

 **DEFENCE NAGARI**

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ATAL SETU

INDIA'S DREAM

By Kr. Aditya

PM TAKES
STOCK OF
**'ATAL
SETU**





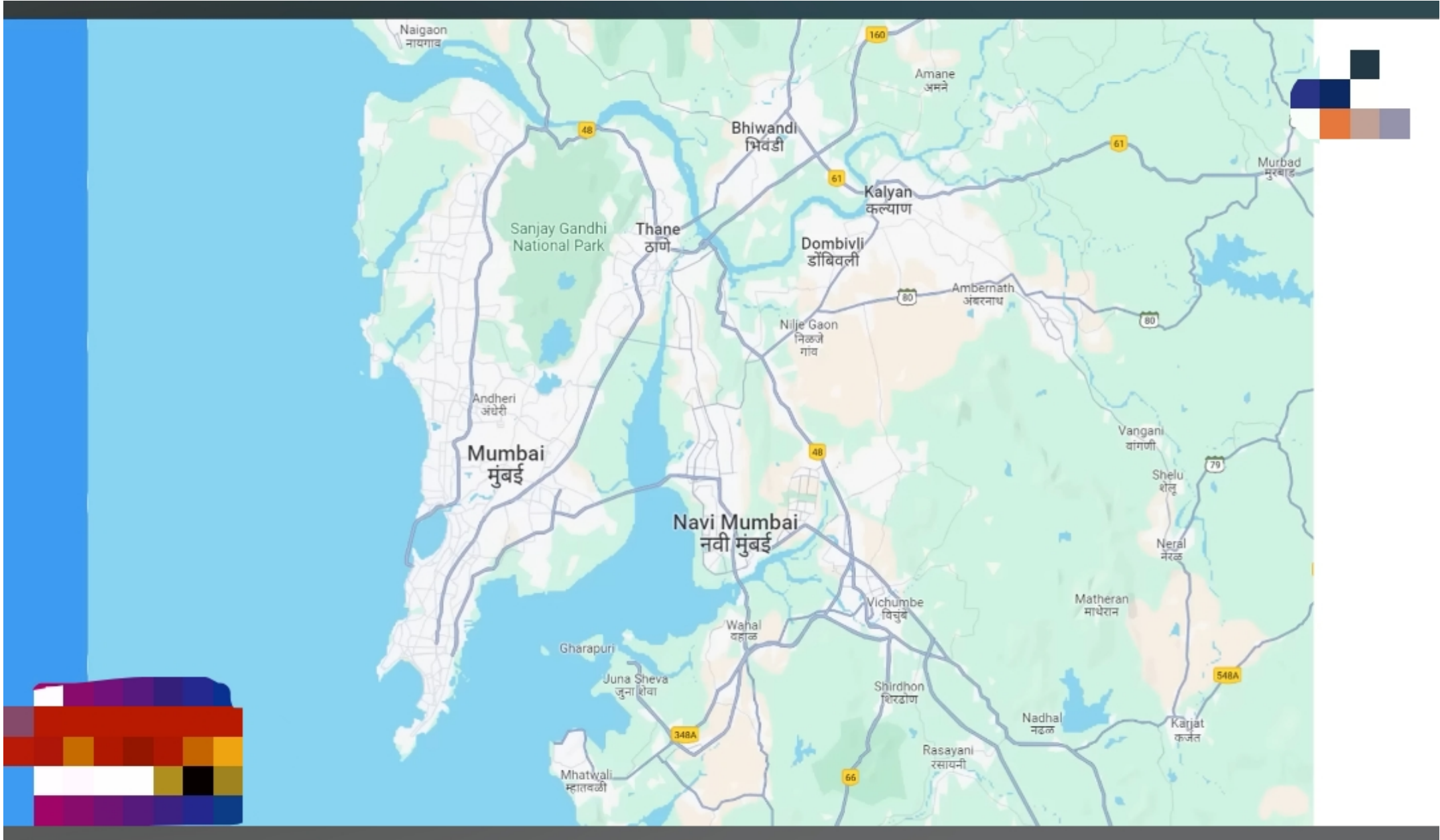
