



VIKRAMA VAHINI

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Bollywood actress Shradha Kapoor stuns fans in the teaser of "Eetha", portraying a Lavani folk artist in a powerful biopic based on the life of legendary performer Vithabai Narayangaonkar.

Siddaramaiah's Kerala visit and reported resort stay have sparked fresh political speculation in Karnataka, with talk of a possible cabinet reshuffle gaining momentum within the ruling Congress.



INSIDE

Good morning

Thanks to the morning sun for reminding us every day that it's not dark forever. Whatever obstacles you face, they will not last forever.

BRIEFS

Lucknow Fire Site Had Revoked Demolition Order

► **Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow**

The three-storey commercial building where a fire claimed 15 lives had received a demolition order in 2016 over alleged unauthorised construction, but the order was revoked within two months, the Uttar Pradesh government said on Tuesday.

Officials said the building, located in Sector D of the Aliganj Scheme area, was originally allotted on July 11, 1980, to Vijay Kumar, son of Rameshwar Sahay, under a hire-purchase scheme through a lottery system.

After the agreement was executed on November 4, 1980, possession of the property was handed over to the allottee, the statement added. Investigations into the fire incident and alleged regulatory lapses are continuing.

Authorities are also examining whether the building complied with mandatory fire safety norms, occupancy regulations and structural approvals at the time of the incident.

A high-level inquiry has been ordered to determine if any negligence by civic or fire department officials contributed to the tragedy.

The government has assured strict action against those found responsible, while rescue teams continue to assess the damage and support affected families.

Ranchi Stadium Stampede Injures Several

► **Vikrama Vahini | Ranchi**
Several people were injured in a stampede-like situation at the JSCA Stadium during the Jharkhand Premier League (JPL) T20 final on Tuesday, officials said.

The incident was triggered by an unexpectedly large crowd at the venue.

Ambulances were rushed to the stadium as emergency response teams evacuated the injured and provided immediate medical assistance.

Videos from the site showed chaotic scenes as medical teams attended to spectators.

Jharkhand Health Minister Irfan Ansari said on X that the Health Department had been immediately activated after reports of injuries emerged. He said instructions were issued to the Civil Surgeon and other officials to ensure swift treatment.

The minister added that ambulances were deployed and hospitals alerted to handle the injured, assuring that relief and treatment operations were underway and the situation was being closely monitored.

Iran Rejects Nuclear Inspection Claims

► **Vikrama Vahini | Tehran**

Iran has rejected claims of agreeing to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections of its damaged nuclear facilities, stating that no framework exists for such visits and denying any meeting with IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said Iran will not allow inspections of sites damaged during recent US and Israeli strikes, adding that discussions with the agency remain suspended. He also said there has been no formal contact or meeting with Grossi.

Baghaei further stated that negotiations with the United States were halted following threats made by US President Donald Trump, with further communication continuing only through intermediaries. He asserted that Iran's defence and missile capabilities are non-negotiable in any future talks.

Responding to Trump's claims that Iran had agreed to extensive inspections,

Baghaei dismissed the statement, saying Tehran retains access to its frozen overseas assets and will use them according to national interests. He also confirmed that Iran's oil and petrochemical exports are continuing following recent permissions. Earlier, Trump



US Keeps Hormuz Open

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday said the United States will not impose a naval blockade on the Strait of Hormuz at present and claimed that Iran has agreed to extensive nuclear inspections as negotiations between the two sides progress.



In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the decision to keep the strategic waterway open was linked to ongoing diplomatic talks, which he described as positive. He added that US naval forces would remain deployed in the region as a precaution in case the situation changes.

PG2

reiterated that military options remain on the table if Iran fails to comply with any agreement, while insisting that nuclear non-proliferation remains a top priority over economic concerns. He maintained that Iran would accept strict inspections under any final deal, a claim Tehran has firmly denied.

Metro Disruption on Purple Line



► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

Metro services on the Purple Line were partially disrupted on Tuesday after a train developed a technical snag at Cubbon Park Metro Station, officials from Namma Metro said.

According to the Operations Control Centre (OCC), the train came to a halt due to a technical failure, leading to disruption of services between Indiranagar and Majestic. Passengers were left stranded at several stations, causing crowding and delays.

Officials said maintenance and operations teams were immediately deployed to rectify the issue and restore normal services at the earliest.

At present, services are operating only in limited sections, with trains running between Majestic and Challaghatta, and between Indiranagar and Whitefield (Kadugodi), officials added.

Authorities have requested commuters to plan their travel accordingly and expressed regret over the inconvenience caused.

Commuters reported long waiting times and congestion at major interchange stations, with several passengers opting for taxis, buses, and app-based cab services to reach their destinations as normal metro frequency remained affected during peak hours.

Cabinet Reshuffle Buzz



► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

Amid growing speculation of a possible Union Cabinet reshuffle, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan, triggering political buzz in Delhi. **PM meets President amid reshuffle talk**

The meeting came a day after Union Minister George Kurian's Rajya Sabha term ended and he resigned from the Union Council of Ministers. The timing of the interaction has fuelled discussions in political circles about an impending Cabinet expansion or reshuffle.

Cabinet changes under discussion

Sources said there has been increasing speculation in Delhi that the Modi government may induct new faces into the Union Cabinet while assigning organisational roles to some senior ministers. Performance reviews of ministries

are also believed to be under consideration.

Political calculations ahead of key sessions

According to sources, the government is also preparing for the upcoming parliamentary session and key legislative business, along with internal security updates and policy discussions.

A Union Cabinet meeting has been scheduled for June 24 at 11 am, further intensifying expectations that official announcements related to changes could follow soon.

NDA expansion and ministerial balance

Reports suggest that leaders from recently joined NDA allies and other regional groups may be considered for ministerial positions. Discussions are also said to be ongoing on balancing representation from various political blocs to strengthen legislative support for key bills.

WEAK MONSOON MAY HIT 111 DISTRICTS

► **Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi**

The southwest monsoon is likely to remain weak until July 2, raising concerns over its impact on kharif crops, especially in rainfed agricultural regions across the country, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Tuesday.

