

Modi Must be Mad Beyond All Belief at the Khan-Trump Meeting

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The long-awaited meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Khan and US President Trump was a nightmare come true for Indian Prime Minister Modi, whose country could only watch in horror as the American leader praised Pakistan's assistance "extricating" the Pentagon from Afghanistan, pledged to encourage much more investment in New Delhi's rival, and even surprisingly offered to mediate the ongoing Kashmir Conflict at what he scandalously said was the Indian leader's earlier urging.

The long-awaited meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Khan and US President Trump was [nothing short of historic](#), and it's an event that's poised to shape Eurasian geopolitics for years to come. The South Asian country proved that it's indeed the [global pivot state](#) after its leader received nothing but praise from his infamously capricious American counterpart in defiance of most expectations, particularly in respect to the help that it's providing the US in "extricating" itself from Afghanistan. That in and of itself would be enough to make Indian Prime Minister Modi mad beyond all belief, but his country's nightmare got worse when Trump also said that he'll [encourage even more investment](#) in New Delhi's rival. In what could only be described as a moment of horror for Indian strategists, the President also dropped an unexpected bombshell by surprisingly offering to mediate the ongoing [Kashmir Conflict](#) at what he said was [Modi's earlier urging](#), something that New Delhi has since [denied](#) but which got the entire world talking about the possible beginning of the US' Russian-influenced "balancing" act in South Asia.

Going through these three main developments one-by-one, the author [earlier predicted](#) that Pakistan would provide the US with a "face-saving" exit strategy from Afghanistan, which presciently came to pass after Trump implied that he'd prefer as much instead of "[killing 10 million people](#)" to win the war. India had hitherto been largely successful in [driving a wedge](#) between the US and Pakistan over the Taliban, but Islamabad's [irreplaceable facilitation](#) of the latest round of peace talks got Washington to change its tune and realize the inevitability of including the armed group in negotiations if it wants any hope of pulling out of one of its costliest and least successful wars ever. The recent peace progress that's been made in the previous months changed the US' perception of Pakistan and worked against India's grand strategic interests, leaving New Delhi to look like it [manipulatively wanted American blood and treasure to be expended](#) on this conflict the entire time in order to expand its own so-called "strategic depth" vis-a-vis its neighbor.

As the US' billionaire businessman leader begins to realize that India was manipulating his

two predecessors for almost two decades already, he's less likely to indefinitely retain its sanctions waiver for the Iranian port of Chabahar, especially since Pakistan [recently reopened its airspace](#) to Indian overflights to Afghanistan and elsewhere. In parallel with this developing change of policy, the President also proudly encouraged American businesses to invest more in Pakistan, which implies his country's commitment to become an unofficial stakeholder in [CPEC](#), the flagship project of China's [Belt & Road Initiative](#) (BRI). This was preceded by the State Department [designating](#) the notorious "Baloch Liberation Army" (BLA) as the [feudalist terrorists](#) that they've always been in a blow to [India's Hybrid War on CPEC](#), which could even one day lead to the scenario of Washington condemning New Delhi for supporting terrorism in the region as part of its strategy of pressure to compel India into becoming more of a junior partner in "[containing](#)" China than it already is. The US' tacit interest in becoming an indirect stakeholder in CPEC also partially explains its desire to mediate the Kashmir Conflict.

Russia's "[Return to South Asia](#)" has seen it replicate the regional strategic success of its Mideast "[balancing](#)" act to become one of the leading powers in that part of the world, which — when combined with the "hardball" that New Delhi is playing with Washington regarding [trade](#) and the [S-400s](#) — likely influenced the US to [follow in Moscow's footsteps](#) through its own fast-moving rapprochement with Islamabad that was just on full display. It's unclear whether or not Modi really did request Trump's diplomatic intervention in Kashmir, but publicly saying as much put tremendous pressure on the Indian leader to no longer remain an obstacle to peace and to welcome America's own attempts to "balance" the region in competition with Russia otherwise India will probably be sanctioned for the S-400s and experience more punitive tariffs from its [top trade partner](#). Whichever way one looks at it, the Khan-Trump Summit was a nightmare come true for Modi, but there's not much that he can do to make it any better.

The only realistic options at his strategists' disposal are to capitulate to the US' S-400 and trade demands in a bid to regain their country's status as [America's top South Asian partner](#), attempt to "compete" with Pakistan for this position through a reinvigorated "balancing" act, or cut the US off as much as possible by pivoting towards Russia and China. The first two options would jeopardize India's relations with Russia and China, while the last one would do the same with the US, meaning that Modi's now in a dire dilemma from which it's impossible to extricate himself. Regardless of which course of action India will take, the resultant outcome will remain in Pakistan's favor since its role as the global pivot state is now cemented like never before due to its excellent relations with all relevant Great Powers, including most crucially the US in this context. Put another way, Pakistan's creative practice of "multi-alignment" indisputably succeeded where India's failed, and the regional strategic chessboard is now forever changed after Kashmir is once again back on the global agenda.

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