

# Russian oil industry considers Indian counterparts very reliable, says Putin

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Calling PM Narendra Modi his "friend", "a reliable person", "a person of integrity" and a good thing to have happened to India, Russian President Vladimir Putin said though there has been a slight dip in purchase of Russian oil by India, the overall trade remains steady, adding that "Russian oil industry considers its Indian counterparts to be very reliable".

In an interview to India Today TV, recorded before he left for India, Putin said US continues to buy nuclear fuel from Russia for its own power plants, including uranium for reactors, and asked why India should not have the same privilege to buy oil.

Putin highlighted defence cooperation with India, emphasising that his country also shares technology, and citing, among other instances,

the joint production of BrahMos. On whether nuclear cooperation is going to be on the table during the talks with Modi Friday, Putin responded in the affirmative and gave the example of Kudankulam nuclear plant in Tamil Nadu while emphasising Russia's expertise in developing small nuclear power plants — something that India is keen on.

PM Modi welcoming Putin at the airport on Thursday was a rare gesture, following which the two travelled in a Japanese SUV, and not the Range Rover Modi uses, to the PM's residence. Earlier this year in Tianjin, they had a 45-minute meeting in Putin's car on their way to the venue of their bilateral meeting on the margins of SCO summit.



File photo

Modi and Putin have a long relationship that goes back almost 25 years. In 2001, Modi had accompanied then PM Vajpayee to Moscow

Modi has in the past greeted on the tarmac only leaders he has personally bonded well with, including ex-US presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump (first term), ex-Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, French President Emmanuel Macron, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, ex-Japanese PM Shinzo Abe and leaders of Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE.

"Delighted to welcome my friend, President Putin to India. Looking forward to our interactions later this evening and tomorrow. India-Russia friendship is a time tested one that has greatly benefitted our people," Modi posted on X.

In the meeting on Thursday, ahead of the annual summit, the two discussed ways to further strengthen the special and privileged strategic partnership, along with regional and global issues. In several rounds of meetings that the

two will have over two days, Modi is expected to reiterate his message for an early end to the war as India walks a diplomatic tightrope in its relations with Russia on one hand and US and EU on the other.

India is working to sign an FTA with EU next month and has also invited EU leaders for Republic Day celebrations. Brussels would be closely watching the summit on Friday as it doesn't want to see any outcome that could create friction with India.

According to govt sources, the Putin visit will go a long way in strengthening economic co-operation. Putin is travelling with a large group of business persons. Ten govt-to-govt agreements in areas like healthcare, trade, economy, mobility and culture are expected to be signed. India also expects to improve the trade deficit with Russia that has shot up because of Russia's oil trade with Russia.

FRIENDS MEET AT DALAM

# Modi won't be pressured by tariffs, says Putin ahead of summit today

## PM Receives Prez At Airport, Ride Together To Pvt Dinner

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



Thursday was the first time PM Modi received President Putin at the airport. The PM gifted Putin a copy of the Gita in Russian

New Delhi: Signalling India's intent to double down on its special and privileged strategic partnership with Russia, PM Modi went to the airport to receive President Vladimir Putin who arrived in India for his first visit to the

► **EDIT PAGE: Putin's Here, So Are Others**  
► **India skips UNGA vote on Ukrainian kids, P 16**

country since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war. The leaders greeted each other with a handshake and a hug on the red carpet rolled out for Putin.

Not for the first time this

year, the leaders travelled in the same car, to the PM's residence for a private dinner.

Thursday's special welcome gesture is significant as most western capitals are focused on outcomes of the Modi-Putin summit, hoping these would not provide the kind of validation Putin seeks for his actions in Ukraine. This was the first time Modi welcomed

Putin on arrival at the airport.

In an interview to India Today TV recorded before he left for India, Putin praised Modi, saying the Indian PM is "not someone who gives into pressure". He was responding to a question on whether the US was using tariffs as an instrument of coercion.

► **Related report, P 16**

## 'Defence ties to deepen despite US, EU oppn'

New Delhi: India and Russia on Thursday agreed to further enhance their expansive defence partnership, including through collaboration in niche military technologies and stronger defence-industrial cooperation, which is likely to see Moscow continuing as New Delhi's leading arms supplier for the foreseeable future, reports Rajat Pandit.

Ahead of the Modi-Putin summit, defence minister Rajnath Singh and his Russian counterpart Andrei Belousov stressed ties were based on "a deep sense of trust, common principles and mutual respect" while inking a protocol on "ongoing and prospective areas" of defence cooperation.

