

## Asia Africa Growth Corridor: Chinese daily cautions India, Japan over trade corridor

BEIJING: The [Asia Africa Growth Corridor](#) ( [AAGC](#)) sponsored by [India](#) and [Japan](#) is welcome — as long as it does not try to trip China's [Belt](#) and Road initiative, a Chinese newspaper said on Wednesday.

Announced by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May, the AAGC, essentially a maritime corridor, was seen by some as a counterbalance to the Belt and Road initiative, the state-run Global Times said in a report.

"The new venture, jointly led by India and Japan - two countries that have so far opted not to join the B&R initiative - sets out a vision for the better integration of South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia with Africa and Oceania," it said.

The Times said the India-Japan vision indicates an overlap between the AAGC and the [Belt and Road project](#) "and invites controversy over the actual intentions behind the growth corridor.

It goes without saying that India and Japan could feel free to embark on a new connectivity initiative and no one is begging them to join the B&R initiative.

"As long as the AAGC aims to embrace inclusive growth and promote joint prosperity, the corridor should be encouraged.

"But if India and Japan design the corridor to deliberately counterbalance China's B&R, they should think twice before rushing to it because the route of the AAGC has an extensive geographic overlap with the route of the B&R initiative," the report said.

"That's particularly the case, considering that China has already made huge commitments to developing Africa while the India-Japan partnership is only just taking shape.

"If the AAGC aims to squeeze out China's B&R initiative instead of serving as a complement, it actually divides what's supposed to be a united force to forge ahead with inclusive growth in dozens of countries and regions along the route of the B&R initiative.

"India, for its part, should be particularly level-headed and guard against any over-assertive plans that may go awry."

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