

After Brics summit, Beijing proposes 'China-India plus one' cooperation model

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Ahead of a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the margins of the BRICS Summit in South Africa, Beijing has mooted the proposal for 'China-India plus one' or 'China-India plus X' cooperation model.

"We hope that the two sides will follow through on the consensus between the two leaders to vigorously explore 'China-India plus one' or 'China-India plus X' cooper-

ation to achieve mutual benefits and win-win outcomes between China and India and other countries," diplomatic sources said.

The comments assume significance against the backdrop of attempts by the two countries to reset bilateral ties after last summer's tense military stand-off at Doklam.

The Modi-Xi meeting this week in South Africa will be their third interaction in the last four months. In April, the two leaders had met for an informal summit in Wuhan. They later met in Qingdao on



the sidelines of the SCO Summit in June.

Even as the two countries take steps to improve ties, both appear to be competing with each other to woo the nations in the African continent. Both Modi and Xi were hosted by

Rwanda earlier this week. Asked why both Modi and Xi were on a charm-offensive in Africa at the same time, sources said as the two largest developing economies and emerging markets in the world, both China and India want-

ed to help the countries African nations within the South-South cooperation framework to accelerate and achieve self-driven development. Both countries were ready to deepen cooperation in various fields with African countries to achieve mutual benefit and win-win outcomes and there was nothing wrong in it, sources added.

Meanwhile, China is also trying to engage with Bhutan with which it does not have formal diplomatic relations. Bhutan had openly sided with India during the Doklam

crisis much to the discomfiture of Beijing. In the highest-level interaction between China and Bhutan since the Doklam incident, China's Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou was on a visit to Thimpu from 22-24 July.

During his visit to Bhutan, he held talks with the king, Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and Foreign Minister Damcho Dorji. Chinese Ambassador to India Luo Zhaohui accompanied him during the visit. The Chinese side confirmed that its minister discussed Doklam

with the Bhutanese leadership and invited Thimpu to join the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a project vehemently opposed by New Delhi on the ground that it runs through Indian territory in Jammu and Kashmir illegally occupied by Pakistan.

According to China's foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang, China and Bhutan exchanged in-depth views on the "China-Bhutan relations and border issues and reached common understandings".