



BRICS 5G Innovation Base

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Why in News

China has proposed the creation of a **BRICS innovation base in China** to take forward **5G** and **Artificial Intelligence** (AI) cooperation among the five countries of **BRICS** i.e. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Key Points

- China urged fellow nations, including India, to boost cooperation in areas including 5G and Artificial Intelligence.
- This move could pose a conundrum before **India** who is having **issues with China** in recent times but other countries seem to willing to allow China's participation in their 5G networks.
 - India is unlikely to allow Chinese participation in the roll-out of its national 5G network, particularly in the wake of recent moves to tighten investment from China and to **ban 59 Chinese apps**, citing national security concerns.
 - A high-level committee on 5G is **opposed to including Chinese vendors** including Huawei in the 5G trials.
 - Indian intelligence assessments have also expressed concerns on the possible **direct or indirect links of several Chinese companies, including Huawei, with the Chinese military.**
 - India has made clear that a return to normalcy cannot be possible while tensions along the **Line of Actual Control** remain unresolved.
 - It needs to be noted that India has recently joined the **'Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)'** as a founding member to support the **responsible and human-centric development** and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- **Russia** has agreed to work with China on 5G and with Chinese telecommunications firm **Huawei**, which has been largely banned by the United States.
 - Huawei has been at the centre of rising USA-China tensions over technology and security.
 - The USA has restricted China's access to chip making tools. Huawei may face shortages in supply of processor chips for which it relies on the USA.
- In **South Africa**, Huawei is providing services to three of its telecom operators in the roll-out of their 5G networks.
- **Brazil** has allowed participation of Huawei in 5G trials. More than a third of Brazil's 4G network operators use Huawei equipment. Brazil maintains that Huawei has capacity above its international competitors.

Way Forward

- China announced in 2017 its ambition to become the world leader in Artificial Intelligence (AI) by 2030 with its **Artificial Intelligence Development Plan**. Alongside the USA, it is already a world leader in terms of AI research. Though India has started taking steps in this direction like **National Strategy on Artificial Intelligence**, it is yet to acknowledge that superiority in critical technologies like AI, cyber and space will decide the future superpowers.
- India cannot afford to sever all its economic links with the world's second-largest economy, even in the digital space. However, through initiatives like **Make in India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**, India can try to replace chinese technology with domestic ones. Further, it needs to **boost up its economic relations** with other countries.
- The ongoing **trade war between China and the USA** has also created a dilemma for India. India is a party to many trade and diplomatic engagements with China like **RCEP, Russia-India-China Grouping**, BRICS etc. It also cannot afford to cut off the trade relations with the USA.

In such a scenario, it is imperative for India to seek a middle path for balancing its strategic interests between the USA and the Russia-China axis, maintaining its historical **Non-Aligned** position.

Source: TH