



## India's balancing act with China

In spite of pressure from Japan and the US, India has refused to join an infra project to balance its relations with China

 Shankar Kumar | September 19, 2018

#India #China #Nirmala Sitharaman



Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her Japanese counterpart, Itsunori Onodera, exchanging mementos in New Delhi on August 20

On the first day of his August 19-20 visit to India, when Japanese defence minister Itsunori Onodera held talks with his Indian counterpart Nirmala Sitharaman, several defence and strategic-related issues had cropped up in their annual talks. But a big smile flashed on Sitharaman's face when Onodera, as per sources, raised the matter of a move by Japan, the US and Australia to launch a joint infrastructure scheme in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Ever since the then Austrian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull, during his February 23-24 visit of the US, discussed with president Donald Trump the plan to counterbalance China's investments in the Indo-Pacific region by having an alternative infra scheme, there have been attempts by these two countries, which were later on joined by Japan, to rope in India for the project. But India has been steadfastly refusing to join any scheme which would lead to a 'us versus China' rivalry in the Indo-Pacific region. It turned down Australia's request to join the 22nd edition of the Malabar naval exercise conducted during June 7-16 by Indian, American and Japanese navies off Guam, a major US naval base in the Western Pacific.

Yet it has not stopped India and Japan from carrying on with the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC), the ambitious project which is actually an answer to China's BRI initiative. The Japanese defence minister who landed in New Delhi two days ahead of Chinese defence minister Gen Wei Fenghe's August 21-24 visit, broached with Sitharaman issues like China's growing involvement in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar – all these countries together with Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and others are part of Asia-Africa Growth Corridor.

India and Japan are jointly investing in road construction and strategic assets in these countries. While Japan has earmarked \$30 billion, India has so far not officially disclosed as to how much money it will pump in to build ports and other... [Read More \(+\)](#)

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### Opinion

Will the supreme court verdict on Section 377 bring about significant change in everyday lives of LGBTs?

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## Other News

### The imprint of the Gurjara Pratiharas

On August 16, when the country lost its beloved former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a nondescript village, 70 km from Agra, came into the limelight. Bateshwar, the ancestral village of Vajpayee, is situated along the notorious Chambal ravines on the banks of the Yamuna. Vajpayee&rsq

### Imagining the worst

Love Sonia is not a film you would want to watch if you knew its subject: sex trafficking. Without even a scene experienced, the subject induces visceral revulsion. However optimistic the screenplay, it can only deal in ugly dregs and bring up retching bile. Even so, Love Sonia, gritty an

### Outlaws no longer

The supreme court has decriminalised homosexuality by declaring that Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code will no longer apply. This has meant a lot to the community of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, and queers (LGBTQs). With the law against them and unaccepting of them, they faced horrifying dis

### AAI to prepare development plan for Sri Lanka's Palaly airport

The Airports Authority of India (AAI), the regulatory body, has inked a pact with the ministry of external affairs to prepare a detailed project report for development of Palaly airport in Sri Lanka. The aviation PSU wants to foray into construction of airports in foreign countries like priv

### Academic session for first batch at ICT - IOCL Bhubaneswar campus inaugurated

Petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan has inaugurated the academic session of the first batch of five-year integrated M Tech course in chemical engineering at the Institute of Chemical Technology (ICT) - IndianOil Bhubaneswar campus. The Bhubaneswar campus is an extension of the reputed ICT,

### BHEL rolls out first electric loco for railways

BHEL has manufactured its first 6,000 HP electric locomotive (type WAG-9H) for Indian Railways. The enterprise says that it has forayed into the transportation sector with the flagging off of its first electric locomotive. The loco was flagged off by Ghanshyam Singh, member (traction), railw

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