Two plus two Diplomacy

Why in news?

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India & the US have moved to strengthen their strategic relationship by initiating what is known as ‘Two plus Two’ diplomacy.

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What is ‘Two plus Two’?

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- In foreign policy parleys, ‘Two plus Two’ is the term used for the institutionalisation of a dialogue mechanism between two countries consisting of the key ministries of defence & external affairs.
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- The 2+2 format draws on a framework Japan used for its strategic interactions with the US, France, Russia and Australia.
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- India & Japan too have a similar mechanism between them since 2010.
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What are the contours of the recent Indo-US initiative?

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- **Hopes -** Diplomats in both the countries hope that the mechanism will place the strategic and security interests between the two countries on centre stage.
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- This they believe would help in better handling of common challenges like Chinese aggression & West Asia crisis.
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- **Cautions -** Both countries need to resist being seduced by the idea that process alone can resolve the issues in the relationship.
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- It is to be noted that, there are now over 60 India-US bilateral institutions

but there is also mounting ire in Washington DC over what it sees as New Delhi’s chronic failure to use them to their potential.
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- Bureaucratic inertia, legal issues, suspicions of the other’s motives are sticky points that needs to be addressed.
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- Lack of clarity on what the two seek from the other strategic relationship is also a source of worry.
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- More specifically, the existence of a dialogue mechanism alone will not itself insulate the strategic relationship from the fallout of simmering rows over intellectual property rights and trade.
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Source: Indian Express

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