Addressing reporters after reviewing the monsoon situation, the Minister said that around 111 districts across 12 states are expected to be the most affected due to uneven rainfall distribution. He noted that the country is currently facing a 43 per cent rainfall deficit,

according to data shared by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Chouhan said the IMD has forecast that the weak monsoon pattern may continue over the coming days, which could directly affect sowing and early growth stages of kharif crops. He added that while the situation is being closely monitored, agricultural operations in several rain-dependent regions may face stress if rainfall does not improve.

Despite the concerns, the Minister assured

that the government is fully prepared to handle any adverse situation arising from the rainfall deficit.

He urged farmers not to panic and said contingency plans are being strengthened to support agriculture in vulnerable districts.

Officials said the government is keeping a close watch on crop conditions and monsoon progress, with coordinated efforts underway between central and state agencies to mitigate possible losses in the agricultural sector.

Kumaraswamy Snubs CM Invite Over Bidadi Row

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

The political controversy over the proposed Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBTI), also known as the Bidadi AI Township, intensified on Tuesday after Union Minister and JD(S) leader H. D. Kumaraswamy rejected Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's invitation for a closed-door meeting at Vidhana Soudha and instead demanded discussions be held in the affected Bidadi region.

In his response, Kumaraswamy said any meaningful dialogue on the contentious project must include farmers whose lands and livelihoods are impacted. He suggested that the meeting be held in Bidadi or nearby Bairamangala, where



protests have been ongoing, and proposed June 27 as an alternative date due to prior commitments.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had earlier invited Kumaraswamy and a delegation of five members for talks on June 26 to discuss the township project, which the government said had origins during Kumaraswamy's tenure as Chief

Minister.

Kumaraswamy, however, rejected the invitation and alleged that the present acquisition process was being driven by middlemen and real estate interests rather than transparent administrative procedures. He also claimed that nearly 4,500 farmers had filed objections that were not adequately addressed.

The ₹18,133-crore GBTI project near Bidadi, about 40 km from Bengaluru, is planned as a major urban and technology hub with residential, commercial, educational, and healthcare infrastructure. The state government has said the project will help decongest Bengaluru and attract investments.

BJP to Report Cross-Voting Issue to Party Chief

► **Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru**

Karnataka BJP will submit a detailed report to its national leadership over alleged cross-voting and violation of party whip by some legislators during the recent Karnataka Legislative Council elections, state BJP President Vijayendra Yediyurappa said on Tuesday.

Meeting with National Leadership: Speaking in New Delhi, Vijayendra said he, along with Leader of Opposition R. Ashoka, MLC Ravi Kumar and other senior leaders, will meet BJP National President Nitin Nabin to brief him on developments related to the June 18 Council polls. He said a detailed report on alleged cross-voting by some BJP legislators will be submitted.

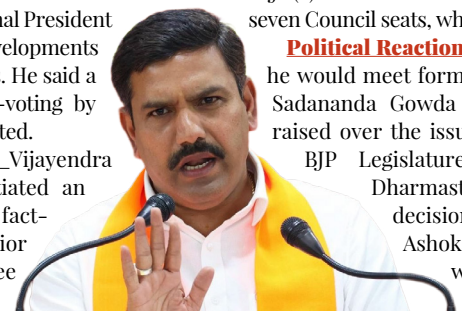
Internal Inquiry Ordered: Vijayendra said the party has already initiated an internal inquiry and formed a fact-finding committee headed by senior leader C.T. Ravi. The committee

will submit its findings before the final report is forwarded to the national leadership.

He added that the party had informed central leaders immediately after the election results and had sought time to present a comprehensive report.

Allegations of Cross-Voting: Reports suggest that at least three BJP MLAs cross-voted in favour of Congress candidates, contributing to an embarrassment for the BJP-led NDA and the defeat of the JD(S) nominee. The Congress won five of the seven Council seats, while the BJP secured two.

Political Reactions: Vijayendra also said he would meet former Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda to address concerns raised over the issue. On proposals for a BJP Legislature Party meeting in Dharmasthala, he said the final decision would be taken by R. Ashoka after consultations with party legislators.



UP Orders Coaching Centre Safety Crackdown

► **Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow**

Following the tragic fire at a coaching institute that claimed 15 lives, the Uttar Pradesh government has ordered a statewide inspection of all coaching centres to check compliance with safety norms and registration rules. The drive will focus on identifying unregistered

coaching institutes and taking legal action against them.

officials said. Registered centres will also be inspected for fire safety, building stability, electrical systems, emergency exits, ventilation and hygiene standards under the Uttar Pradesh Coaching Regulation Act, 2002.

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WHERE YOUR SUCCESS MAKES HEADLINES

SPIRITUAL

Nirjala Ekadashi's 26-Fold Blessing

Nirjala Ekadashi, also known as Bheema Ekadashi or Pandava Ekadashi, is regarded as one of the holiest and most significant observances in the Vaishnava tradition. Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, the sacred fast is considered unique because devotees observe it without consuming food or even a drop of water throughout the day.

According to Hindu scriptures, observing this single fast with devotion is believed to bestow the spiritual merit of observing all Ekadashi fasts in a year.

In 2026, Nirjala Ekadashi will be observed on June 25. This year's observance holds special significance as the Hindu calendar includes an Adhik Maas (extra lunar month), increasing the total number of Ekadashis from the usual 24 to 26. Religious scholars believe that devotees who observe the Nirjala Ekadashi fast this year will receive the spiritual benefits associated with all 26 Ekadashis, including the special Padmini Ekadashi and Parama Ekadashi, which occur during the Adhik Maas.

The origin of the fast is closely linked to the Mahabharata. According to legend, Bhima, one of the Pandava brothers, found it difficult to observe the twice-monthly Ekadashi fasts due to his enormous appetite. Sage Vyasa advised him to undertake a single, strict Nirjala Ekadashi fast during the bright fortnight of the Jyeshtha month to earn the merit of all the year's Ekadashi observances. Since then, the day has also been known as Bheema Ekadashi.

