

India may overtake US in metro rail network length in two years: Minister

NEW DELHI, Sept 6 (IANS)

UNION Minister for Power and Housing & Urban Affairs Manohar Lal on Saturday said that India is likely to overtake the United States in terms of metro rail network length in the next two years. After inaugurating the extended metro rail service in Indore, the Minister said India's metro network had reached 1,170 km across 26 cities compared with 1,386 km in the US.

"With the extended Indore line, India's metro rail network has reached 1,170 km," he said and added that the nation was now 216 km short of the US network.

I think in the next two years, we will overtake the US and become the world's second-largest country in terms of metro rail network after China, according to him. In addition, China currently has around 8,000 km of metro rail lines, he added.



According to the Minister, metro rail services were operational on 245 km across five cities when PM Modi assumed office in 2014.

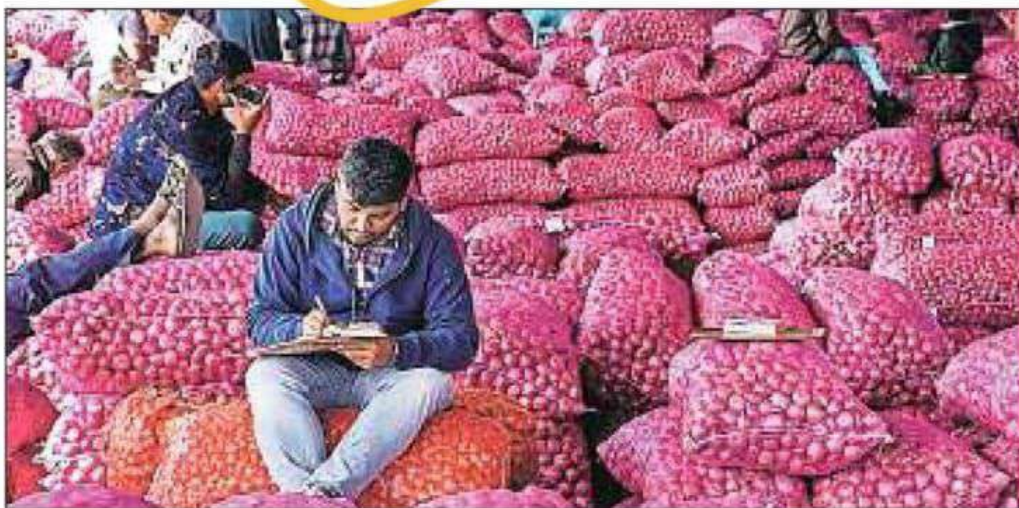
The network has since expanded to 1,170 km across 26 cities, he added. He further stated that metro rail was not merely a mode of transport but also a means of improving people's ease of living and its expansion was linked to the goal of building 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. The extended

Indore metro service built at a cost of Rs 2,850 crore will now operate on a 17-km route between Gandhi Nagar and Malviya Nagar Chauraha.

Additionally, the first trains on the extended route will depart from both ends at 9 am daily. On the other hand, the last service will run at 7 pm.

Trains will be available every 15 minutes, with more than 80 trips scheduled daily.

Govt sells 4K tonnes of onions across 17 cities to cool prices



NEW DELHI, Sept 6 (PTI)

THE Government has sold about 4,000 tonnes of buffer onions across 17 cities in the first ten days of a subsidised sale aimed at curbing skyrocketing prices, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said on Sunday.

The Centre, through its agencies NCCF and Nafed, is sitting on a buffer stock of 1.21 lakh tonnes of onion for 2026.

These agencies are transporting the stored onions in bulk from producing states to consuming centres, either by a dedicated rail rake christened "Kanda Express" or by trucks, as part of a retail intervention aimed at cooling prices. Onions are being sold at a subsidised rate of Rs 35 per kg in select price-sensitive cities.

"Approximately 4,000 tonnes of buffer onion have been sold so far in 17 cities," Khare told PTI.

Bulk consignments have

already reached Delhi and Chennai via the Kanda Express, and a third rake is now being loaded for dispatch to Guwahati in the coming days, she added.