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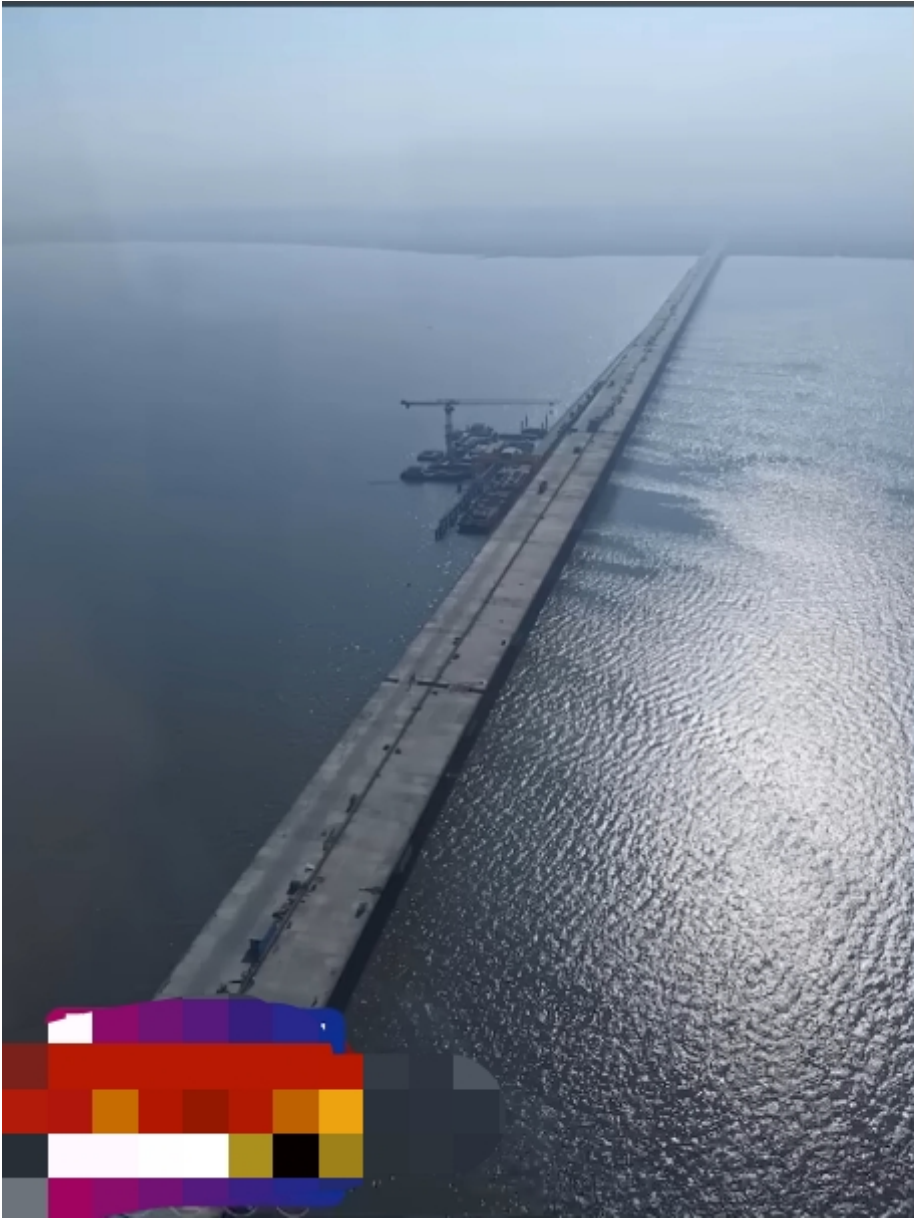
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PM Modi to inaugurate India's longest sea bridge, Mumbai Trans Harbour Link on January 12

