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SUBJECTIVE PART

QUESTION NO.5

PAKISTAN-KSA Defence Pact : Geopolitical achievement for both countries and economic opportunities for Pakistan.

I. Introduction

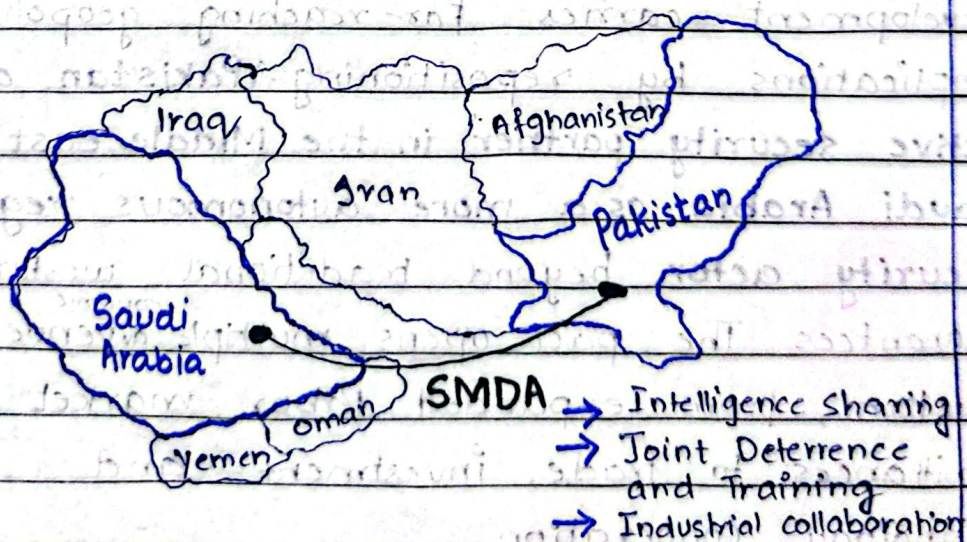
The Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) signed between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on 17th September, 2025 represents a landmark shift in bilateral relations, transforming decades-long, informal military cooperation into a formal collective defence pact. This development carries far-reaching geopolitical implications by repositioning Pakistan as an active security partner in the Middle east, and Saudi Arabia as a more autonomous regional security actor beyond traditional western guarantees. The pact opens multiple ^{economic} avenues for Pakistan, from expanded labor market and remittances to trade, investment, and technology cooperation.

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II. Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement : an overview

The Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) is a bilateral treaty in which Pakistan and Saudi Arabia pledge mutual defence commitments, codifying what had been informal military cooperation into a formal security arrangement. Under this pact, both countries commit that "any aggression against one shall be considered an aggression against both." Signed in Riyadh by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, the pact aims to strengthen joint deterrence and institutionalize security ties.

Fig: Map of Pakistan and KSA



III. Geopolitical Achievements for Pakistan:

Geopolitical gains for Pakistan

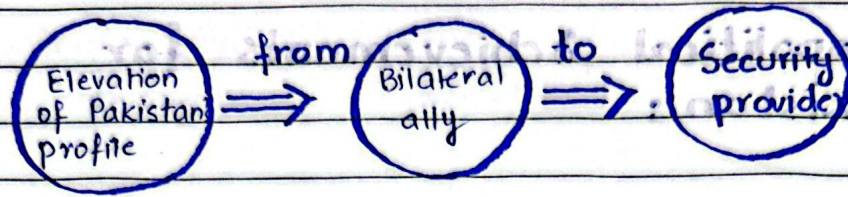
Diversification
of Strategic
Alliances

Enhanced
Deterrence
Credibility
and Soft power

Strategic
Elevation in
Regional
Security
Architecture

(a) Strategic elevation in Regional Security Architecture:

Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement enhances the diplomatic profile of Pakistan in the Gulf region and strengthens its position in Islamic forums and regional diplomacy. By committing formally to Saudi defence, Islamabad moves beyond transactional military cooperation to institutionalised partnership with a major regional power, enhancing its strategic profile.



(b) Diversification of Strategic Alliances :

Pakistan's Foreign policy has long been anchored in partnerships with China and the West. The defence pact allows Pakistan to diversify its strategic relationships while maintaining ties with global powers, signalling strategic autonomy.

After the SMDA, Pakistan's diplomacy has become more multifaceted :

⇒ State visit to Riyadh and follow-up meetings.

⇒ Pakistan expressed complete solidarity with Saudi Arabia after a Saudi recent military event in Yemen.

⇒ Pakistan has not only engaged with Saudi Arabia, but also with leaders of UAE and Bahrain, aiming to balance ties between major gulf states.

(c) Enhanced Deterrence Credibility and Soft power

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The collective defence element of the SMDA that an attack on either ^{state} sides is an attack on both - implicitly raises Pakistan's deterrence credibility.