The 22nd inter-governmental commission on milita-

## 'Rolling bunker' flies in from Moscow

While G20-like security beef-up is in place for President Putin's visit, central to the security logistics is his custom-made Aurus Senat limousine, called "rolling bunker", which can withstand IED blasts. Flown in from Moscow, the limo will be used for exigencies, sources said. P 16

ry and military-technical cooperation, co-chaired by the ministers, underlined India's intent to retain its strategic autonomy despite mounting pressure from the US and EU to distance itself from Russia.

► **Continued on P 16**

# UNSC delegation visits Syria for first time since 1945

DAMASCUS, Dec 4 (AP)

---

A DELEGATION of representatives from the 15 member states of the United Nations Security Council visited Syria Thursday for the first time since the council's founding in 1945.

The visit comes just ahead of the one-year anniversary of the fall of former Syrian President Bashar Assad in a lightning rebel offensive. It marks the country's continued reintegration into the international fold under its new government headed by former Islamist insurgent leader and now interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa. Samuel bogar, permanent representative of Slovenia to the U.N. And president of the Security Council, said the delegation had come to "build trust," adding that "I hope that today we made a step forward." He said the delegation had met with al-Sharaa, Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani and other cabinet members. The group also met with local UN staff, Syrian civil society and religious leaders, and communities affected by sectarian violence earlier this year on the coast and in southern Syria's Sweida province.

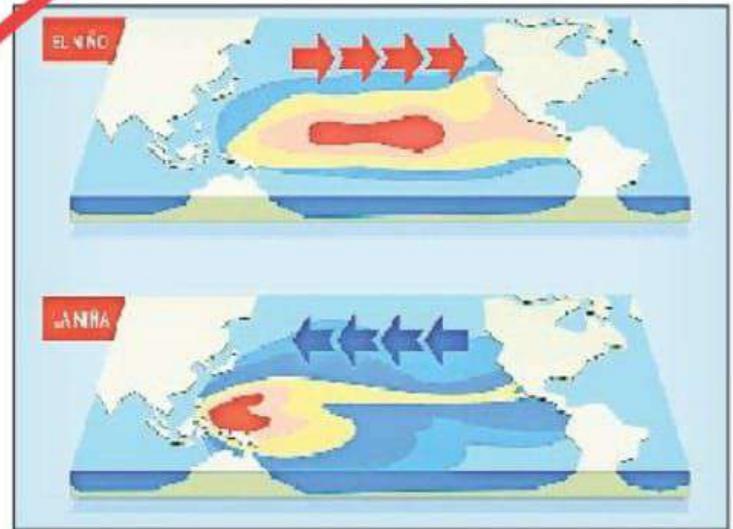
# UN weather agency reports 55 pc chance of weak La Nina this winter

NEW DELHI, Dec 4 (PTI)

THERE is a 55 per cent chance of a weak La Nina affecting global weather and climate patterns over the next three months, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said on Thursday.

La Nina usually brings a temporary cooling effect on global average temperatures but many regions are still expected to record warmer-than-normal conditions, the UN climate and weather agency said in its latest update.

La Nina and El Nino are opposite phases of a Pacific Ocean climate cycle known as El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). La Nina is the periodic large-scale cooling of sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern



equatorial Pacific Ocean and is linked to changes in tropical winds, pressure and rainfall.

El Nino is the “warm phase” of this cycle. It often weakens India’s monsoon and increases the chances of drought.

According to the latest forecasts from WMO’s Global Producing Centres for Seasonal Prediction, oceanic and atmospheric indicators in mid-November 2025 point to borderline La Nina conditions.

# Putin: Russia will take Donbas region militarily or otherwise

## Also Says There Are Points He Can't Agree To In US Plan To End Ukraine War

Moscow: President Vladimir Putin said in an interview published on Thursday that Russia would take full control of Ukraine's Donbas region by force unless Ukrainian forces withdraw, something Kyiv has flatly rejected.



Putin sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in Feb 2022 after eight years of fighting between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian troops in the Donbas, which is made up of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

"Either we liberate these territories by force of arms, or Ukrainian troops leave these territories," Putin told India Today, according to a clip shown on Russian state television.

Ukraine says it does not want to gift Russia its own territory that Moscow has failed to win on the battlefield, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said Moscow should not be rewarded for a war it started.



Reuters  
Rescuers work at the site of buildings hit by Russian air strike in Sloviansk

## Want real peace, not appeasement with Russia, says Ukraine minister

Ukraine wants "real peace, not appeasement" with Russia, its foreign minister Andrii Sybiha said on Thursday at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the security and rights body seeking a role for itself in Ukraine. "We still remember the names of those who betrayed future generations in Munich. This should never be repeated. Principles must be untouchable, and we need real peace, not appeasement," Sybiha said.

