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Italy Regrets Joining China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) Seeks To Leave It Without Harming Ties

Why In The News?

- Italy's Defense Minister Called His Country's Decision To Join A Flagship Chinese Infrastructure Scheme "Wicked," As The Government Weighs Up Whether Continue As Part Of The Scheme.
- In A Recent Interview, Guido Crosetto Said That The Belt And Road Initiative (BRI) Which Italy Signed Up To Under Its Previous Government Had Done Little To Help The Country's Exports.



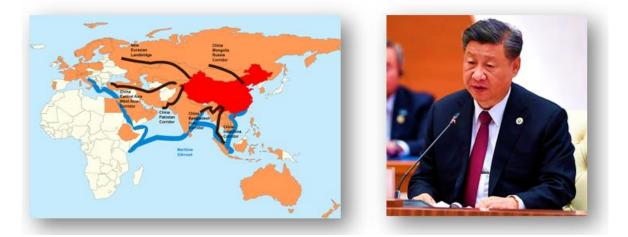


Italy seeking ways to break free of 'atrocious' BRI agreement with China: Report

Belt And Road Initiative (BRI)

- The BRI, A Name Coined By China's Xi Jinping In 2013 Is Beijing's Global Infrastructure Investment Program. It Was Established To Rebuild China's Silk Road, Connecting Asia With Africa And Europe With The Aim Of Increasing Trade And Economic Growth.
- The Initiative Has Seen **Billions Of Dollars Poured Into Infrastructure Projects** Each Year Paving Highways From Papua New Guinea To Kenya, Constructing Ports From Sri Lanka To West Africa, And Providing Power And Telecoms Infrastructure For People From Latin America To Southeast Asia.

• Critics See The **BRI As A Way For China To Spread Its Influence Across The Globe. Italy In 2019** Became The Only Major Western Country And The Only Country From The G7 Group Of Advanced Economies To Join The BRI.



What Italy's Defence Minister Said?

- The Choice To Join The Silk Road Was An Improvised And Wicked Act, Made By The Government Of Giuseppe Conte, Which Led To A Double Negative Result. We Have Exported A Load Of Oranges To China, They Have Tripled Their Exports To Italy In Three Years.
- The Most Ridiculous Thing Then Was That Paris, Without Signing Any Treaties, In Those Days Sold Planes To Beijing For Tens Of Billions. The Question Now, He Said, Is How Italy Can Withdraw From The BRI Without Damaging Relations With Beijing.
- He Described Beijing As "A Competitor, But Also A Partner." Italy's Membership Of The BRI Expires In 2024. Earlier This Year, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni Said That It Was Possible To Have "Good Relations" With China Outside The Scheme.





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