15th BRICS Summit

Why in news?

15th BRICS Summit is set to be held in Johannesburg from 22-24 August 2023.

What is BRICS?

- Originally conceived as BRIC by Jim O'Neill, the grouping consisted of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
- **Launch-** It was launched by a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India and China in *2006.*
- BRIC turned into BRICS in 2010, with the entry of South Africa.
- **Current Members-** Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.



- **Chair-** Chaired by member countries in rotational basis.
- *South Africa* is the chair for 2023.
- **First summit-** It was held in Yekaterinburg in 2009.



What is the need for BRICS?

- **New world order-** It aims to assert their position particularly in relation to the United States and the European Union.
- **Multipolar global order-** It promotes the recognition of a multipolar global order with economic and political balance.
- It aims to break away from organisations formed in the post-World War II era, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.
- **De-dollarization**- BRICS account for 18% of the world trade, supports the increased use of members' national currencies for trade and the introduction of a common payment system in the long term.
- **Global South**- It helps in representation from voices of the 'Global South', a term used to refer to countries that have not traditionally been at the centre of international agenda-setting.
- **Economic rise**- In recent decades, India and China witness economic rise. The creation of their own forums has been utilised as an alternative.
- **Financial structure**- *New Development Bank (NDB),* the *Shanghai-headquartered bank* has since invested $30 billion in infrastructure development projects.

In Fortaleza declaration, New Development Bank was created in 2015 worth 100 bn dollars.

What is the significance of 15th BRICS Summit?

- It is the first in-person summit since 2019, which meets at an important geopolitical and geo-economic moment.
- It is first in-person meeting since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.
- **Agenda**- 'BRICS in Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism'.
- **Participation in dialogues**-
  - BRICS-Africa Outreach
  - BRICS Plus Dialogue
- **Develop partnership**-
  - Equitable just transition, including risks associated with climate change,
  - Transforming education and skills development for the future,
  - Strengthening post-pandemic socioeconomic recovery
  - Attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.
- **Discuss political issues-**
  - Russia- Ukraine conflict
  - Post-coup scenario in Niger
  - Increased tension between the West and Russia.
- **Economic reforms**- It is expected to advance the cause of
  - Emerging Markets and Developing Countries (EMDCs) gaining more space in international economic decision-making
  - Reform of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and relief for debt stress
  - Unlocking opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- **Expand BRICS**- It is seen as an attractive alternative to the G-7 developed countries "*club".*
- More than 40 countries have shown an interest in joining BRICS, and at least 19 countries have applied formally for membership.
- **Wider participation**- South Africa has invited African Union (AU) and about 20 other leaders who represent the Global South for sessions on the sidelines of the summit.

What is the significance for India?

- **Multi-alignment-** It is an issue-based alignment strategy, which aims to simultaneously participate and pursue its interests in multiple strategic and economic coalitions, such as the Quad and BRICS.
- **Reflect multidirectional foreign policy**- It strengthens economic prosperity, technology advancements, research and innovation, norm influencing, and strengthening security.
- **Diplomacy-** It allows India to pursue a development focused diplomatic engagement which aims at increasing the membership of BRICS.
- **Broader agenda**
  - Energy security
  - Combating terrorism
  - Climate change financing
- **Geopolitical force**- BRICS attempts to amplify non-traditional security threats and promote economic security within the forum.

- **Political push-** It would be a political push against unfair coercive practices
  - European Union's Carbon border tax
  - Economic transaction and
  - Unilateral sanction
- **Strategic interest-** It is the first in-person summit since the military standoff with China at the Line of Actual Control in 2020.
- Ahead of summit, 19th round of India-China Corps Commander Level Meeting resulted in a joint statement is a positive sign.

References

1. Indian Express- 15th BRICS summit
2. The Hindu- Why BRICS important for India

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