Seminar held by Amity Law School, Noida; Views presented are personal.

OUR FASCINATION WITH THE EXTREMES

Sanjay Chandra

I recently met a senior from my society during the morning walk. He had celebrated his eighty-seventh birthday with his family, who had prepared a PowerPoint presentation with photographs capturing his journey from childhood to the present. Half-jokingly, he said he was thinking of burying the document somewhere in the society lawns for a future generation to discover. A time capsule of sorts.

It was not long before our conversation turned to the extreme positions, and often the language, adopted by some of our esteemed residents on the WhatsApp groups while criticising the incumbent governing body. We have witnessed this for the past ten years and will probably continue to do so, irrespective of who occupies those positions. We had a hearty laugh when we realised that someone would probably have an objection even to his idea of burying the time capsule.

I continued with my walk, still thinking about our fondness for extreme positions, when a rather more literal version of the same thought presented itself. I soon came across a few delivery boys whizzing breezily past on their e-bikes. Some of them appeared barely old enough to possess a driving licence. The absolute chutzpah with which they negotiate the society roads has to be seen to be believed. It is not only these youngsters. Many older residents also seem to think little about the well-being of pedestrians sharing those roads.

But there is one thing I have frequently noticed on our roads. When approaching a bend, riders and drivers often swing towards the extreme right or left, sometimes straying onto the wrong side of the road. During my travels in Europe, I have often noticed the opposite - the discipline of staying on the appropriate side while negotiating a bend. As I walked, the words left, right and extreme stayed with me.

Extreme positions are visible in corporate boardrooms too. Juniors learn quite early in their careers that supporting the strongly held position of a powerful senior can sometimes be more advantageous than questioning it. Seniors, in turn, can become so entrenched in their views that adopting a middle path becomes difficult, even when it may eventually produce a better outcome. Business owners sometimes continue pursuing an idea long after the writing on the wall has become visible to almost everyone else.

The problem with an extreme position is not necessarily that it is wrong. Sometimes circumstances demand one. The problem begins when the position becomes more important than the purpose for which it was taken. A residential WhatsApp discussion is meant to improve the community in which we live. A road is meant to allow everyone to reach somewhere safely. A boardroom discussion should eventually help the business make a better decision. Yet, somewhere along the way, winning the argument can become more important than achieving the objective.

For much of my life, I associated left, right and centre primarily with politics. How naive I was. Apparently, left and right extend far beyond politics.

Life around us seems determined to make us choose sides. WhatsApp groups do it. Boardrooms do it.

Social media certainly does it. Sometimes even a bend in the road appears to demand that we choose an extreme. But must we?

Perhaps the middle is not always an unwilling compromise between two strongly held positions. Sometimes it may simply be the space from where we can see both sides clearly enough to decide where we actually need to go.

The writer is founder of Kala - Krazy About Literature And Arts, is an author, speaker, coach, arbitrator, and strategy consultant; Views presented are personal.

BRICS: From declarations to delivery

Kalyani Shankar

Following last week's significant BRICS summit in Delhi, what are the next steps? The summit produced several recommendations that could help advance the BRICS agenda. It has positioned India to play a proactive role in shaping global governance, and the Modi government is likely to seize these opportunities to advocate for a multipolar world that includes emerging economies in decision-making.

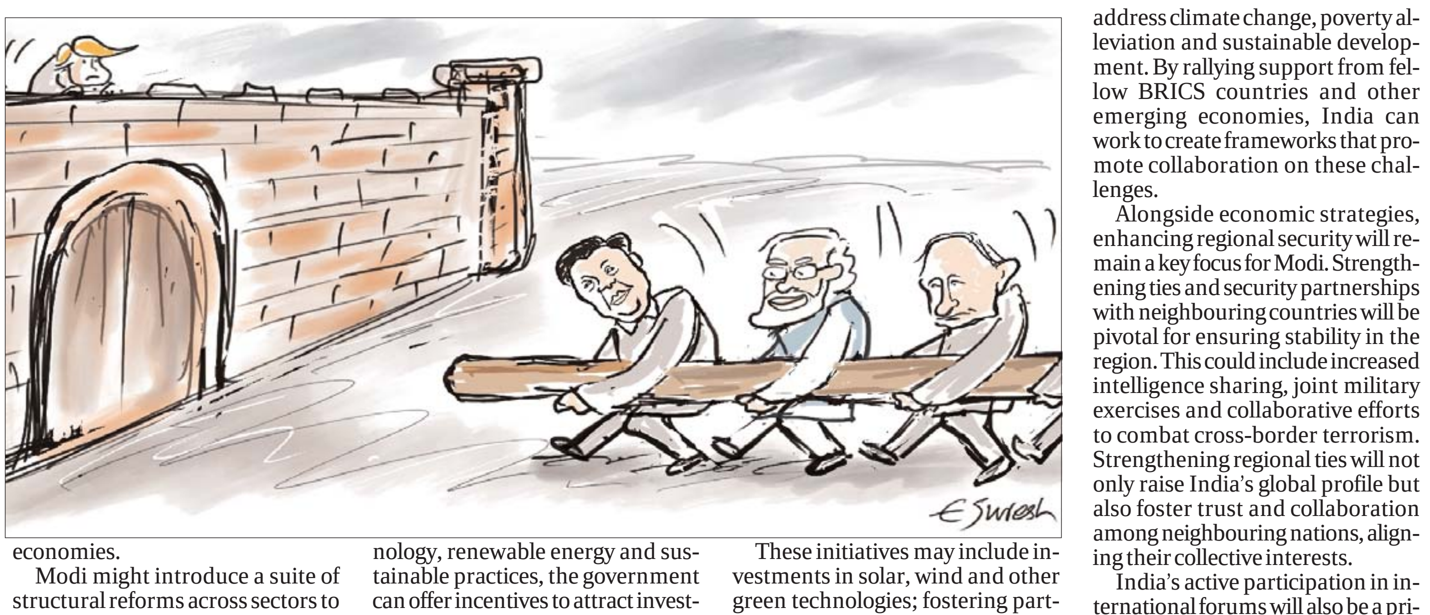
The summit took place amid significant conflict in West Asia and the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Trade and supply chains have been disrupted due to strained relations among key global players, with the US using trade and tariffs as tools.