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?



Nearly 7,500 workers and engineers worked **day and night** to help **end Mumbai's 60-year wait.**

The Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), **is set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 12.**

This extraordinary sea bridge, spanning **nearly 22km** and ranking as the **world's 12th longest**, has been **under construction since 2018.**





The route commences at Sewri in south Mumbai, traversing Thane Creek and concluding at Chirle in the distant outskirts of Navi Mumbai.

Out of 21.8-km-long bridge. **16.11 km stretch** of the bridge is built **on water**.

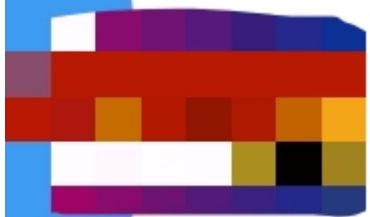


HISTORY OF THE PROJECT



The idea of a connector linking the Island City of Mumbai to the mainland **was first proposed in 1962 in a study titled “Planning of Road System for Mumbai Metropolitan Region”.**

The idea was to set up infrastructure that would help in the greater economic integration of Mumbai island with Navi Mumbai and extended regions of Pune, Goa, Panvel and Alibaug.





It took the Maharashtra government close to **34 years** to initiate a **feasibility report** of the project, which was done in **1994**.

The project was stuck in bureaucratic files for another decade before the study was updated in **2004** and tenders called in **2006**.

Corporate rivalry, litigation and the state's hesitancy in pushing the project — which was expected to see 50,000 vehicles using the bridge from both ends — **led to the project going into a deep freeze for another decade.**





In 2017 the project was revived with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) – the nodal agency for constructing the project –

Signing an agreement with Japan International Cooperation Agency, which is providing development loan assistance for the Rs 18,000 crore project.

Work on the project began in April 2018, and it was expected to be completed by mid-2023.



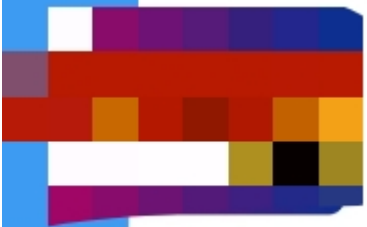
TOLL RATES



On January 4, 2024, the pricing details for toll rates were disclosed.

For a one-way trip, the charge is set at Rs. 250, while a round trip incurs a fee of Rs. 375.

Those opting for a day pass will be charged Rs. 625, and individuals seeking a monthly pass will find it available at Rs. 12,500.





No toll queues: MTHL will have an open road tolling (ORT) system, which eliminates the need for boom barriers, eradicating the long queues typically observed at toll booths. The ORT system, already at work in Singapore, doesn't require vehicles to halt for toll payment. Instead, advanced scanners and cameras identify moving vehicles and electronically collect toll. The advantages are numerous: enhanced commuter experience, fuel efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness.





NO SMALLER VEHICLES



Anticipated to accommodate 70,000 vehicles daily, the MTHL boasts a **maximum speed limit of 100 kmph for four-wheelers.**

However, motorcycles, autorickshaws, and tractors **are restricted from using the sea bridge.**

Vehicles such as cars, taxis, light motor vehicles, minibuses, and two-axle buses will have a **maximum speed of 100 kmph**, with the **speed restricted to 40 kmph** on the **ascent and descent of the bridge.**

This precautionary measure aims to curb **dangers, obstructions, and inconveniences to the public.**





Notably, the link incorporates artificial-intelligence-based **cameras designed to alert the control room.**