The word 'Nirjala' literally means 'without water', making it one of the most rigorous fasting practices in Hinduism. Devotees abstain from food and water from sunrise until the completion of the fast, symbolising self-discipline, unwavering faith and complete surrender to Lord Vishnu.

On this auspicious day, devotees perform special prayers to Lord Vishnu, offer flowers and traditional worship, chant the Vishnu Sahasranama, and engage in devotional singing and meditation. Many also observe an all-night vigil as an expression of devotion.

Hindu scriptures state that sincere observance of Nirjala Ekadashi helps cleanse past sins, brings peace, prosperity and good health to the family, and ultimately guides devotees on the path towards spiritual liberation (moksha). For those unable to observe every Ekadashi throughout the year, this single fast is considered the most rewarding and spiritually powerful.

'Namma Guide' App to Boost Karnataka Tourism

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
In a major initiative to strengthen Karnataka's tourism sector and enhance visitor experience, the Department of Tourism is planning to develop a dedicated digital platform, 'Namma Guide', comprising a website and mobile application.

The proposed platform aims to provide domestic and international tourists with easy access to registered local guides, enabling them to explore the state's tourist destinations with authentic information on their history, culture, heritage, and significance.

Officials said the initiative is inspired by successful international models where tourists can conveniently book certified guides online. The department believes a similar system in Karnataka will improve tourist services while promoting responsible and

meaningful travel. Apart from simplifying guide bookings, the platform is also expected to encourage local guides to actively contribute to the cleanliness, maintenance, and overall management of tourist destinations. The initiative is likely to create greater employment opportunities for guides already registered with the Tourism Department.



To fast-track the project, the department plans to invite technology-driven organisations, including startups based in Karnataka, to participate in the development of the website and mobile application.

The proposed 'Namma Guide' platform is expected to play a key role in modernising tourism services in the state, making Karnataka's tourist destinations more accessible, informative, and tourist-friendly.

US Keeps Hormuz Open Siddaramaiah's Kerala Visit Sparks Political Speculation

> From PG1
Trump claimed that Iran has accepted the "highest level" of nuclear inspections for the foreseeable future, calling it a guarantee of "nuclear honesty." He further said that continued negotiations depend on Tehran's compliance with inspection requirements.

The US President also outlined a proposed sanctions relief mechanism under which funds released by the US Treasury would be placed in an escrow account controlled by Washington. He said the funds would be used only for purchasing food and medical supplies from American producers. Trump described the situation in Iran as a humanitarian concern and said negotiations between the two countries were moving forward.

However, both countries stressed that any future arrangement must respect their sovereignty.

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A visit by former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to Kerala, including reports of a stay at a resort, has triggered fresh political speculation in Karnataka, with discussions intensifying around a possible cabinet reshuffle and internal adjustments within the ruling Congress.

While there is no official statement on the purpose of the visit, the timing has drawn attention in political circles, where movements of senior leaders are often closely watched for indications of organisational or policy-level consultations.

The development has revived long-standing speculation over cabinet expansion and internal balancing of regional, caste and factional equations within the Congress government.

Some media reports have also claimed that an alleged list of ministers—reportedly linked to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar—was circulated through internal party channels, further fuelling political discussions. However, there has been no official confirmation of these claims.

Party sources maintain that no formal decision has been taken on any cabinet reshuffle or leadership change, while senior Congress leaders have described the Kerala visit as routine and dismissed speculation as media-driven interpretation.



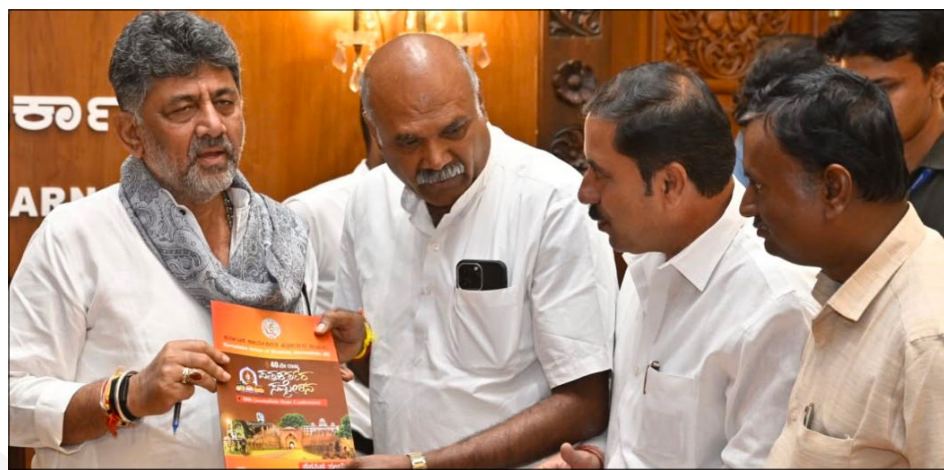
KUWJ DELEGATION MEETS CM, INVITES FOR PRESS DAY

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A delegation led by Karnataka Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ) State President Shivananada Tagadur met Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and discussed several issues related to journalists' welfare.

The delegation also submitted a memorandum seeking the swift implementation of schemes such as bus passes for rural journalists and the Media Sanjeevini initiative.

During the meeting, the delegation felicitated the Chief Minister with a book and a Ganesha idol. They also invited him to inaugurate the upcoming Press Day celebrations scheduled for July 1, jointly organised by the Information Department, Media Academy and KUWJ.

The Chief Minister assured that he would look into the demands and make efforts to



attend the Press Day event despite his busy schedule. The delegation also included representatives from Bidar district and other members of the journalists' association.

Terror Suspect Held in Harihar

> From PG1
which led to crucial leads about Suhail's whereabouts. Investigators suspect that Suhail was maintaining continuous contact with operatives based in Pakistan and was allegedly involved in planning disruptive activities in parts of Karnataka.

After his arrest, he was shifted under tight security to Tumakuru for further interrogation. A joint investigation by state police and central intelligence agencies is currently underway.

Officials said the investigation is continuing to uncover the wider network and identify any local associates linked to the suspected terror module. Security agencies are also examining digital evidence and communication records recovered during the operation.

