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.
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- It was further decided to establish secure communication (hotlines) between the two Ministers of the countries.

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- This would help maintain regular high-level communication on emerging developments.
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- **Defense** - Strategic importance of India’s designation as US's Major Defense Partner (MDP) was reaffirmed.
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- It was committed to expand the scope of India’s MDP status.
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- India recently being offered license exception under the Strategic Trade Authorization (STA-1) was mentioned.
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- It was also agreed to explore other means for expansion in two-way trade in defense items and defense manufacturing supply chain linkages.
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- Significantly, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) was signed.
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- This is likely to open the way for sales of more sensitive US military equipment to India.
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- It facilitates interoperability between the two countries’ armed forces.
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- This will give India access to function on high-end secured and encrypted communication equipment installed on US origin military platforms.
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- The Ministers also announced their readiness to begin negotiations on an Industrial Security Annex (ISA).
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- This would support closer defense industry cooperation and collaboration.
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- The two sides also committed to the creation of a new, tri-services exercise.
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- It was also agreed to increase personnel exchanges between the two militaries and defense organizations.
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- Specific mention was made of a further expansion in bilateral maritime cooperation.
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- The Ministers thus committed to start exchanges between the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the Indian Navy.
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- It underscored the importance of deepening maritime cooperation in the 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.
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- The common principles for the region articulated in the India-U.S. Joint Statement of June 2017 were reaffirmed.
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- **Afghanistan** - The two sides expressed support for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process.
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- Shared commitment to a united, sovereign, democratic, inclusive, and peaceful Afghanistan was reiterated.
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- The U.S. acknowledged India’s economic and development assistance to Afghanistan.
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- **North-Korea** - India welcomed the recent U.S.-North Korea summit.
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- India and U.S. pledged to work together to counter North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction programs.
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- **Nuke** - The United States welcomed India’s accession to the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Missile Technology Control Regime.
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- It also reiterated its full support for India’s immediate accession to the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
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- Both sides looked forward to full implementation of
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i. the civil nuclear energy partnership
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ii. collaboration between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and Westinghouse Electric Company for the establishment of six nuclear power plants in India
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- **People-to-People Ties** - The Ministers recognized the importance of increasing bilateral trade, investment, innovation, and job creation.
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- 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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