Arrest of Huawei's Executive - US-China Tech Trade War – II

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What is the global response?

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- The recent arrest in Canada of the chief financial officer of Huawei has created a fresh flashpoint between the United States and China.
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- It reveals that fresh attention is being paid to the mechanisms of, as well as the implications of, Chinese technological leadership.
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- Many of the five eyes countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and US) have imposed restrictions on Huawei and its compatriots in the same industry, such as ZTE.
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- The Government of Japan has also moved to prevent these companies from dominating the fifth-generation telecom rollout domestically.
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What are the lessons for India?

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- India is a leading player in the consumption and use of new technology.
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- The commercial rollout of 5G is expected to take place in India in 2020.
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- The Indian government has invited Huawei to be a part of 5G trials in the country.
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- Early this year, Huawei also conducted 5G trials in laboratory with Bharti Airtel in India.
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- However, it is important for the government to ensure that there is

transparency about national security as well as the commercial interests at stake in this and similar cases.
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- The dangers of permitting state-linked companies such as Huawei to become the primary guarantors of the effectiveness of India's telecom backbone are real, and should be avoided.
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- Also, India's protections against breaches in the high-tech, telecom and cyber domain need urgent review.
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- It is far from clear that there is sufficient capacity or awareness about the degree to which Indian systems can be or have already been penetrated.
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- Stress testing is used to test the stability & reliability of the system.
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- This test mainly determines the system on its robustness and error handling under extremely heavy load conditions.
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- It is not clear whether stress tests have been run or simulated to determine the stability of India's technological framework in the event of various geopolitical crises.
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What should be done?

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- Technological infrastructure is crucial in the 21st century and should be an important part of security preparedness and theorising.
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- Thus, the government could consider coming out with a white paper establishing its strategy in this respect, similar to the one on data protection.
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Source: Business Standard

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