

India hosts BRICS Network University Conference and the International Governing Board Meeting, strengthening BRICS Higher Education Cooperation

Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems proposed as a new thematic area under the BRICS Network University

International governing board adopts declaration and advances academic cooperation

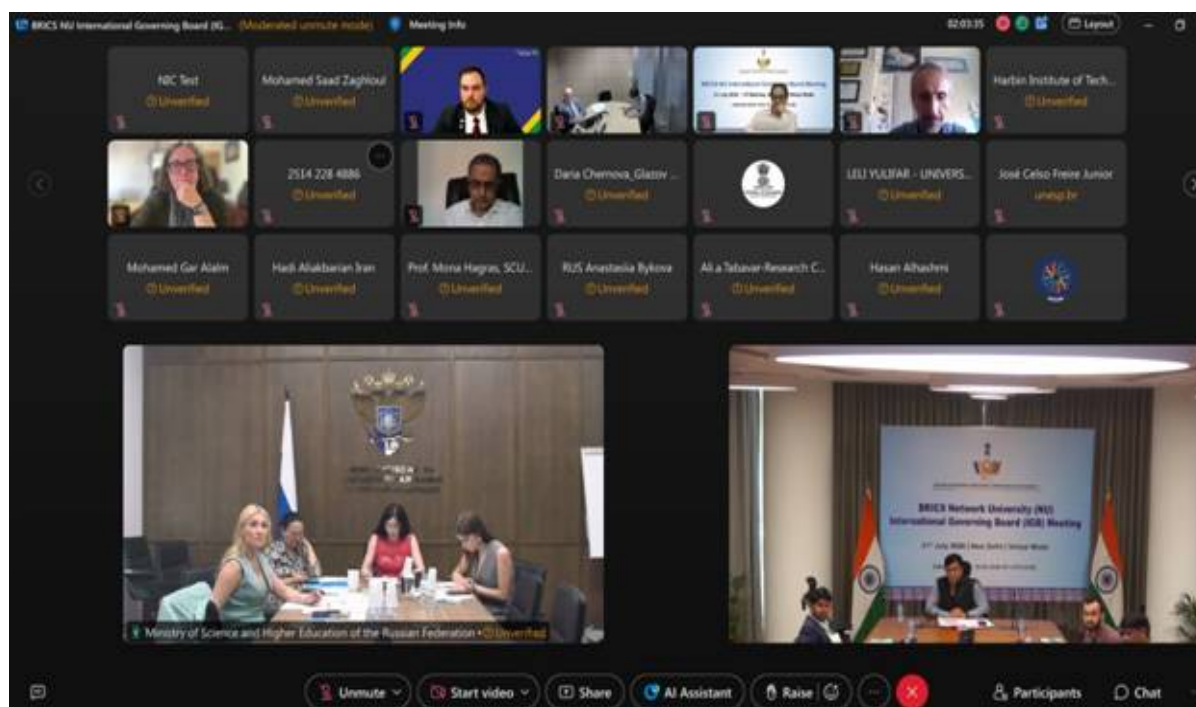
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As part of India's BRICS Presidency 2026, the Union Ministry of Education successfully convened the International Governing Board (IGB) meeting of the BRICS Network University (BRICS NU) on Tuesday (July 21, 2026) in virtual mode, following the BRICS Network University Conference on Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems held on Monday (July 20, 2026). The two-day engagement brought together government representatives, university leaders, academics and experts from BRICS member countries to strengthen collaboration in higher education, research and innovation.



The IGB meeting was inaugurated by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, Dr. K. M. Praphullachandra Sharma, while Dean (International Relations), IIT Bombay, Prof. Sudarshan Kumar, presented an overview of the BRICS Network University, its expanding institutional network and ongoing collaborative initiatives. Member countries also shared updates on their participating universities and academic cooperation activities undertaken during the past year.

Representatives from the BRICS member countries, including Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates, along with university leaders, academics and experts, delivered country interventions showcasing national initiatives and best practices. The deliberations reaffirmed the collective commitment to strengthening the BRICS Network University through enhanced academic cooperation, collaborative research, institutional partnerships and knowledge exchange.



A key highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the outcomes of the BRICS Network University Conference on Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, the first conference of its kind under the BRICS NU framework. The conference deliberated on the mapping, documentation, preservation and responsible digital dissemination of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems, while emphasizing ethical governance, community ownership, equitable benefit-sharing and the responsible use of emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence. The Conference also developed Guiding Principles on Strengthening Academic Collaboration on Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems for consideration by the International Governing Board.

Recognising the significance of this emerging area of cooperation, the International Governing Board deliberated on the proposal to include Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a new International Thematic Group (ITG) under the BRICS Network University. The proposal received broad support from member countries and marks an important milestone towards institutionalising collaboration on traditional knowledge within the BRICS higher education framework. Member countries agreed to continue consultations on the concept note with a view to advancing the proposal.

The Governing Board also reviewed the BRICS Network University Action Plan (2025–2028), discussed the development of the new BRICS NU website, considered measures to enhance institutional cooperation, academic mobility and collaborative research, and adopted the BRICS Network University International Governing Board Declaration after detailed deliberations.

The meeting reaffirmed the collective commitment of BRICS member countries to strengthening the BRICS Network University as a leading platform for higher education, research, innovation and people-to-people exchanges. India thanked all participating delegations for their constructive engagement and reiterated its commitment to advancing academic cooperation under the theme of its BRICS Presidency, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

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