

Q Analyze Pakistan's relations with KSA and Iran.

Pakistan's Relations with KSA and Iran

Pakistan ^{always} has strong ties with KSA and Iran. The alliance between Pakistan and KSA is deeply rooted in geographic significance of Pakistan for KSA. Strengthening ties with KSA grants Pakistan with potential benefits in political, economic and strategic zones. The dynamics of Pak-Iran relations are centered around border proximity and security issues; and energy security. However, KSA-Iran rivalry is a major hindrance for Pakistan in balancing ties between KSA and Iran.

1- Expanding Pak-KSA Relations

Pakistan's relations with KSA are deeply rooted in geographic significance of

7 Pakistan for KSA.

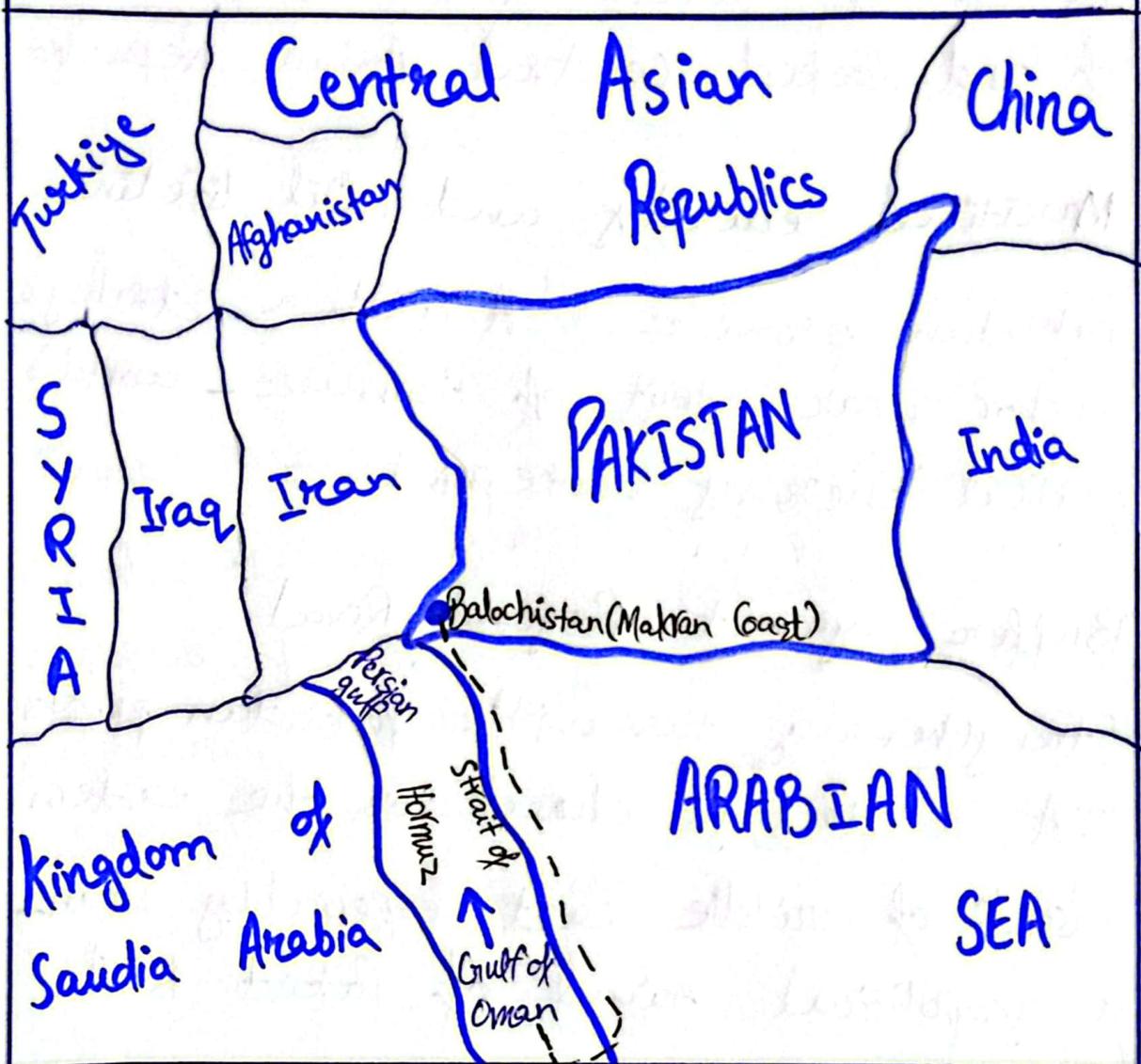


Fig: Pakistan: A Land-Bridge Connecting South Asia, Asia and Middle East Central

Following are the factors that clearly show geographic significance of Pakistan for KSA.

