

Russia's Interest in Pakistani Power Projects Could Portend CPEC Investments

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Reports are circulating in the Pakistani press that the Russian company is interested in several power projects in the country, which could pave the way for Moscow to unofficially invest in CPEC without angering its Indian partners.

Many Pakistanis are excited by the news that Russian company Inter RAO Engineer is interested in several power projects in the country, potentially willing to commit the [whopping sum of \\$2 billion](#) worth of investments if their counterparts are receptive. While nothing has been officially confirmed, these reports are plausible enough given the fast-moving rapprochement between Russia and Pakistan over the past couple of years, which aims to establish a [strategic partnership](#) that the author coined with the catchphrase of "[Rusi-Pakistani Yaar Yaar](#)".

It evidently appears as though Russia is diversifying its outreaches with Pakistan from their former Afghan-related anti-terrorist centrality to a more robust partnership that's now taking on important energy dimensions. It shouldn't be forgotten that Russia already committed to building the North-South gas pipeline and signed a memorandum of understanding for constructing a [\\$10 billion offshore one](#) between Iran, Pakistan, and possibly even India too one day. In a sense, it can be said that Russia's "traditional diplomacy" with Pakistan evolved to "[military diplomacy](#)" and now "[energy diplomacy](#)".

Attention should be paid to the latest report's claims about how Inter RAO Engineering is supposedly interested in the proposed Mohmand Dam along the Swat River in the former mountainous Afghan-bordering region of what used to be called the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) prior to its [merger with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa](#) last year. This is highly symbolic because the words "FATA" and "Swat" remind many Westerners of the [country's War on Terror](#) during the mid-2000s, so it says a lot about the overall sub-region's newfound stability that Russia would consider investing there.

Importantly, \$2 billion worth of potential investments in Pakistan's power industry would signal that Russia wants to get in on the country's [CPEC](#)-related Chinese-driven construction boom but is doing so without openly attaching itself to the CPEC "brand" out of concern for its Indian partner's political sensitivities. New Delhi is dead-set against CPEC because of its stance that the series of megaprojects transit through territory that India claims as its own per its maximalist approach to the Kashmir Conflict, and the [renaissance of relations](#) between it and Russia would be ruined if Moscow invested in CPEC.

That explains why Russia might reportedly be considering investing in CPEC without formally doing so, following the strategy that the author previously suggested in his piece last summer about "[Creative Non-CPEC Marketing Strategies For Pakistan](#)". So long as Russia

abstains from officially endorsing CPEC and attaching its investments to that “brand”, then its relations with India won’t suffer no matter how many billions of dollars it eventually pours into Pakistani projects. With that being the case, the latest reports are an encouraging sign of Russian intent and could portend more unofficial CPEC investments.

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