ISRO to Host BRICS Space Meet in Bengaluru

Bengaluru will host the BRICS Heads of Space Agencies meeting on June 23-24, bringing together representatives from 11 member nations to strengthen cooperation on space sustainability, satellite collaboration, and future joint initiatives.

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
India, as the BRICS Chair for 2026, will host the BRICS Heads of Space Agencies (HOSA) meeting in Bengaluru on June 23-24, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said. The two-day event is aimed at strengthening space cooperation among member nations.

Organised by ISRO with support from the Department of Space and the Ministry of External Affairs, the meeting will bring together heads and senior representatives of space agencies from 11 BRICS countries, including Brazil, China, Russia, South Africa, and new members such as Egypt, Iran, and the UAE.

The discussions will focus on space sustainability, policy frameworks, and measures to ensure debris-free space operations. Members will also deliberate on expanding the BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation agreement and establishing a proposed BRICS Space Council.

The event will also highlight India's growing private space ecosystem, with presentations from IN-SPACE and visits to private space industry facilities planned for delegates.

Union Minister of State for Space Dr. Jitendra Singh will attend the valedictory session and interact with participating agency heads.

UP Orders Coaching Centre Safety Crackdown

> From PG1
Higher Education Department Special Secretary Nidhi Srivastava has directed all District Magistrates to conduct a detailed survey of coaching institutes in their respective districts.

The exercise will verify compliance and identify unauthorised operations.

Officials said only 3,152 coaching institutes are currently registered in the state, while a large number are believed to be functioning without approval.

Many operate in overcrowded and unsafe conditions, raising

serious safety concerns. Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyaya said ensuring student safety remains the government's top priority and warned that strict action will be taken against violators.

He added that there will be no compromise on safety or educational standards.

The Act mandates compulsory registration before starting operations and requires institutes to obtain fire department NOCs, while also empowering authorities to conduct regular inspections.

NEWS

Padma Honours for Five Karnataka Icons



> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Five eminent personalities from Karnataka were honoured with the prestigious Padma Awards 2026 by President Droupadi Murmu at the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Tuesday.

Dr. Prabhakar Kore, Chairman of KLE Society, received the Padma Shri for his outstanding contribution to education and healthcare. Through KLE institutions, he has expanded quality education and affordable medical services, especially for rural communities. Scientist Dr. Shubha Venkatesh Iyengar was conferred the Padma Shri for his significant contribution to India's defence and aerospace sectors, including the development of the 'Drishti' vision system and his role in strengthening the Agni missile programme.

Industrialist T.T. Jagannathan was posthumously

awarded the Padma Shri for transforming the Prestige Group into a global brand and for sharing patented pressure cooker safety technology with the industry for public benefit. Senior physician Dr. Suresh Hanagavadi received the Padma Shri for his pioneering work in haemophilia treatment and for ensuring free treatment for patients in government hospitals across the country.

Former Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati was honoured with the Padma Shri for modernising Doordarshan and All India Radio, reviving the iconic Ramayan telecast during the COVID-19 pandemic, and expanding educational broadcasting. The recognition of these five achievers reflects Karnataka's outstanding contribution to education, healthcare, science, industry, and public service.

HEALTH & Lifestyle

Shawarma Safety Alert in Bengaluru

> Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru
A major food safety concern has emerged in the city after a recent inspection by the Food Safety and Quality Department revealed the use of harmful artificial colouring agents in shawarma and kebab preparations. The findings have raised alarm over public health risks linked to widely consumed street foods.

Large-Scale Inspection Across City Outlets

Officials said the department conducted a targeted inspection across multiple food outlets in Bengaluru following complaints and rising concerns about hygiene and adulteration practices. A total of 39 shawarma samples were collected from different locations across the city.

8 Shawarma Samples Declared Unsafe

The test results have revealed that 8 shawarma samples were unfit for human consumption. The report indicated the presence of unsafe additives, including artificial colouring agents used during preparation.

Previous Crackdown on Artificial Colours in Street Food

The Food Safety Department had earlier imposed restrictions on the use of artificial food colours in several popular street foods, including cotton candy, Gobi Manchurian, and kebabs. Authorities had also taken action after detecting chemicals such as Sunset Yellow and Carmoisine in items like pani puri and other fast foods.

Kebab Samples Also Show Violations

In a parallel inspection, 19 kebab samples were collected from different outlets. Test results for 16 samples have been received so far, of which 2



were found to be unsafe for consumption.

Legal Action and Enforcement Measures

Food safety officials confirmed that strict action will be taken against vendors using banned or harmful substances in food preparation. Authorities are also preparing for intensified inspections across Bengaluru to ensure compliance with regulations.

Health Experts Raise Serious Concerns

Food safety experts have expressed serious concern over the findings, warning that certain artificial colours used in shawarma may contain carcinogenic properties that could increase the risk of cancer.

They further cautioned that prolonged consumption of such contaminated food could lead to other health complications, including cardiovascular diseases and obesity.

Ongoing Monitoring and Public Advisory

Officials said surveillance will continue across the city to identify and prevent the use of unsafe food additives. The department has also urged consumers to remain cautious while purchasing street foods and to prefer hygienic and certified food outlets whenever possible.

SCIENCE & Technology

Zoom Unveils AI Agents, On-Prem Enterprise AI

> Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi
Zoom has expanded its artificial intelligence offerings by introducing AI agents within its ZoomMate platform and launching a new Zoom AI On-Prem solution aimed at regulated enterprises that require higher levels of security and compliance.

The company said the AI agents, integrated into the Zoom Workplace app, are designed to automate everyday workflows, generate content, and help users complete tasks without switching between multiple applications. These agents can analyse information from meetings, chats, notes and connected enterprise systems to quickly retrieve relevant information and support faster decision-making.

Zoom added that the AI agents can also generate draft presentations, reports, project plans, proposals and spreadsheets based on meeting discussions, while simultaneously coordinating follow-up tasks and updating records within business systems. The feature is intended to reduce manual work and improve productivity across organisations.