"The distribution of buffer onions has brought some relief to consumers. Prices have fallen slightly," Khare said, adding that the quality of the Government's buffer stock was comparable in size and quality to what private traders were selling.

She noted that the rabi onion crop, typically stored for release later in the year, had suffered some damage during harvesting due to untimely rains.

NCCF Managing Director Anice Joseph Chandra said the federation alone has sold 1,500 tonnes of buffer onion so far.

"So far, we have sold 1,500 tonnes of buffer onions in different cities across the country. The focus is on retail and selling at Rs 35 per kg," she said.

European allies join Zelensky, US envoys in Kyiv for talks to end war

Ukraine Prez Says See No Quick End To War

Ukraine is resigned to Russia's war dragging on through another tough winter and is looking for a "package" from allies that would cover air defence reinforcements as well as energy, including US LNG. President Zelensky spoke to reporters after talks in Kyiv with President Donald Trump's negotiating duo, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff. They were later joined by national security chiefs from the UK, France and Germany — whose attendance Sunday hadn't been previously announced. The US, Ukraine and Europe resolved to meet again at a time and place to be determined, Zelensky said.

"We had progress in Moscow. We have new ideas, and we brought them to Kyiv," Witkoff said at the press briefing.

Zelensky declined to elaborate on any "new ideas" for bringing the conflict, now well into its fifth year, to an end — but said Sunday's talks also touched on a postwar "prosperity plan" for Ukraine.

Territorial issues, such as Russia's demand that Ukraine



Zelensky welcomes US envoys Jared Kushner (C) and Steve Witkoff (R) in Kyiv

cede additional parts of its eastern Donbas region, should be resolved at the "leader level," Zelensky said. Russian President Putin insists Ukraine must surrender the remainder of its eastern Donetsk region as part of any deal to end the war. Ukraine has repeatedly rejected the demand. "It's going to take both sides to make some compromises and narrow the issues between them and we think we have the ingredients to get to that place," Witkoff said after the talks.

Sunday's discussions followed the US officials' more than three hours of talks in Moscow on Saturday that a Kremlin aide called "highly useful." Putin opened that meeting by describing the situation in Ukraine as "not a simple one." Kremlin

foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov described the talks as "substantive, constructive, extremely frank and trusting".

While Witkoff and Kushner have travelled to Moscow often, Sunday's was their first visit to Kyiv since being entrusted with leading negotiations on behalf of Trump. Speaking in the Oval Office Friday, the US president said his envoys were "bringing with them a proposal to end the war."

Witkoff and Kushner were earlier greeted by Zelensky at the historic St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv after arriving in the capital by train. Rustem Umerov, head of Ukraine's foreign intelligence service, posted a video on social media of the pair disembarking after their journey. BLOOMBERG

Putin may meet Trump at APEC summit: Report

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin may meet his US counterpart Donald Trump on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in China if an opportunity arises, while Moscow has also said a trilateral meeting involving the leaders of Russia, China and the US cannot be ruled out, TASS reported Sunday.

Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said both Putin and Trump plan to attend the APEC summit and that Moscow would seek to arrange separate meetings for the Russian president, including with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Ushakov added that if a Putin-Trump meeting takes place, the substance of their dialogue would depend on the duration of the meeting.

Meanwhile, Russian deputy foreign minister Sergey Ryabkov said a trilateral meeting involving the leaders of Russia, China and the United States cannot be ruled out, although he noted that preparations for such a meeting have not yet begun. ANI

IAF's Sarang copter team in Egypt for int'l airshow

New Delhi: The Sarang helicopter display team of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has reached Egypt to participate in the 2nd edition of the EI Alamein International Airshow, scheduled to be held from Sept 8 to 10 at EI Alamein International Airport.

The IAF Sarang team is the world's only five-helicopter display team. The team will showcase precision, professionalism and flying skills through a series of meticulously choreographed displays.

This marks another significant milestone in international engagements for the IAF and highlights growing defence and diplomatic ties between India and Egypt.