- i - Gateway to South Asia and Central Asia: Pakistan connects energy rich

Middle East with energy hungry markets of South Asia and markets of land-locked Central Asian Republics

ii- Maritime Security and Oil Lifelines

Pakistan provides KSA with a strategic anchor near strait of Hormuz - world's critical energy chokepoint.

iii- Buffer against Regional Rival

Strengthening ties with Pakistan provides KSA a strategic check on the eastern flank of middle east especially Iran - a geopolitical rival of Pakistan KSA.

2. Potential Benefits for Pakistan of Strengthening Ties with KSA

i- Political Benefits

a- Diplomatic Leverage

Strengthening ties with KSA help Pakistan in gaining centrality in

the OIC and advocacy on Kashmir Issue.

b- Domestic Political Support

KSA has strong influence on Pakistan's politics because KSA is a predominantly Sunni power that provides funds to Sunni religious groups of Pakistan. These religious groups shape Pakistan's political culture. That is why ruling parties of Pakistan often seek strong ties with KSA for gaining domestic political support.

ii. Economic Benefits for Pakistan of strengthening ties with KSA

a. Inflow of Remittances

KSA is the largest source of remittances to Pakistan. In FY2024-25, remittances of KSA to Pakistan were around

\$9.34 billion (State Bank of Pakistan
Remittances of KSA to Pakistan, Dec
2025)

b. Defence exports

In 2024, Pakistan's defence exports to KSA were around \$734 million. In recent years, Pakistan is planning to convert \$2 billion Saudi loans into procurement package for JF-17 Block III fighter jet.

(Dawn, Defence exports to KSA, Jan 2026)

c. Investment Opportunities

Example: Manara minerals is using and heavily investing in Reko Diq for transforming KSA into global mining power house. This investment is projected to catalyze an annual economic boost of \$1.5 to 3 billion for Pakistan's economy (Tribune, Investments of KSA in Pakistan, Aug 2025).

Energy Security

Example: In 2025, KSA pledged \$1 billion oil financing facility to Pakistan for FY 2025-26. This would address the issue of energy insecurity in Pakistan upto a ^{great} extent. (Al-Jazeera, Energy insecurity and Pak-KSA alliance, Dec 2025)

iii- Strategic Benefits for Pakistan of Strengthening Ties with KSA

a- Geopolitical leverage
KSA would help strengthening ties with Pakistan in gaining geopolitical leverage against India in the region.

b- Strategic Agreements signed with KSA in 2025

→ Strategic Mutual Defence Pact: Pakistan

signed this pact in 2025 in which a "collective security" clause is added which clearly states that "an attack on one is the attack on other."

(Arab News, Growing Pak-KSA alliance, Oct 2025)

3. Elucidating the Dynamics of Pak-Iran Relations

i- Border Proximity and Security Issues

Pakistan shares a long, porous border with Iran especially in Balochistan region which makes Iran crucial for Pakistan's border security primarily for managing separatist, sectarian groups and controlling illicit trade.

ii- Energy Security: Iran has enriched oil reserves and Pak-Iran gas pipeline,

although delayed highlights Pakistan as a primary consumer of Iranian resources.

4. KSA-Iran Rivalry: A Major Hindrance for Pakistan of ~~strengthening~~ Balancing Ties with KSA and Iran

KSA and Iran have ideological conflicts.

Both use proxies in Muslim states like Pakistan, Yemen, Lebanon etc for asserting ideological influence in Muslim world.

They often conflict with each other in OPEC over oil production levels.

This rivalry makes it difficult for Pakistan for balancing ties with KSA and Iran.

5. Concluding Thoughts

KSA and Iran both are crucial for Pakistan's foreign policy. By strengthening

ties with KSA, Pakistan gains diplomatic, geopolitical leverage and economic benefits.

However, strengthening ties with Iran is also crucial for ensuring border security. KSA-Iran rivalry is a hindrance before Pakistan for balancing ties with KSA and Iran.