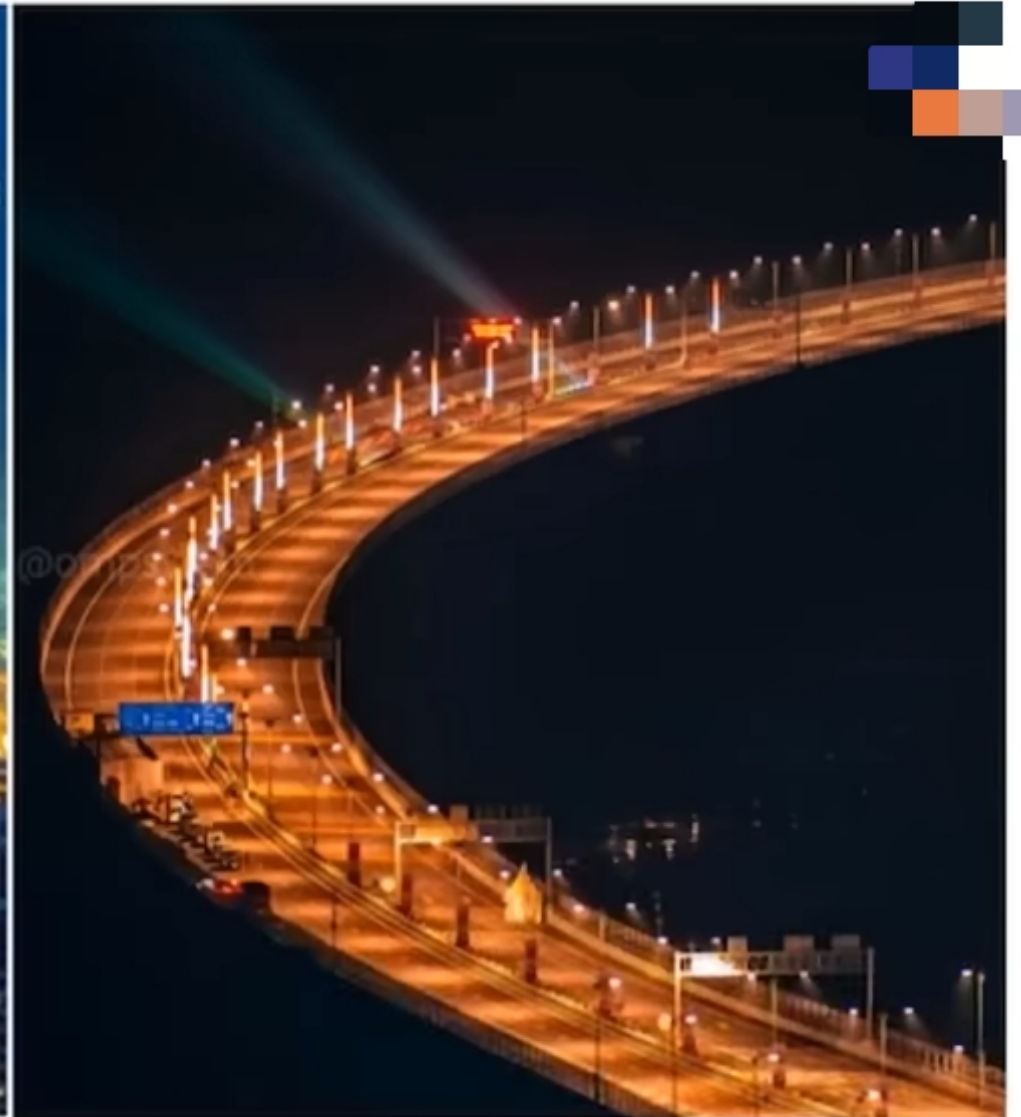
In the event of vehicle breakdowns, minimizing congestion as **stranded vehicles will swiftly be towed away via emergency lanes.**



Dynamic displays: Motorists will have real-time information through dynamic displays, which includes messages for traffic congestion and alerts in case of accidents or emergencies.

Special light poles: Environmentalists were concerned that lighting on MTHL would disturb marine life at night. But engineers have solved the problem by installing 1,212 special light poles that will illuminate only the carriageway without any luminous spill onto the sea.

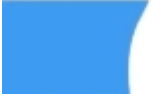






Noise barriers to protect sensitive stretches

From Sewri, an 8.5 km noise barrier and 6 km of view barrier has been installed, as the portion of the bridge passes through a flamingo protected area and BARC (Bhabha Atomic Research Centre), which is a highly sensitive area. On the 7.807 km of stretch over the sea, over 900 metres of noise barrier and 1.2 km of view barrier have been installed.





Sea bridge was the most difficult part of project

The sea bridge, built at a height of 15 metres from sea level, was the most difficult and arduous part was the construction of the segments of the project. In the marine portion, engineers and workers had to dig as deep as 47 metres in the sea bed. The bridge lying close to sensitive establishments like ONGC, JNPT and BARC made the construction of these segments more difficult, with engineers having to take care that they do not damage any underwater installations like pipelines or communication cables.