Flying the indigenously designed and manufactured Advanced Light Helicopter Dhruv, the Sarang team is renowned for its demanding formation manoeuvres, close-proximity flying and synchronised aerial sequences. The display will highlight not only the exceptional skill and discipline of its pilots but also the capabilities of India's indigenous aerospace industry.

The Sarang team will display its famous Dolphin Leap manoeuvre and present a new one called the Spot Stall Turn.

The EI Alamein International Airshow brings together leading air forces as well as professionals in the aerospace, defence and space sectors. TNN

India, China Corps Commanders meet in Arunachal

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New Delhi: Corps Commanders of the Army and Chinese PLA Commanding formations in the eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh Sunday geared up for talks to sort out ongoing tensions along the state's stretch of the 1,126-km Line of Actual Control. The meeting is the first Corps Commander-level military talks in the eastern sector at the Vacha-Damai border meeting point.

The latest talks are significant as India and China have so far held Corps Commander-level meetings primarily at the Chusul-Moldo border meeting point in the Ladakh sector. The latest engagement marks a new start from both sides to address issues in the eastern sector. A source told **TOI**, "The Indian side will be represented by Lieutenant General Girish Kalia, Commander of the Indian Army's 3 Corps, also known as Spear Corps."

The 3 Corps is headquartered at Rangapahar in Nagaland and is responsible for operational areas along the LAC in Arunachal. The Army has two Corps formations looking after the LAC in the state, including Tezpur-based 4 Corps and Rangapahar-based 3 Corps.

India and China have different perceptions of the LAC, resulting, at times, in face-offs. The latest engagement is expected to provide them with an opportunity to

Asia future depends on how India, China manage rise: Ex-CDS

Former CDS General Anil Chauhan has said India and China are two major Asian powers, large economies and civilisational states, and the future of Asia will depend substantially on how the countries manage their simultaneous rise.

Addressing an event on the 139th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, General Chauhan Saturday talked briefly of the opportunities and challenges in the ties.

"Our relationship with China cannot be held hostage only to boundary issues... They cooperate in some forms, compete for influence and markets, and hold differing views on aspects of regional and global order. So there's a need to engage the Chinese on this. That's what we're doing as part of SCO and now Brics," he said. ani

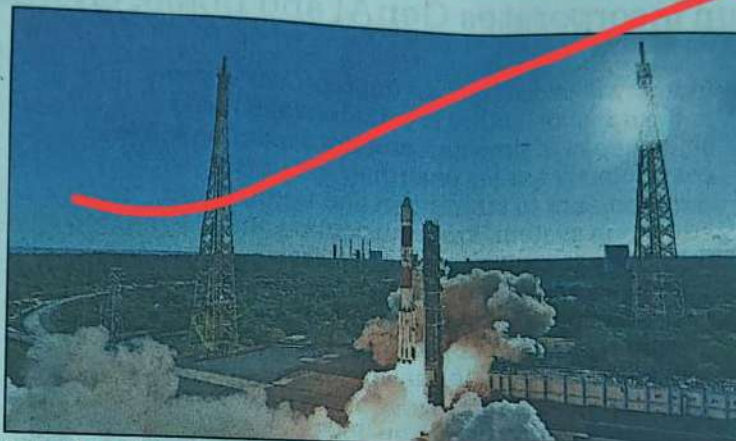
address such issues directly through military channels.

The talks follow a meeting in Beijing in Aug between national security adviser Ajit Doval and China's foreign minister, Wang Yi. There, they agreed on an eight-point plan to improve how both countries manage the border, promising quicker action through diplomatic and military channels whenever issues pop up.

