

# Hiroshima bomb had 1/30th force of meteor strike

REUTERS

**New York:** The meteor that streaked across the Russian skies on Friday, injuring around 1,200 people, exploded with a force 30 times greater than the Hiroshima nuclear bomb, Nasa scientists have said.

The 55-foot wide rock with a mass of 10,000 tonnes lit up the sky above the Urals region, causing shockwaves and damaging thousands of homes in an event unprecedented in modern times.

"It had an energy greater than (all) the weapons used in World War II," Bill Cooke, leader of the Meteoroid Environments Office at Nasa's Marshall Space Flight Center, said.

The dazzling fireball burned brighter than the Sun as it unleashed nearly 500 kilotons of energy, around 30 times the size of the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

Shockwaves from the aerial explosion injured some 1,200 people and wrecked thousands of homes as residents cowered from the apocalyptic momentum in the city of Chelyabinsk, some 1497 km east of Moscow.

"Imagine a shock wave coming through a city with glass flying from all these tall buildings. Walls collapsed ... doors were blown in and a lot of people were injured by flying debris," Cooke said.

The fiery 643734 kmph streak disintegrated 32.5 seconds after blasting through the atmosphere about 24 km



**BIG BANG:** The Chelyabinsk Zinc Plant building was damaged after a meteorite passed above the Urals city on Friday

up, according to new data culled from five infrared stations located throughout the world. The trajectory of the Russian meteor (north to south) diverged so greatly from Asteroid DA14's near-Earth flyby (south to north) that scientists insist they are unrelated phenomena.

"They occurred the same day so some people would assume that the meteor was a chunk of DA14 but that's not true," said Cooke.

The meteor is the largest reported since 1908 when one crashed into Tunguska, Siberia, about 4828 km to the east. "We would expect an event of this magnitude to occur once every 100 years on average," said Paul Chodas of Nasa's Near-Earth Object Programme Office. PT1