TRAVEL TIME, FUEL SAVINGS?



The bridge, designed to have a life of 100 years, will reduce the travel distance from South Mumbai to Chirle by around 30 km and as it will take around **16 minutes to cross the bridge, it will save at least an hour of commute time.**

One crore litres of fuel are projected to be saved per year by the use of this bridge, apart from the reduction of **pollution levels, by about 25680 metric tonnes less of CO₂ emissions.**








Over 5,000 workers employed by project, seven died

MMRDA documents state that on an average, a total of 5,403 workers and engineers worked every day for completion of the project since work began in mid-2018.

Seven labourers lost their lives while constructing the project. Most of the labourers hired were from states like Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Maharashtra.

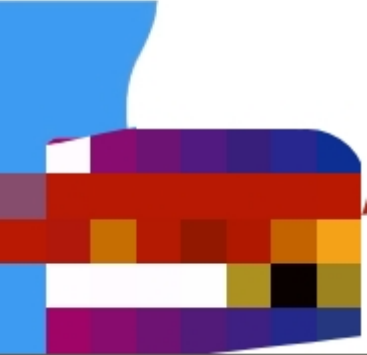
Almost all these fatal accidents took place when these workers were working on the first package of the project which entailed constructing a 10.380 km-long bridge section across Mumbai Bay including Sewri Interchange.





Covid-induced delays caused cost escalation

MTHL saw a cost escalation of Rs 2,192 crore or 14.9 per cent, according to information obtained through a Right to Information (RTI) query by activist Anil Galgali. The original cost of Rs 14,712.70 crore increased to Rs 16,904.43 crore owing to delays due to Covid-induced lockdowns.



HOW WILL IT TRANSFORM MUMBAI?



Through this bridge Mumbai will get a vital artery which can give a phenomenal boost to business and industry as well as make daily life easier for Mumbaikers.

Mumbai is India's most vehicle-congested city. It has more than 2,000 per km of road.

It also has the most densely packed intra-city railway corridors which carried more than 8 million people daily in pre-pandemic times.





Mumbai's car population has nearly doubled in the last decade, but the length of its road network lags far behind **Delhi and Bangalore.**

The city has a road network of roughly 2,000 km, less than a tenth of **Delhi's 29,000-km sprawl.**

It's barely even a fifth of **Bengaluru's grid.**

In such a scenario, **Atal Setu** has come as a blessing.





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Its real potential, though, will be unleashed once the Sewri-Worli elevated corridor, the Eastern Freeway-Marine Drive tunnel, the proposed Chirle-Palasppe connection with the Mumbai-Pune Expressway,

And the international airport in Navi Mumbai are completed.

Real estate experts say market will see significant growth

Gautam Thacker, Chairman NAREDCO Neral-Karjat unit, said, “The Mumbai address has changed as a lot of construction has begun in MMR. Many homebuyers are showing interest in properties in MMR. With the upcoming MTHL and Navi Mumbai Airport projects, untouched areas will see significant growth. It is a given, that connectivity has a positive impact on real estate development. Micro markets like Ulwe, Panvel, Kharghar among others are seeing growth in real estate pricing, and it will go up further.”

Economic growth

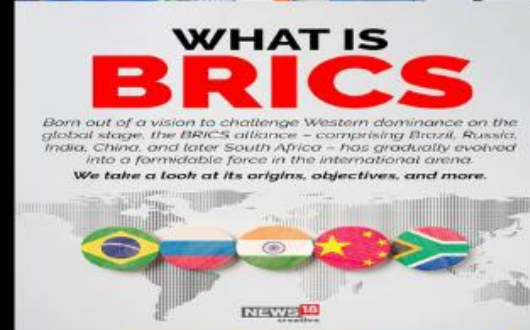
MTHL will accelerate growth in Mumbai and MMR in terms of economy, as India to become a 5 trillion growth economy. The MTHL will give impetus to growth by opening up new avenues and businesses opportunities, an official said.

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