Agency won't be privatised or its role diminished: Isro

It Will Remain Bedrock Of Indian Space Sector: INSPACE

Surendra Singh & Chethan Kumar | TNN



Isro will continue to remain India's principal institution for advanced space research and technology development, the agency said

Modi govt deliberately circumscribing Isro's role to boost start-ups: Cong

Congress Sunday accused Modi govt of deliberately circumscribing the role of Isro in the name of encouraging start-ups and claimed its capabilities would be transferred to private companies whose commitment was doubtful. In a post on X, Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh shared a screenshot of a media report and said, "One former Isro chairperson has been bold enough to express his concerns. Others like him must also have the courage of their convictions and not simply keep quiet as the magnificent Sarabhai-Dhawan edifice gets systematically dismantled." TNN

ce is not about reducing its role. It is about enabling Isro to focus even more strongly on the next generation of India's space programme, while industry scales mature technologies and capabilities. What is changing is not the importance of Isro, but the scale and structure of India's space ecosystem. The transition is therefore towards an Isro-led national space ecosystem."

The agency also said its role would progressively strengthen in areas where "its scientific expertise matters most: frontier R&D, advanced technologies, human spaceflight,

next-generation launch systems, deep-space and planetary missions and strategic national capabilities. It will continue developing cutting-edge technologies, including advanced payloads for communication, navigation and Earth observation, sensors, propulsion systems and other critical technologies".

After nine Isro staff associations representing thousands sought clarification from the agency chairperson on the private sector shift, Goenka said on X, "Let me say it unequivocally: Isro's role is by no means diminishing."

On scaling up the production of rockets and satellites in India, the INSPACE director declared that the country had set an "ambitious target" of 50 launches a year by 2030. "A goal of this scale cannot be achieved by one organisation alone. Govt and private industry have to build this future together," he said.

The INSPACE chairperson said, "The reforms since 2020 are about expanding India's overall space ecosystem. IN-SPACE will facilitate and authorise greater non-govt participation, while NSIL will help commercialise mature capabilities."

Goenka said the idea of space reforms is to "let industry increasingly manufacture and scale mature launch vehicles, satellites and other systems, while Isro focuses on what it is uniquely placed to do: advanced R&D, scientific missions, strategic missions, new technologies, and infrastructure that is too complex for the private sector to develop on its own".

Assuring staff that they were going to handle big projects, he said, "Isro will remain at the core of India's space programme, leading frontier research and the next generation of national missions, including Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035, an Indian crewed mission to the Moon by 2040, next-generation launch systems, and sustained lunar and planetary exploration."

"The direction is not a smaller Isro. It is a larger Indian space ecosystem, with Isro pushing the technological frontier," he added.

New Delhi/Bengaluru: Allaying the fears of some of its staff that the organisation will be privatised and its role reduced to an R&D lab, Isro Sunday dismissed "speculation" about any diminution of its role as "misinformation".

"These assertions are completely baseless and incorrect. We wish to categorically state that Isro will neither be privatised nor will its importance be diminished," it said.

Isro further said it would continue to remain "India's principal institution for advanced space research and technology development, national and strategic missions, space science and exploration, and critical and frontier space capabilities".

Space promoter and regulator Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (INSPACE) chairperson Pawan Goenka also said Sunday that Isro would "remain the bedrock of the Indian space sector" and at the core of India's space programme leading frontier research and the next generation of national missions like the space station and Gaganyaan.

The agency said, "Participation of private sector in spa-

India, 163 others vote at UNGA for map with bigger Africa, shrunk N America

This Is Why Body Is Losing Credibility: US

United Nations General Assembly voted Friday to adopt a new world map that makes the African continent bigger while shrinking North America and Europe, drawing fire from Washington.

Aimed at "a more accurate representation" of continental landmasses, the resolution was supported by 164 countries. US voted against it and six nations abstained.

The new map, known as the Equal Earth cartographic projection, improves "the accuracy of the cartographic representation of the world", the resolution said. It urges member states to use the new map in place of the traditional Mercator projection.

Foreign minister Robert Dussey of Togo, which sponsored the resolution, said maps "guide education, nourish imagination, and influence collective perceptions".

"They are therefore never neutral; when they present a distorted image of our planet, they risk perpetuating inaccurate representation that is passed down through generations," he said.

African Union Commission chair Mahmoud Ali



The UN General Assembly resolution urges member states to use the new 'more accurate' map, known as the Equal Earth cartographic projection, in place of the traditional Mercator projection

Youssef said, "Beyond cartography, this initiative underscores the importance of representing Africa on the basis of objective and scientifically established realities... Africa must be represented as it truly is: in its true dimensions and in its rightful place in the world."

