India-U.S. 2+2 Dialogue

Why in news?

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- The 2-plus-2 dialogue between India and the United States concluded recently in New Delhi.
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- Click here to read the previous part.
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What is the 2+2 dialogue?

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- The 2-plus-2 dialogue was held between Indian External Affairs and Defence Ministers, and their US counterparts.
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- The dialogue aimed to provide a positive, forward-looking vision for the India-U.S. strategic partnership.
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- It also aimed at promoting synergy in diplomatic and security efforts.
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- It was resolved in the meet to continue the meetings in this format on an annual basis.
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What are the key outcomes?

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- **Cooperation** - The Ministers committed to work together on regional and global issues.

- It was further decided to establish secure communication (hotlines) between the two Ministers of the countries.
- This would help maintain regular high-level communication on emerging developments.
- **Defense** - Strategic importance of India's designation as US's <u>Major Defense Partner</u> (MDP) was reaffirmed.
- It was committed to expand the scope of India's MDP status.
- India recently being offered license exception under the <u>Strategic Trade Authorization</u> ([STA-1](#)) was mentioned.
- It was also agreed to explore other means for expansion in two-way trade in defense items and defense manufacturing supply chain linkages.
- Significantly, the <u>Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement</u> (COMCASA) was signed.
- This is likely to open the way for sales of more sensitive US military equipment to India.
- It facilitates interoperability between the two countries' armed forces.
- This will give India access to function on high-end secured and encrypted communication equipment installed on US origin military platforms.
- The Ministers also announced their readiness to begin negotiations on an <u>Industrial Security Annex</u> (ISA).
- This would support closer defense industry cooperation and collaboration.
- The two sides also committed to the creation of a new, <u>tri-services exercise.</u>
- It was also agreed to increase personnel exchanges between the two militaries and defense organizations.
- Specific mention was made of a further expansion in bilateral <u>maritime cooperation</u>.
- The Ministers thus committed to start exchanges between the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the Indian Navy.

- It underscored the importance of deepening maritime cooperation in the underlined{western Indian Ocean}.
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- **Technology** - The unique role of technology in the India-U.S. defense partnership was acknowledged.
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- It was agreed to continue the co-production and co-development of defence projects through the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI).
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- In this regard, the conclusion of a Memorandum of Intent was welcomed.
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- This was between U.S. Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) and Indian Defence Innovation Organization – Innovation for Defence Excellence (DIO-iDEX).
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- **Terrorism** - Intent to increase information-sharing efforts on known or suspected terrorists was announced.
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- It was also decided to implement UN Security Council Resolution 2396 on returning foreign terrorist fighters.
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- They also committed to enhance their ongoing cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN and FATF.
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- The countries reaffirmed their support for a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
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- This will advance and strengthen the framework for global cooperation against terrorism.
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- Both called on Pakistan to ensure that its territory is not used to launch terrorist attacks on other countries.
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- Pakistan was also called on to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of the Mumbai, Pathankot, Uri, and other cross-border terrorist attacks.
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- India and U.S. also reaffirmed on their cooperation to ensure a stable cyberspace environment.
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- **Indo-Pacific** - The aim was spelt out as advancing a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, based on recognition of ASEAN centrality.
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- Respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, rule of law, good governance, free and fair trade, freedom of navigation and overflight was also mentioned.
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- Support on sustainable debt financing practices in infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region was agreed.
- The common principles for the region articulated in the India-U.S. Joint Statement of June 2017 were reaffirmed.
- **Afghanistan** - The two sides expressed support for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process.
- Shared commitment to a united, sovereign, democratic, inclusive, and peaceful Afghanistan was reiterated.
- The U.S. acknowledged India's economic and development assistance to Afghanistan.
- **North-Korea** - India welcomed the recent U.S.-North Korea summit.
- India and U.S. pledged to work together to counter North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs.
- **Nuke** - The United States welcomed India's accession to the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Missile Technology Control Regime.
- It also reiterated its full support for India's immediate accession to the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
- Both sides looked forward to full implementation of

i. the civil nuclear energy partnership
ii. collaboration between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and Westinghouse Electric Company for the establishment of six nuclear power plants in India

- **People-to-People Ties** - The Ministers recognized the importance of increasing bilateral trade, investment, innovation, and job creation.
- The free flow of ideas and collaboration in health, space, oceans, and other areas of science and technology were also accentuated.

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Source: Firstpost

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