

# Blue Dot Network

[UPSC Notes]

## What is Blue Dot Network?

Blue Dot network is the multistakeholder initiative taken by the U.S. and joined by Australia and Japan to counter China's belt and road initiative. It aims to improve the standard of global infrastructure development.

Any project with certification from the Blue Dot can attract massive capital from investors. Any investor will invest easily in a project which has Blue Dot certification. The Blue Dot network was seen as the counter to the China belt and road initiative, which China president xi Jinping launched in 2013.

- This initiative was launched on 4 November 2019 at the 35 summits of the indo-pacific forum in Bangkok, Thailand.
- Through this initiative wants to bring the government and private companies together to build global infrastructure like roads and bridges worldwide. This project focuses on indo-pacific regions.
- It is a multi-stakeholder initiative to bring together various government and private companies to increase the standard of global infrastructure development. It is giving certification or approval to a project.
- Any project which gets the Blue Dot network certification or approval can easily convince investors to invest. This certification is a trademark to signal to people that the project is not exploitive but sustainable.
- In addition, India, Japan, the United States, and Australia are part of a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, also known as the QUAD group.
- Whenever India joins the Blue Dot Network, the QUAD group will probably become an extension of the Blue Dot Network.
- The Blue Dot Network will operate as a “Michelin Guide” for public services developments and ventures. It indicates that the infrastructure ventures becoming a part of this initiative by the United States will be evaluated and approved by the network based on the standards.
- According to these standards, the ventures must fulfill certain worldwide infrastructure principles.

## Objective Of The Blue Dot Network Certification

This initiative has only one sole purpose, which is the development of the project; it could be only through good investment from the investors in the project.

- This initiative is specially designed in such a technique to electrify foreign investors to invest in the projects for the development of infrastructure.
- It is responsible for giving the project certification and approval after grading them properly. It is a certification and global evaluation system for roads and bridges in the Indo-Asian areas to give evidence of their sustainability.
- The project approved by the Blue Dot network set a universal standard to attract more investors to the project. In addition, this approval signals to people that the project is sustainable and transparent.
- It can also be considered a global symbol for transport and sustainable market-driven infrastructure projects.
- It will also enhance the sustainable development of the economy by promoting excellence in infrastructure development and supporting alternatives by predator lending.

## What Is a Belt And Road Initiative?

It is a cooperative project focusing on the cooperation and connectivity of multiple countries across the Asian, African, and European continents.

It was announced in 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping to build a network of roadways, railways, power grids, and gas pipelines to build infrastructure. This project includes around 70 countries in the project. Through this initiative, China can expand its influence in Europe and Asian countries.

The projects are divided into two parts:

- **Silk road** is a land-based project connecting China with central Asia, western Europe, and eastern Europe.
- **21-century maritime silk road** is a sea-based system connecting China with Mediterranean Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia.

## Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): How Does it Work?

These initiatives force the development of inter-governmental relations to better alignment of all programs for economic development and strategies and plan for regional cooperation.

- It focuses on strengthening the coordination of infrastructure plans to better connect complex infrastructure in transportation and improve the grids system.
- It encourages the development of soft infrastructures, such as signing trade deals and aligning regulatory standards.
- It enhances the people relation by allowing free flow of investment, people, and resources all over the country.
- This project allows china to use its finances to fund infrastructure projects for development. This project's primary focus is on investment.
- China invests in those underinvested countries or not at all invested by any other region or country. Through this, they provide support to the country's infrastructure growth.

## Differences between Belt and Road initiative and the Blue Dot Network

The fundamental differences between Belt and Road initiative and the Blue Dot network are as follows:

Belt and Road Initiative	Blue Dot Network
It is headed and controlled only by China	It includes multiple players. It consists of multiple stakeholders, including Australia, Japan, and the U.S.
It does not invite the participation of any private companies or governments.	It will work in collaboration with various government and private companies.
It provides loans to developing projects in various areas, especially underinvested in countries like Pakistan.	It does not provide any loan to the project but provides approval as a hallmark to get a loan from anywhere
China initiated this initiative to expand Its Network For the Development of solid Infrastructure.	These initiatives are mainly taken to counter China's belt and road strategy.

### Blue Dot Network: A Step to Counter to the Belt and Road Initiative?

Although after seeing a lot of evidence, it can be seen that the Blue Dot Initiative was initiated to counter China's belt and road initiative. At a time when China initiated the belt and road initiative, it disturbed a lot of foreign neighbors, which included Japan, India, and Australia.

As a counter, Japan and India also came up with a similar active 'trilateral partnership' in 2018 with similar objectives like belt and road initiatives. But all these plans ultimately led to failure due to poor funding.

To work as a counter, the Blue Dot Network Still Needs some final touches like-

- Belt and Road initiatives to provide funding and short relief to various projects. But the Blue Dot network only provides approval to various projects to make them eligible for enough funding from other investors.
- A Blue Dot network is a multi-stakeholder group. So any decision might see a lot of up and down before everyone agrees on a particular decision; this could affect the functioning of the network. This might also lead to interruptions in decision-making.

## Blue Dot Network: Benefits for India

The benefits associated with India joining the Blue Dot network are as follows:

- It has increased the transparency and economic accountability of the development project India commences.
- This network acts as a seal of the project, signaling to other people that the project is not exploitive but sustainable.
- The Blue Dot network provides the correct information to foreign investors, who are reluctant to invest in the projects due to a lack of information.
- It promotes sustainable investment in the infrastructure and forms the ability to get quality investment from foreign investors. Therefore, it will increase the country's economy.
- It will also help make India more powerful than China or other rivals. This could be the one way through which India can override china.