He was apparently referring to a 1938 agreement with Nazi Germany in which Britain, France and Italy agreed to Hitler's annexation of the Su-

detenland in what was then Czechoslovakia. The agreement is widely used as shorthand for failing to confront a threatening power. Russia was due to speak later.

"Europe had too many unfair peace deals in the past. All of them only led to new catastrophes," Sybiha said. The OSCE, a 57-nation body that includes the US, Canada, Russia and much of Europe and Central Asia, emerged as a key forum for east-west dialogue during the Cold War. In recent years, it has often been deadlocked as Russia has blocked important deals, accusing the organisation of having been taken over by the West. REUTERS

Russia currently controls 19.2% of Ukraine, including Crimea, which it annexed in 2014, all of Luhansk, more than 80% of Donetsk, about 75% of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, and slivers of the Kharkiv, Sumy, Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions. About 5,000sqkm of Donetsk remains under Ukrainian control.

In discussions with the US over the outline of a possible peace deal to end the war, Russia has repeatedly said that it wants control over the whole of Donbas — and that the US should informally recognise Moscow's control.

Putin received US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner in the Kremlin on Tuesday, and said that Russia had accepted some US proposals on Ukraine. Russia's RIA state news agency cited Putin as saying that the meeting had been "very useful" and that it had been based on proposals he and President Trump had discussed in Aug. "This was a necessary conversation, a very concrete one," Putin said, with provisions that Moscow was ready to discuss, while others "we can't agree to." Putin refused to elaborate on what Russia could accept or reject. "I think it is premature... It could simply disrupt the working regime" of the peace effort, Tass quoted Putin as saying. REUTERS

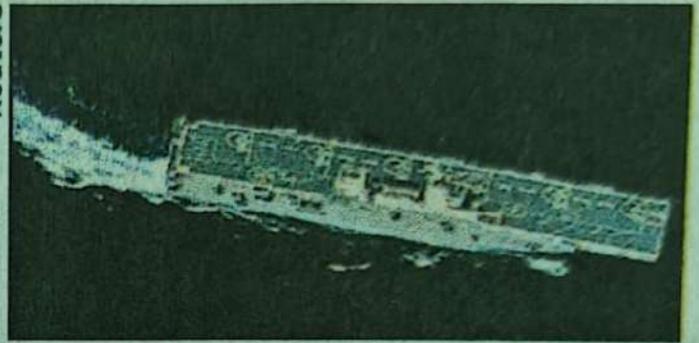
# China massing naval ships across East Asia: Reports

**Taipei:** China is deploying a large number of naval and coast guard vessels across East Asian waters, at one point more than 100, in the largest maritime show of force to date, according to four sources and intelligence reports.

China is in the middle of a busy season for military exercises, though the People's Liberation Army has not made any announcements of large-scale officially named drills. Still, the rise in activity is happening as China and Japan are in a diplomatic crisis after Japanese PM Sanae Takaichi said last month that a hypothetical Chinese attack on Taiwan could trigger a military response from Tokyo. Beijing has also been angered by a recent announcement by Taiwan President Lai Ching-te of an extra \$40 billion in defence spending to counter China.

The Chinese ships have

Reuters



A satellite image shows Hainan, the Chinese Type 075 landing helicopter dock class ship, in the Philippine Sea, on Wednesday

massed in waters stretching from the southern part of the Yellow Sea through the East China Sea and down into the South China Sea, as well as into the Pacific, according to security officials. As of Thursday morning, there were more than 90 Chinese ships in the region, the documents showed.

Taiwan has full grasp of security situation in Taiwan Strait and broader region and "can ensure there are no concerns for national security", presidential office spokesperson Karen KUO said. REUTERS

# Germany, France sceptical of US push for Ukraine peace: Report

**Berlin:** The French President and German Chancellor have voiced scepticism over the direction that US efforts to negotiate peace between Ukraine and Russia are taking, German magazine Spiegel cited a transcript of a confidential call.

In a report on Thursday, Spiegel said that in the call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and other European leaders, France's Emmanuel Macron warned that the US could insist that Ukraine makes territorial concessions to Russia. "There is a chance that the US will betray Ukraine on territory without clarity on security guarantees," he said, according to the magazine. In the call that took place on Monday, Germany's Friedrich Merz warned Zelensky that US negotiators are "playing games" and that he should be "very careful" over next few days, the Spiegel report said.

Berlin declined to comment, while Macron's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. "The President did not express himself in these words," Spiegel quoted the Élysée as saying. REUTERS