During this important time, leaders from China (Xi Jinping), Russia (Vladimir Putin), Iran, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince, and the presidents of Vietnam and the Philippines met. The summit showed that countries with different interests can come together around a common goal that helps the Global South, even amid regional rivalries. This meeting occurred while there was significant conflict in West Asia and an ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

One of Modi's most immediate priorities will be to strengthen trade agreements and economic partnerships with other BRICS nations - Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa - while also exploring partnerships with other emerging economies. By fostering closer ties with these countries, India aims to diversify its trade relationships beyond traditional Western markets.

For India, ensuring an uninterrupted flow of foreign investment, especially in technology, manufacturing and sustainable energy, will be critical to stimulating economic growth. Although India has come a long way since the 1991 foreign exchange crisis, it still needs foreign investment.

Recognising startups' role in driving economic change, Modi's administration aims to implement measures to build a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. This may include simplifying regulations that hinder business development, offering financial incentives such as grants and subsidies, and establishing innovation hubs across the country. These initiatives aim not only to attract domestic and foreign investors but also to encourage homegrown talent to innovate, thereby creating jobs and stimulating local economies.



Modi might introduce a suite of structural reforms across sectors to improve India's ease of doing business. These reforms could focus on regulatory reforms.

Enhancing infrastructure through increased public and private investment will be crucial. Improved roads, ports and digital infrastructure will support business operations and attract foreign investment.

With a focused approach to technology, renewable energy and sustainable practices, the government can offer incentives to attract investment. This may include tax breaks for green energy projects or support for technological advances across industries.

As climate change remains a major concern, Modi is likely to place significant emphasis on renewable energy initiatives after the summit. By committing to ambitious renewable energy targets, New Delhi aims high.

These initiatives may include investments in solar, wind and other green technologies; fostering partnerships with other nations to drive innovation; and sharing technological advancements that can benefit developing countries in the Global South.

During the BRICS summit, a spotlight was shone on the issues faced by emerging economies, particularly those in the Global South. Modi is expected to strengthen

India's advocacy for policies that address climate change, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. By rallying support from fellow BRICS countries and other emerging economies, India can work to create frameworks that promote collaboration on these challenges.

Alongside economic strategies, enhancing regional security will remain a key focus for Modi. Strengthening ties and security partnerships with neighbouring countries will be pivotal for ensuring stability in the region. This could include increased intelligence sharing, joint military exercises and collaborative efforts to combat cross-border terrorism. Strengthening regional ties will not only raise India's global profile but also foster trust and collaboration among neighbouring nations, aligning their collective interests.

India's active participation in international forums will also be a priority. After the BRICS summit, Modi may engage in discussions at various multilateral platforms. Indiancurrent events

As India prepares for Assembly elections, it may take steps to reassure voters that their economic futures are secure. By highlighting investments in education, health infrastructure and social welfare programmes, Modi can appeal to a broad demographic. His government may also promote policies centred around green technology and environmental sustainability, showcasing a commitment to future generations.

Prime Minister Modi's steps after the BRICS summit will be multifaceted and strategically aligned with India's long-term goals. By prioritising economic revitalisation, fostering innovation, strengthening regional cooperation and advocating for the Global South, India can strengthen its role as a vital player on the global stage. The coming months will be critical as Modi's administration lays the groundwork for a more prosperous and influential India in a rapidly evolving multipolar world.

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The writer is a popular columnist; Views presented are personal.