The AI system can be integrated with major enterprise platforms including Salesforce, ServiceNow, Google Drive, Confluence, Box and Microsoft OneDrive. The company said the agents operate within existing access permissions and data controls, ensuring employees can only access authorised information. Businesses can also customise AI agents using prompts tailored to their workflows and deploy them in chats or team channels to streamline operations.

The solution allows enterprises to run AI features within their own infrastructure, including private cloud and on-premises environments, using the Zoom Node platform.

RAM TEMPLE PROBE REPORT FILED

Vikrama Vahini | Ayodhya

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged misappropriation of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Tuesday submitted its preliminary inquiry report to the Uttar Pradesh Government.

The report was handed over by Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant to Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Sanjay Prasad. Officials said the investigation is still in progress and that additional evidence is being collected. The final report is expected to be submitted in the coming days.

The Uttar Pradesh Government constituted the SIT on June 13 following a request from the Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust after allegations surfaced regarding the alleged embezzlement of temple donations.

Speaking to reporters, Pant said the report submitted was only a preliminary assessment based on the information and facts gathered so far. He added that the findings are confidential and declined to disclose any details, stating that the team would

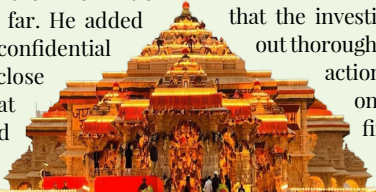


continue its investigation and revisit Ayodhya if required.

The controversy gained political attention after Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav alleged on June 7 that crores of rupees from donations offered at the Ram Temple had gone missing.

He urged the courts to take cognisance of the matter, sought regular updates on the SIT investigation, and alleged that public confidence in the probe had been affected due to what he described as widespread corruption under the BJP government.

The state government has maintained that the investigation will be carried out thoroughly and that appropriate action will be taken based on the findings of the final report.



'Everyone Will Be Accountable': Adhikari

Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari launched a sharp attack on the previous Trinamool Congress (TMC) government in the Assembly, vowing strict action against corruption and political violence.

Addressing the debate on the Governor's speech, Adhikari declared, "The earth is round; everyone will be held accountable." He said his government would introduce a law to confiscate and auction properties allegedly acquired through corruption and return the proceeds to the public.

Without naming former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee or TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee, he referred to properties in the Kalighat area and warned that those found guilty of amassing illegal assets would face legal action and imprisonment.

Adhikari also alleged that democracy had suffered under the previous regime, claiming opposition workers were targeted and voters were intimidated during elections. He assured the House that all cases of corruption, administrative irregularities and political violence would be thoroughly investigated and those responsible brought to justice.



Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar paid last respects to the mortal remains of Sri Mummadi Nirvana Swamiji of Kanakapura Devalaya Math, who passed away yesterday, at the Devalaya Math premises on Tuesday. Minister Eshwar Khandre, Bamul Chairman D. K. Suresh, MLC S. Ravi and others were present.

Lucknow Fire Tragedy: Probe Begins, Demolition Ordered

Vikrama Vahini | Lucknow

The building where a devastating fire killed 15 people was functioning as a commercial establishment with only one entry point, no emergency exit, and no proper smoke safety measures, police said on Tuesday.

Unsafe structure under scrutiny

Officials said the three-storey building in Lucknow's Aliganj area had serious safety violations, including lack of emergency evacuation routes and inadequate fire prevention systems. The incident has raised fresh concerns over enforcement of building safety norms in commercial establishments.

Charred remains reveal negligence

A day after the tragedy, the building stood as a stark reminder of the disaster. Goods, shelves, and fire safety equipment were found damaged or unused amid debris, melted structures, and burnt wiring hanging from the ceiling.

SIT begins investigation

A two-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been constituted to probe the cause of the fire and possible lapses in safety compliance. The team has assured that its report will be submitted at the earliest.

Demolition notice issued

Meanwhile, the Lucknow Development Authority has issued a demolition notice to the building, citing multiple violations and illegal operations in the premises. Authorities said further action will follow after the investigation report is completed.

SURYA SEEKS ACCOUNTABILITY IN BENGALURU WORKS

Vikrama Vahini | Bengaluru

BJP MP Tejasvi Surya on Tuesday urged the Karnataka government to ensure greater accountability and coordination in Bengaluru's infrastructure development, stressing the need to complete pending projects, speed up metro expansion, and improve transparency in public spending.

Speaking at a press conference in Bengaluru after meeting Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, Surya said the city requires governance reforms rather than repeated announcements. He also submitted a 15-point agenda covering mobility, housing, water security, and administrative improvements.

He said he fully supports initiatives that improve the city's quality of life and assured cooperation if the government takes "genuine steps" for Bengaluru's development.

Surya demanded a white paper from the state government detailing expenditure on pothole repairs and road works over the past

three years, questioning whether the funds spent have translated into visible improvements on the ground.

He also called for a publicly accessible digital dashboard to track infrastructure projects, contractors, timelines, and accountability mechanisms in real time.

Highlighting delays in metro expansion, the BJP MP said the Orange Line and Phase-3 metro projects were approved two years ago but have not yet seen construction begin. He criticised delays in tendering and execution, saying not even preliminary work has started.

Surya stressed the need for stronger coordination among civic agencies such as BMRCL, BDA, BMLTA, and K-RIDE, proposing that BMLTA be empowered as a nodal agency for integrated urban planning.

He further pointed out that Bengaluru has not fully utilised central government schemes, including the Urban Challenge Fund and rental housing initiatives, urging the state to act faster to tap available resources.



10 Indian Ships Still in Gulf, 11 Cross Hormuz

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Tuesday said that 10 Indian-flagged vessels continue to remain in the Persian Gulf region, while 11 India-bound ships have successfully crossed the Strait of Hormuz following the recent agreement to halt hostilities between the United States and Iran.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said during a media briefing that maritime traffic in the region has begun to stabilise after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on June 17.

"As of today, we have 10 Indian-flagged



vessels still in the Persian Gulf region. In addition, two Indian ships have crossed into the Gulf, indicating movement in both directions," he said.

