

BRICS can showcase failure of unipolar security model: Iran

NEW DELHI, May 16 (IANS)

IRANIAN Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali on Saturday said that the 2026 BRICS summit presents an important opportunity to underline how a global security framework dependent on guarantees from a "single power" has failed in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world order. The remarks come amid the ongoing conflict involving Iran, the United States and Israel, and reflect Tehran's continued advocacy for multipolarity and collective approaches to global security and prosperity following its inclusion in the expanded BRICS grouping.

In a post shared on X, the Iranian envoy stated, "The BRICS Summit in India is an opportunity to highlight a key reality: a security model based on guarantees of security and prosperity by a single power, even a major one, has failed in today's complex and rapidly evolving world."

The statement was made shortly after the conclusion of the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi on Thursday and Friday under India's chairship of the grouping. The high-level gathering was chaired by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and attended by foreign ministers and senior representatives from

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BRICS member nations as well as partner countries.

Earlier on Thursday, PM Modi met the foreign ministers and heads of delegation from BRICS nations in the national capital and reiterated that under India's chairmanship, the grouping would work towards strengthening multilateralism, promoting sustainable development, enhancing economic resilience and building a more inclusive global order.

During the meeting, EAM Jaishankar also expressed confidence that the deliberations among member nations would contribute towards achieving a more stable, equitable and inclusive international system.

He stressed the importance of reformed multilateralism and called for reforms in the UNSC.

Climate Change crisis: IMD to change parameters to declare heatwaves

■ **By K Praveen Kumar**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, May 16 (PTI)

THE IMD, along with its technical partners, will soon revise the criteria for declaring heatwave conditions in the country, as the present parameters do not suit India's geographical conditions, according to official sources here.

Kerala, in particular, has faced difficulties in issuing heatwave warnings because of the limitations of the existing parameters.

Sources in the India Meteorological Department said the State experienced severe heat and humidity this summer and, for the first time, weather forecasts were made based on the anti-cyclone system that formed near the Karnataka-Maharashtra coast. "We have never had an anti-cyclone system form closer to the South before, and this time we had to predict the weather based on it," a senior IMD official told PTI.

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Intra-BRICS trade jumps 13-fold in 21 yrs, touches \$1.17 trillion: Commerce Secretary

GANDHINAGAR, May 16 (IANS)

THE intra-BRICS merchandise trade has risen thirteen-fold, from \$ 84 billion in 2003 to \$ 1.17 trillion in 2024, outpacing the growth in global trade and contributing to greater resilience and diversification for member countries, Rajesh Agrawal, Commerce Secretary said on Saturday.

Speaking at 2nd meeting of the BRICS Contact Group on Trade and Economic Issues (CGETI) here, the top government official underscored that BRICS has continued to grow stronger and has emerged as an influential voice representing the aspirations and priorities of emerging markets and developing economies.

"This has happened despite



rising protectionism, geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, inflationary pressures and growing uncertainty," Agrawal said.

However, indicating significant untapped potential for deeper trade integration,

stronger value-chain linkages and enhanced economic cooperation the commerce secretary added that intra-BRICS trade still accounts for only around 5 per cent of global trade.

Discussions at CGETI also placed India's engagement with

BRICS in a wider trade context. India's exports to BRICS member countries were estimated at \$ 82.0 billion in merchandise goods in FY26 and \$ 31.3 billion in services in CY24, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said.

These point to further scope for deepening intra-BRICS trade, with services and connectivity emerging as important drivers of future growth.

This is the 2nd meeting of CGETI following the first CGETI meeting held virtually in March 2026. Held under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", the meeting built on the work undertaken under previous Chairships.

India has assumed the BRICS Chairship for the fourth time, after 2012, 2016 and 2021.

CBSE makes **three-language study compulsory** in Classes 9-10, exempts third language from Board exam

■ By Vishu Adhana
NEW DELHI, May 16 (ANI)

THE Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has made the study of three languages compulsory for students from Class IX beginning July 1, while clarifying that there will be no Board examination for the third language (R3) in Class X.

In a circular issued on May 15, the CBSE said that at least two of the three languages must be native Indian languages, in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023. "With effect from July 1, 2026, for Class IX, the study of three languages (R1, R2, R3) shall be compulsory, with at least two languages being native Indian languages," the circular stated.

However, the CBSE said no



Board examination would be conducted for the third language at the Class X level in order to "keep the focus on learning and reduce any undue pressure on students".

"All assessments for R3 shall be entirely school-based and

internal. The performance of students in R3 will be duly reflected in the CBSE certificate," the CBSE said, adding that no student would be barred from appearing in the Class X Board examinations because of R3.

The CBSE said schools may

offer any language from the CBSE list of subjects, provided at least two of the three chosen languages are native Indian languages. Foreign languages can only be studied as the third language if the other two are Indian languages, or as an optional fourth language. As part of the transition, the CBSE said Class IX students would temporarily use Class VI R3 textbooks for the chosen language until dedicated secondary-stage textbooks become available. Schools have also been asked to supplement the material with local or State literary content.

The circular further stated that schools facing shortages of qualified language teachers may adopt interim measures such as inter-school resource sharing, virtual teaching support, or engagement of retired teachers and qualified postgraduates.

Pak must decide whether they want to be part of geography: Army chief

NEW DELHI, May 16 (PTI)

IN A stern military message to Islamabad, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday said if Pakistan continues to harbour terrorists and operate against India, then they have to “decide whether they want to be part of geography or history or not”. At an interactive session hosted by ‘Uniform Unveiled’ at the Manekshaw Centre here, he was asked about how the Indian Army will respond if circumstances that led to Operation Sindoor last year comes up again.

The Army chief said, “If you have heard me earlier, what I have said... That Pakistan, if it continues to harbour terrorists and operate against India, then they have to decide whether they want to be part of geography or history or not.”

His remarks at the event,

Army chief warns Pakistan against harbouring terrorists and operating against India.



Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi addresses the ‘Sena Samvad’ event, at Manekshaw Centre, in New Delhi on Saturday. (PTI)

‘Sena Samwad’, came days after the country and the Indian military marked the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor.

Gen Dwivedi’s remarks, though brief carried a blunt message to Pakistan, and reiterated India’s stand against terrorism. Operation Sindoor was launched early on May 7 last year in retaliation to the deadly Pahalgam terror attack, with Indian forces conducting precision strikes on multiple terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Pakistan later also launched offensives against India, and all subsequent counter-offensives by India were also carried out under Operation Sindoor. The military conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, lasting nearly 88 hours, halted after they reached an understanding on the evening of May 10.