

**TRUMP'S OFFER TO MEDIATE IN KASHMIR ISSUE**

**Prelims- IR- International**

**Mains- GS-II- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.**

- ▶▶ **Context-** Trump's remarks that Prime minister Modi had asked the U.S. President to mediate on the Kashmir issue.

**Indian Stand:**

- ▶▶ India government categorically stated that no such request has been made by the Prime Minister to the U.S. President.
- ▶▶ All outstanding issues between India and Pakistan "can be discussed **only bilaterally**"
- ▶▶ Indian government emphasized that the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration provide the basis for resolving all issues between India and Pakistan bilaterally,

**Pakistan stand:**

- ▶▶ Pakistan has continued to view the "**internationalisation**" of the Kashmir issue as its best bet towards reversing J&K's accession to India, and has used every global forum to criticise India's "illegal occupation" of Kashmir.

**Why Trump Might Have Given Such Statements?**

- ▶▶ Mr. Trump's comment in March that the U.S. successfully mediated for the release of captured fighter pilot Abhinandan by Pakistan may have even given him some hope that the U.S. could play a larger role on the Kashmir issue, and New Delhi would need to address that.
- ▶▶ Trump took the **line favoured by his Pakistani interlocutors on Kashmir** as a way of enhancing his own plans for a **pullout from Afghanistan with Pakistan's help** on security and talks with the Taliban. The US also played a role in forcing China to agree to the designation of Jaish chief Masood Azhar as a "global terrorist".

**Why India Insists on Bilateralism with Pakistan**

- ▶▶ The Indian position has historically stemmed from its **mistrust of outsiders meddling in its internal affairs**, the strongly felt need to protect its secular nationhood project, and suspicion that mediators viewed Kashmir through Pakistani eyes.

- ▶▶ The framework for bilateral resolution of problems between India and Pakistan was written into the 1972 **Simla Agreement** and reiterated 27 years later in the **Lahore Declaration**.

### **The American 'Hand', Playing Out Earlier Too:**

- ▶▶ In 1993, Robin Raphel, who headed the State Department's newly created South Asia division in the first Clinton Administration, sought to junk the Instrument of Accession, and asserted that for the US, **Kashmir was "disputed territory", undermining years of Indian diplomatic efforts.**
- ▶▶ In 1999, the year after India and Pakistan went nuclear, it was US intervention that brought the Kargil crisis to an end.
- ▶▶ The Vajpayee government had been in touch with the Clinton Administration to get the Nawaz Sharif government to call off the intrusion in Kargil, even as the Indian Army fought the Pakistani forces.
- ▶▶ In 2008, when **Barack Obama** was a candidate for his first term in the White House, he told Time in response to a question on Taliban attacks in Afghanistan from across the Pakistan border: "Working with Pakistan and India to try to resolve Kashmir crisis in a serious way... [is among the] critical tasks for the next administration."

