BRICS – The Core Agenda

Why in news?

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- Ninth BRICS summit is going to be held in Xiamen, China.
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- China has invited Egypt, Kenya, Tajikistan, Mexico and Thailand as guest countries for the summit.
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What is BRICS?

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- BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
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- BRICS countries represents 40% of the world population and account for 22% of global GDP.
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- Since 2009, the BRICS nations have met annually at formal summits.
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What are the problems faced by the BRICS countries?

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- Bilateral relations among BRICS nations have mainly been conducted on the basis of non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit.
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- The future of this partnership has lately come under serious interrogation due to various internal and external problems experienced by them.
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- Brazil and South Africa have experienced prolonged internal instability.
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- Russia has had to face continuous distractions from Georgia, Ukraine and Syria to the current US sanctions.
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- Also, the recent China-India military standoff at Doklam became formidable stumbling block.
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- Hence, the theme of the current Summit “Stronger Partnership for Brighter Future” is very apt to the present situation for the group.
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What is its agenda?

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- Originally, BRICS was envisioned to usher in reforms in the global financial governance.
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- At a broader level, it was to pursue democratisation of international relations and provide developing nations a greater say in global governance.
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- Of late, BRICS has drastically expanded its scope & become more of a political forum, thereby diluting its founding principles.
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- The expanded agenda now includes several non-financial issues from climate change and terror to women empowerment, human trafficking and so on.
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- While these issues are indeed pressing, experts allude that expansion of agenda takes a toll on efficacy.
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What is the best path for BRICS?

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- Experts feel that focus should be on consolidation of the agenda and not expansion.
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- Creating a dedicated organisational structure with its own cadre of BRICS personnels should be prioritized.

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- To nourish cohesion and momentum, the organisation should be a mission oriented framework rather than being a vague conglomerate.
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- People to people contacts & co-operation in other fields shouldn’t dilute the core issues at hand.
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Source: The New Indian Express

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