III Geopolitical Achievements for Saudi Arabia:

(a) Diversification Beyond Traditional Security dependence:

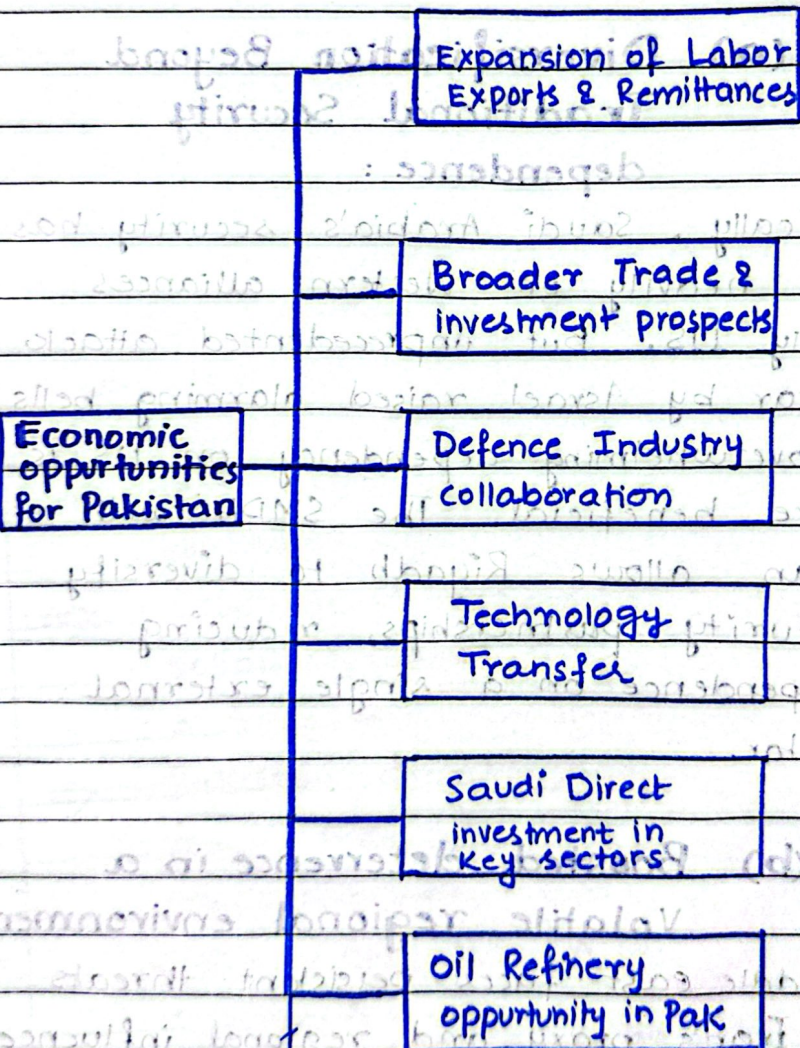
Historically, Saudi Arabia's security has relied heavily on Western alliances especially US. But unprecedented attack on Qatar by Israel raised alarming bells that overwhelming dependency on US is no more beneficial. The SMDA with Pakistan allows Riyadh to diversify its security partnerships, reducing over-dependence on a single external guarantor.

(b) Boosted deterrence in a Volatile regional environment:

The middle east faces persistent threats from Iran's proxy and regional influence to spillovers from Gaza-Israel conflict. A mutual defence pact with Pakistan signals a strong deterrent posture

to neighbouring powers and non-state actors, conveying that Saudi Arabia now has committed defence backing beyond its own forces.

IV. Economic Opportunities for Pakistan due to SMDA:



(a) Expansion of Labor Exports and Remittances:

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The defence pact has boosted confidence in Pakistani manpower in Saudi Arabia.

Also Saudi Arabia is Pakistan's largest remittance source, official data suggest that remittances have grown significantly in recent years.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia was a leading contributor of remittances to Pakistan in 2025, with Pakistani workers sending home ~\$823 million, more than any other country, monthly.

(b) Defence Industry collaboration:

The pact paves the way for defence-industrial cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, where Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would bring complementary defence capabilities to the partnership.

(c) Technology Transfer

The SMDA, does not just formalize mutual security, it opens the door for technology transfer, a key dimension of defence industry collaboration.

(d) Saudi Direct Investment in Key sectors:

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Saudi Arabia has moved forward with direct investment in one of Pakistan's most strategic mineral asset i.e. **Reko diq**. It includes purchasing **15% stake** in the project and approximately **\$6 billion** to Pakistan in financial support.

(e) Opportunity of oil Refinery in Pakistan:

Pakistan can collaborate with Saudi Arabia to build a domestic oil refinery. This will allow Pakistan to import crude oil at cheaper prices, reducing dependency on expensive imported oil.

V. Conclusion:

The Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia marks an important milestone in bilateral relations, strengthening mutual security and regional deterrence. Geopolitically, it enhances Pakistan's strategic leverage and economically, it opens avenues for significant opportunities. Overall, SMDA integrates strategic trust with economic partnership, positioning Pakistan for long-term gains.

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