US, however, slammed the resolution, saying such moves are "the reason this institution is losing its credibility". Representative Yaryna Ferencevych said,

"Instead of focusing on genuine problems... this body is debating map projects from the 16th century and their role in promoting repara-

tions and cognitive justice."

The Mercator projection was designed for maritime navigation by Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569. It focused on accurate depictions of the shapes and angles of land masses, but their relative sizes were often inaccurate, largely due to the challenge of rendering a three-dimensional globe on to a two-dimensional map.

It inflated northern regions and compressed equatorial ones, making Europe and North America appear much larger, while shrinking Africa and South America. Africa appears to be roughly as big as Greenland,

MEA: Resolution doesn't endorse any specific map

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India was among the 164 countries that voted in favour of UN General Assembly's Sept 4 resolution, "Correct the Map: Rebalancing Global Cartographic Representation and Promoting Equitable Representation of the World's Regions, Particularly Africa".

MEA said the resolution's purpose is to encourage the use of equal-area map projections that preserve the relative sizes of continental landmasses, and it neither adopts nor authenticates any particular world map, nor does it address political cartography, including international boundaries, disputed territories or place names.

"India voted in favour of the resolution and also made an explanation, stressing the underlying principle of promoting equal-area cartographic representation. We

though at 30.3 million sq km, it's about 14 times as large.

France, which co-sponsored the resolution, announced Friday it would abandon the Mercator projection, in which "US, Russia and China take on a dis-

also highlighted that the resolution does not constitute endorsement of any specific map, projection or depiction of national boundaries," said Randhir Jaiswal.

The resolution received abstentions from Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine, and a lone vote against it from US.

The resolution noted that the Mercator projection remains widely used in educational, media, digital and official materials, despite the considerable distortion of landmasses to the North and South, far from the equator.

It expressed concern that this distortion contributed to minimising the perceived sizes of Africa, Latin America and South Asia, and perpetuating an unbalanced view of the world. India welcomed the intention behind the resolution to promote more accurate and representative cartographic practices.

proportionate visual prominence". Foreign minister Jean-Noel Barrot said, "Changing maps obviously doesn't change the world," "But correcting a distorted representation is already an act of truth." AGENCIES

Iran claims strike on a US ship in Hormuz, US military denies it

Cairo: Iran said Sunday it struck an unmanned US vessel trying to enter the Strait of Hormuz, a claim that the US military dismissed as a "total lie". It was the latest salvo in a new flare-up of fighting between the two countries. The purported attack came a day after the US military said forces struck three Iranian oil tankers in response to a missile attack on navy warships.

The US and Iran resumed attacks last week, following a month of relative calm, with the Strait of Hormuz and Iranian communities along it again being targeted. At least five people were killed earlier in the week in US strikes. The Trump administration appears to have adopted a dual-prong approach to the conflict, responding militarily to attacks on the strait while going after foreign financial institutions that handle Iran's money. But Tehran's hard-line new senior leaders have signalled a willingness to dig in after weathering decades of sanctions.

Iran has found ways over the years to circumvent sanctions, and now the US blockade, and get its oil to buyers to help ease growing economic



A damaged storage & warehousing facility at the port of Kuhestak in Iran's Sirik County Sunday, which was struck by the US military last week

pressures. That relies in part on a shadow fleet transporting its oil.

Over 140 killed in latest Yemen clashes: Sources

Fighting between Yemeni govt forces and Iran-backed Houthi rebels in southwest Yemen killed more than 140 combatants between midday Saturday and Sunday morning, military sources said. Two military officials with the Saudi-backed govt forces said that 84 of their troops were killed, mostly in missile attacks, while four Houthi military sources said 57 rebels were killed in the same period. Clashes have erupted in Yemen over control of a gateway to the Red Sea in the deadliest fighting since a 2022 ceasefire between the two sides collapsed in July. AGENCIES