He added that since the agreement, 11 India-bound vessels have passed through

the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil shipping route.

"These include three Indian-flagged crude oil tankers carrying 2.85,000 metric tons of crude each, one foreign-flagged LPG carrier, one foreign-flagged crude oil tanker, and six foreign-flagged bulk carriers transporting fertiliser," Jaiswal informed.

The MEA further expressed hope that the remaining Indian-flagged vessels currently in the region would also be able to cross the Strait safely in the coming days as maritime conditions continue to improve.

Swamiji at Mauritius Global Meet

Vikrama Vahini | Mauritius

His Holiness Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji of Sri Puthige Matha, Udipi, has arrived in Mauritius to participate in a three-day World Religious Leaders' Conference themed "Forging Pathways for Shared Sacred Flourishing." He was warmly received by Mauritius President H.E. Dharam



Gokhool.

The conference brings together religious and social service leaders from over 80 countries. Swamiji is scheduled to deliver a keynote address highlighting pressing global challenges, including climate change, conflict, and debt burden, in the presence of international delegates.

ENTERTAINMENT

'Welcome To The Jungle' Opens Paid Previews



Vikrama Vahini | Mumbai

Akshay Kumar's upcoming film Welcome To The Jungle has adopted the growing Bollywood trend of paid previews, with special early screenings scheduled for June 25, a day before its official theatrical release. Advance bookings for the film opened on Friday.

The paid preview shows will begin from 7.30 pm onwards, allowing audiences to watch the film ahead of its nationwide release on June 26, 2026. The strategy is increasingly being used in the industry to generate early word-of-mouth and boost opening-day collections.

Industry observers note that paid previews are now often included in the first-day box office tally, unlike earlier practices where they were reported separately. The approach is seen as particularly effective for big-budget films expected to open strong in cinemas.

This is not the first time Akshay Kumar has followed the trend this year. His earlier release Bhooth Bangla also had paid previews and reportedly earned ₹3.65 crore nett from early shows before its official release.

The film is projected to open in the ₹22-26 crore range, with strong advance

bookings expected to further boost its initial performance. The runtime of the film is 2 hours and 28 minutes, and it marks the third instalment in the popular Welcome franchise.

Directed by Ahmed Khan, the film features a large ensemble cast including Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Disha Patani, Jacqueline Fernandez, Arshad Warsi, Jackie Shroff, Paresh Rawal, Raveena Tandon, Lara Dutta, Johny Lever and several others.

Welcome To The Jungle is presented by A.A. Nadiadwala, Cape of Good Films and Star Studio18 in association with Seeta Films and Rakesh Dang. Produced by Firoz A. Nadiadwallah and others, the film is scheduled for worldwide theatrical release on June 26, 2026.

The film's promotional strategy is also expected to include extensive nationwide marketing campaigns, with the makers planning high-profile events and digital promotions in the days leading up to release. Trade analysts believe the franchise's strong brand recall will play a key role in driving audience turnout across urban and semi-urban markets. Meanwhile, the ensemble cast has been actively participating in promotional interviews and appearances, further building anticipation among fans.

Trisha Wishes Vijay on Birthday, Belatedly

Vikrama Vahini | Chennai

Actress Trisha Krishnan extended a belated birthday wish to Tamil star and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Thalapathy Vijay, sharing a photograph with him on social media a day after his birthday celebrations.

Vijay, who turned 52 on June 22, received birthday wishes from fans and film personalities across the industry. However, Trisha's absence from public greetings on the day had sparked speculation online, with rumours even suggesting a possible rift between the two long-time co-stars.

Ending the speculation, Trisha later posted a picture on her official Instagram account showing Vijay cutting a birthday cake while she looks on smiling.

The image quickly went viral, drawing widespread attention from fans and social media users.

In her caption, she wished a "very happy birthday" to someone she described as a person who brings value to everything around him. The post was widely interpreted as a gesture reaffirming their long-standing friendship and on-screen camaraderie.

The duo, who have shared screen space in several popular Tamil films including Ghilli, Thirupaachi, Aathi, Kuruv and Leo, are known for their strong on-screen chemistry and enjoy a large fan following.

Recent months had seen social media buzz around their relationship, especially after speculation regarding Trisha allegedly unfollowing Vijay online. However, her latest post appears to have put those rumours to rest, reaffirming that there is no discord between the two.

Trisha had also attended a recent public event involving Vijay, further adding to discussions about their continued association.

While neither has officially commented



on the ongoing speculation, their repeated public interactions continue to fuel interest among fans.

The post also reignited discussions among fans about the enduring friendship between the two stars, who have remained popular both on and off screen for nearly two decades.

Social media platforms were flooded with reactions, with fans sharing clips, old movie scenes, and appreciation posts celebrating their pairing.

Industry observers noted that such public interactions often help reinforce nostalgia around successful on-screen duos, particularly in Tamil cinema where star pairings enjoy strong fan loyalty. Vijay and Trisha's collaborations have historically been among the most commercially successful and widely discussed in Kollywood.

Meanwhile, neither Vijay nor Trisha has directly addressed the recent wave of rumours regarding their personal rapport, maintaining silence amid ongoing online speculation. However, their continued public acknowledgment of each other has been interpreted as a sign of mutual respect and professionalism.

With Vijay now actively engaged in his political journey and Trisha continuing her successful film career, fans remain curious about whether the iconic pair will share screen space again in the future, though no official announcements have been made so far.

BUSINESS

UAE Eyes India's BrahMos, Akashteer Defence Systems

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is reportedly exploring the purchase of India's advanced defence systems, including the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile and the Akashteer air defence system, amid escalating tensions in West Asia, according to international reports.

The move comes as regional security concerns rise following ongoing conflicts involving Iran, the United States and Israel, with Gulf nations reassessing their defence preparedness against potential drone and missile threats.

According to reports, early-stage discussions between India and the UAE on the possible defence deal are progressing rapidly. The UAE is said to be strengthening its air defence capabilities and safeguarding key strategic areas, including the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy shipping route.

