

**Text of CAG's Speech at BRICS SAI Leaders' Summit in  
Bengaluru**

<b>Agenda Item No. 1:</b> <b>07.05.2026</b>	<b>Inaugural Address by Mr. K. Sanjay Murthy, Comptroller &amp; Auditor General of India</b>
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**Excellencies,**

**Mr. Hou Kai, Auditor General, China**

**Counsellor Mohamed El-Faisal Youssef, President, Accountability  
State Authority of Egypt**

**Ms. Meseret Damtie Chaniyalew, Auditor General, Ethiopia**

**Dr. Isma Yatun, Chairperson of the Audit Board of the Republic of  
Indonesia**

**Dr. Thami Zikode, Acting Head of Audit in SAI South Africa**

**Mr. Weder De Oliveira, Minister of the Federal Court of Accounts,  
Brazil,**

**Ms. Galina Izotova, Deputy Chairperson of the Accounts Chamber  
of the Russian Federation**

**Distinguished Colleagues, Distinguished delegates, ladies and  
gentlemen**

**Good morning, Namaste.**

**Welcome to Bengaluru, and welcome to India.**

There is something particularly fitting about gathering here, in the city that India calls both its Silicon Valley and its Garden City. A city that writes the software powering the world's most advanced enterprises, and where, on the very same morning, a nurse boards an overcrowded bus for a ninety-minute commute to save lives that software cannot reach. Bengaluru, in that way, is not just a host city. It is the living argument for why this Summit matters.

## **I. THE INDIAN URBAN STORY - SCALE, PROMISE, AND RESPONSIBILITY**

India is undergoing one of the most consequential urban transformations in human history. Our cities today occupy just three percent of our land, yet they contribute sixty percent of our national GDP. By 2030, seventy percent of all new jobs in India will be created in cities. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has set before the nation a clear and inspiring vision: that by 2047, Indian cities will be recognised globally for sustainable urban mobility, digital integration, and climate resilience. According to the UN, more than 50% of India's population, will live in our cities and towns by 2050.

To give that vision the impetus it deserves, the Government of India has approved Eleven billion USD Urban Challenge Fund - a paradigm shift from grant-based financing to market-linked, reform-driven, outcome-oriented urban infrastructure. These are not incremental steps. This is a civilisational goal of inclusive urbanization: transforming cities into engines of opportunity and well-being and as the engines of Developed India (Viksit Bharat).

A goal is only as good as the accountability that backs it. And that is precisely where we, the Supreme Audit Institutions of the BRICS nations, enter this story.

## **II. EASE OF LIVING - THE CITIZEN AT THE CENTRE**

Our Prime Minister has spoken of a 5-E vision for India - Ease of Living, Education, Employment, Economy, and Entertainment. I want to dwell on that first E for a moment. Because 'Ease of Living' is not a bureaucratic metric. It is a deeply human promise.

It is the promise that a mother in the city of Pune can get her child to a good school without spending two hours in traffic. It is the promise that an elderly man in Chennai need not choose between an autorickshaw he cannot afford and a bus stop he cannot reach. It is the assurance that a young woman working the night shift in Hyderabad arrives home safely.

In our ancient scriptures in Sanskrit language, we speak of 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah' - may all beings be happy, may all beings be free from suffering. Ease of Living is what that ancient aspiration looks like in a modern urban context. And mobility, the freedom to move, is its most visible and most tested expression.

## **III. THE MOBILITY PARADOX - WHERE GOVERNANCE IS FELT MOST**

Urban mobility is where governance stops being abstract and starts being personal. It is the daily referendum that citizens conduct on their governments, not at the ballot box, but at the bus stop.

The numbers tell a sobering story. Global congestion indices have risen from twenty per-cent to twenty-five percent as of 2025, costing each urban commuter between one hundred and one hundred eighty hours of productive time every year.

And yet, the solutions are not unknown. London, Stockholm, and Singapore have demonstrated that congestion pricing, combined with strong public transport, can reduce traffic by twenty to thirty percent. The knowledge exists. The technology exists. What, then, is the cultural barrier?

The barrier is governance. Urban mobility fails not for want of roads or rails, but for want of systems that work together. We build metro lines that don't connect to bus networks. We build flyovers that merely shift congestion. We measure outputs, kilometres of road laid, stations built, rather than outcomes: did commute times fall? Did air quality improve? Did inequality in access reduce?

As our former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam reminded us, a vision without action is merely a dream. But action without accountability is merely expenditure. The accountability is ours to provide.

#### **IV. THE EVOLVING MANDATE OF SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTIONS**

Colleagues, our institutions were built for a different era. We were designed to ask: Was the money spent legally? Were the rules followed? These remain essential questions. But they are no longer sufficient.

In the era of Ease of Living, we must ask a deeper question: Did spending change lives? A city can build a hundred flyovers and still fail its citizens. A city can pass every compliance audit and still not be very easy to live in. If substantial capital expenditure fails to reduce average commute times, it is not an infrastructure deficit we are looking at, it is a governance failure. And it is our duty to name it as such.

SAI India, as an institution, has embarked on this journey with conviction. Beyond traditional audit reports, to provide useful information and inputs

the audited entities, we are now offering value-added products like Departmental Appreciation Notes, Management Letters, and Study Reports. These serve as a genuine aid to management and keep citizens and stakeholders meaningfully informed. Simultaneously, we are building a tech-driven ecosystem integrating AI and data analytics into our audit processes, guided by our Strategic Plan 2030, aligned with India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047. We are conducting a special audit of one hundred and one Indian cities, assessing Ease of Living from the citizen's perspective, across quality of life, access, sustainability, and perception. And we are auditing multi-modal transport and first-mile, last-mile logistics, in partnership with institutions like Indian Institute of Technology and Indian Institute of Management, and with the World Bank. We would be happy to share our experiences during the Summit and hope to learn from the innovative approaches of other SAIs.

## **V. BRICS - SHARED CHALLENGES, SHARED WISDOM**

The BRICS nations together represent over three billion people and some of the world's fastest-growing urban populations. The challenges we face in mobility, in housing, in environmental sustainability, may not be identical, but they are deeply related. Across our nations, cities are already running experiments, in congestion pricing, in transit equity, in data-driven mobility planning. None of us has solved this fully. All of us have something to offer.

India's philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', the world is one family, is not simply a sentiment. It is a call to action. In that spirit, I invite each SAI present here to share not just your audit findings, but your audit questions. The questions we ask shape the answers governance gives.

## **VI. CLOSING - A CALL TO PURPOSEFUL AUDIT**

Aristotle observed that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.' Urban mobility is the connective tissue of city life. When it works, a city transcends its infrastructure and becomes an ecosystem of opportunity, where a child from a modest neighbourhood can reach the best school, where a patient can reach care in time, where a worker can reach her full economic potential.

When it fails, no amount of concrete can compensate. Not one flyover, not one metro line, not one smart city command centre.

We are here, over next two days, to sharpen the questions, share the methods, and strengthen the audit frameworks that can hold urban systems accountable to the people they exist to serve.

India is honoured to host you. Bengaluru is proud to be your classroom. And I am privileged to stand before each of you as a fellow guardian of the public trust.

**Thank you.**