The BrahMos missile, jointly developed by India and Russia, is considered one of the world's fastest supersonic cruise missiles, capable of being launched from land, sea and air platforms with high precision.

The Akashteer system, developed by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in collaboration with the Indian Army, is an automated air defence command and control system. It integrates radar and sensor data to detect and respond to aerial threats such as drones and missiles in real time, enhancing battlefield response efficiency.

If finalised, the deal would make the UAE another major buyer of the BrahMos system after the Philippines, marking a significant milestone for India's growing defence export sector and strengthening its position in the global arms market. Analysts say that if the deal progresses to a formal agreement, it would mark a significant deepening of India-UAE strategic defence cooperation, reflecting growing trust between the two nations.

It would also reinforce India's emergence as a credible defence exporter in the Indo-Pacific and West Asian regions, while potentially opening doors for future collaborations in advanced military technology and joint production initiatives.

SPORTS

Vaibhav Suryavanshi Gets Team India Jersey



Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Fifteen-year-old batting prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi has received his Team India jersey after being selected for the upcoming T20 series against Ireland and England, marking a significant milestone in his young cricketing career. The BCCI shared a video of the emotional moment on social media, where Suryavanshi is seen receiving the iconic blue jersey bearing his name. Visibly moved, he described it as a lifelong dream, saying he could not believe the moment had finally arrived.

Selection of the teenager has generated widespread attention as he stands on the verge of potentially making history by debuting for India at just 15 years of age. If he plays in either of the upcoming series, he would become the youngest cricketer ever to represent India at the international level.

Currently, the youngest players to represent India in international cricket include legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar, who debuted in Tests at 16 years and 205 days against Pakistan in 1989, and in ODIs at 16 years and 238 days. In T20 cricket, Washington Sundar holds the record for youngest debut at 18 years and 80 days.

If Suryavanshi makes his debut, he would surpass these long-standing records and set a new benchmark in Indian cricket history, further highlighting his rapid rise in the sport.

Kohli Ends Test Comeback Rumours

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Former India captain Virat Kohli has put an end to all speculation surrounding his Test cricket comeback, firmly stating that he will not return to the red-ball format.

Kohli, who has played 123 Test matches for India, has scored 9,230 runs with 30 centuries at an average of 46.85. He had shocked fans earlier by announcing his retirement from Test cricket last year.

Speaking at a brand launch event in New Delhi, Kohli clarified that his decision to step away from Test cricket is final, dismissing ongoing rumours about a possible return. "I have already moved on from Test cricket. I will not be coming back to the red-ball format," he said, effectively closing all speculation.

The discussion came during the launch of his lifestyle brand 'One8', where a light-hearted moment turned into a headline-making clarification.

During the event, the host jokingly linked the price of a newly launched red shoe—₹9,230—to Kohli's total Test runs and asked whether he would return to add more runs. Kohli responded with a smile, reiterating that his Test career was already complete.

US Plans 75% Citizenship Fee Hike

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has proposed a steep increase in the fee for applying for American citizenship, a move that is expected to significantly impact legal immigrants, particularly Indian Green Card holders seeking naturalisation.

Under the proposed rule, the citizenship application fee would rise by nearly 75 per cent, from \$760 to \$1,330. The DHS said the revision is aimed at aligning application charges with the actual cost of processing immigration cases.



The proposal also includes a sharp increase in the fee for filing

Form N-336, used to appeal a denied citizenship application. The fee would increase from \$830 to \$1,475, marking a 77.7 per cent hike.

In addition, the government has proposed eliminating fee waivers and discounted application fees currently available to low-income applicants, including those with household incomes up to 400 per cent of the federal poverty level. However, fee exemptions for members of the US military will continue.

The proposal has been issued as a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and is currently open for a 60-day

public consultation.

The revised fees will come into effect only after the public comment period ends and the rule is formally approved.

The proposed hike is expected to have a significant impact on Indian Green Card holders, many of whom entered the United States on H-1B visas and are now eligible for citizenship.

Retirees and middle-income families who previously relied on fee waivers or reduced charges are likely to face a substantially higher financial burden if the proposal is implemented.

RBI FLAGS MONSOON, IRAN-US DEAL RISKS TO GROWTH

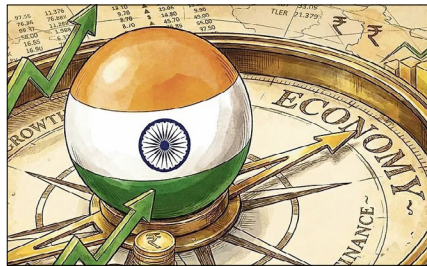
Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has warned that geopolitical uncertainty in West Asia and the possibility of below-normal southwest monsoon rainfall could pose significant risks to India's economic growth and inflation outlook.

In its June Bulletin's State of the Economy report, the RBI said any setback to the emerging peace process between the United States and Iran could trigger inflationary pressures, disrupt energy supplies, delay investments, affect food security and weaken financial stability, ultimately slowing economic growth.

The central bank also cautioned that the threat of an El Niño-induced weak monsoon remains a major concern. Lower rainfall could adversely affect agricultural output, reduce reservoir levels and push up food prices, leading to higher inflation in the coming months.

Despite these challenges, the RBI noted that the Indian economy remains resilient compared to many other countries. The economy grew by 7.8 per cent during the January-March quarter of 2026, supported by strong private consumption and fixed investment. Early indicators also suggest that economic momentum has continued in the first two months of the current financial



year.

Reflecting concerns over global uncertainties and inflationary pressures, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra recently revised the GDP growth forecast for FY2026-27 to 6.6 per cent, down from 6.9 per cent.

The bulletin observed that retail inflation remained broadly under control, although prices of food items, commercial LPG, personal care products and restaurant services have witnessed an increase. Daily price data up to June 18 indicated that food inflation remained elevated, with prices of rice, wheat, pulses and key vegetables such as potatoes, onions and tomatoes continuing to rise.

The RBI has projected retail inflation at 5.1 per cent for the current financial year while warning that a weak monsoon could further fuel food inflation and put additional pressure on consumer prices.

Rise in Cervical Cancer Cases

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

Worldwide cases of various types of cancer are rising rapidly, with different patterns seen among men and women. While men are increasingly affected by lung, oral, and prostate cancers, women face higher risks of breast and cervical cancers. Among these, cervical cancer cases are also increasing at an alarming rate.

Health experts note that nearly one-fourth of all global cervical cancer deaths occur in India alone, with the country reporting around 80,000 deaths annually. The mortality rate stands at approximately 11.2 per 1,00,000 women. Despite the growing risk, specialists say cervical cancer can be significantly prevented through vaccination and regular screening.

To reduce the disease burden, the government is continuing its nationwide free HPV vaccination programme for girls aged 14 years and above, aimed at preventing cervical cancer at an early stage.

Doctors warn that cervical cancer often shows no symptoms in its early stages. As the disease progresses, symptoms may include abnormal vaginal bleeding after intercourse or between menstrual cycles, heavy menstrual bleeding, foul-smelling or blood-stained vaginal discharge, and pelvic pain, they said.

The HPV vaccine is considered one of the most effective preventive tools against cervical cancer, significantly reducing infection risk when administered at an early age. Health authorities also stress the importance of regular screening tests such as Pap smears to detect precancerous changes before they develop into cancer.

TMC Leader Raided, 3 Kg Gold Seized

Vikrama Vahini | Kolkata

Police in West Bengal have conducted raids on residences linked to TMC leader Tina Bhaumik, an associate of arrested former MLA Sabyasachi Dutta, in connection with extortion and fraud allegations. During the search operations in Nadia district, officials reportedly recovered around 3 kg of gold and issued a notice seeking her explanation.

The accused former MLA was also taken along for questioning as part of the ongoing investigation. Earlier, police had raided properties belonging to Dutta's relatives in North 24 Parganas district as part of the wider probe.

Officials said the action followed information gathered during interrogation of Sabyasachi Dutta. Bhaumik, a Nadia district panchayat member and active figure in the TMC women's wing, has been under scrutiny over alleged disproportionate asset growth since 2019.

The case is part of a series of corruption allegations and investigations involving several political leaders in the state.

CUET-UG 2026 Results Declared

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Tuesday announced the results of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) 2026.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the agency said the long wait for candidates was over, adding that the CUET (UG) 2026 results are now available.

Candidates who appeared for the examination can check their results on the official website by logging in with their application number and password. The scorecards can also be downloaded directly from the portal, the NTA said.

The agency further advised students to carefully verify their login credentials while accessing the result portal to avoid errors while downloading their marksheets.

CUET is a national-level entrance examination conducted by the NTA for admission to undergraduate courses in central, state, and selected private universities across India, offering a common platform for higher education admissions.

Centre Announces Hajj 2027 Policy

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs has announced the Hajj Policy 2027 and invited applications from prospective pilgrims through the Hajj Committee portal and the Hajj Suvidha App. Union Minister Kiren Rijju said. The system has been designed to make the application process simpler, smoother and more accessible.

The minister said the 70:30 quota split between the Hajj Committee of India and the private sector remains unchanged, with 1,22,518 seats allocated to the Hajj Committee and 52,507 to private operators. He urged eligible pilgrims to apply within the stipulated time to ensure a transparent and efficient selection process.

China Builds Mega Brahmaputra Dam, India Plans Counter

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

China has begun construction of a massive hydropower dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) river near the Indian border, prompting India to accelerate plans for its own Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) in Arunachal Pradesh.

The Chinese project, also referred to as the Medog or Motuo Hydropower Station, is expected to have an installed capacity of around 60,000 MW, making it one of the largest hydropower developments in the world. The river flows downstream into India, where it becomes the Siang and later the Brahmaputra, a lifeline for millions in the Northeast.

In response, India is planning the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), an 11,000 MW hydroelectric and flood-control project proposed in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Siang region. The project is being developed by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and is



estimated to cost around USD 13 billion (approximately ₹1.5 lakh crore). It is currently in the early pre-feasibility stage.

Officials said the SUMP is expected to generate about 47 billion units of electricity annually while also helping regulate river flow and reduce the impact of seasonal flooding in downstream areas such as Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Experts have warned that large upstream dams in China could alter river flow

patterns, affect ecosystems, damage agriculture and increase the risk of unpredictable flooding in India. The proposed Indian project is therefore seen as crucial for safeguarding water security and asserting water rights in the region. The government has also stated that it is closely monitoring developments related to Chinese hydropower projects on transboundary rivers and has raised concerns over transparency and data sharing.

DOVAL WELCOMES HORMUZ OPENING

Vikrama Vahini | New Delhi

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Tuesday said the opening of the Strait of Hormuz is a "very welcome move" that will strengthen global energy security and ease supply chain disruptions.

Speaking at a BRICS conclave in New Delhi, Doval welcomed the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Iran, expressing "cautious optimism" over its potential impact on regional stability.

Energy Security and Trade Stability

Doval said improved freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz would benefit not only regional countries but also the wider global economy. He noted that smoother maritime movement would help resolve supply chain bottlenecks, particularly in critical sectors such as fertilisers and chemicals.

Concerns Over Global Geopolitical Tensions

The NSA also highlighted the broader geopolitical challenges facing the world, describing the current period as "tumultuous" due to rising uncertainties, economic pressures and disruptive technological changes.

He said global threats are becoming increasingly complex, while existing institutional mechanisms are proving inadequate to manage or resolve



conflicts effectively.

Call for Stronger Multilateral Cooperation

Emphasising the importance of international cooperation, Doval said multilateralism is facing a decline and called for stronger collective efforts through platforms like BRICS to address global challenges.

He said BRICS was originally conceived as an informal grouping of emerging economies aimed at promoting a multipolar world order, strengthening economic cooperation and amplifying the voice of the Global South.

BRICS as a Platform for Global Development

Doval described BRICS as a "special coalition" of countries committed to peace, progress and cooperation. He added that the grouping also envisions reforms in global governance and improved international institutions.

India is hosting the BRICS conclave in its capacity as the current chair of the organisation.