

Q No 8

1. Introduction

The Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement, signed between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in September 2025, is a landmark accord that significantly deepens their long-standing security partnership. It goes beyond a simple agreement, signaling a major shift in the security dynamics of both Middle East and South Asia. This pact aims to formalize a robust defence alliance, driven by mutual security concerns, regional instability, and economic imperatives for both nations.

2. Causes: Why Pact was Signed

2.1. Saudi Arabia's Need for New Security Guarantees

Saudi Arabia is actively looking for new Security Partners because it perceives the United States' commitment to its security weakening.

Evidence: The US has reduced its military presence in the Middle East, pushing Gulf Countries ties with China and Russia.

2.2. Immediate Regional Security Threats

The security environment in the Gulf became fragile following a reported Israeli strike in Qatar in September 2025, underscoring risk of conflict spreading.

2.3. Pakistan's Economic Stability Requirements

The Pact provides a strong framework to ensure continued and potentially larger Saudi investments

and vital financial deposits, which have historically been crucial for Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves.

Example: Past deposits exceeding \$3 billion.

2.4. Enhancing Pakistan's Deterrence Posture

Gaining a defence commitment from a powerful ally like Saudi Arabia raises the perceived diplomatic and strategic cost for any potential military escalation involving India.

2.5. Saudi Interest in Strategic Ambiguity

The pact with only nuclear-armed Muslim state provides Strategic hedge against major regional threats. It may serve as a deterrent against adversaries like Iran, Israel.

2.6. Formalizing Decades of Military Ties

The relationship dates back to the 1960s, building on existing frameworks like the 1982 Bilateral Security Cooperation Agreement, under which Pakistani troops have been stationed in KSA for training and protection duties.

3. Implications: The Impact of the Deal

3.1. Birth of the Collective Security Framework

This mutual defence guarantee, similar to NATO's Article 5, is a major step towards forming the foundation of a wider Muslim-majority security alliance in the future.

3.2. Enhanced Pakistani Military Confidence

The pact boosts Pakistan's deterrence against conventional threats, potentially leading to increased assertiveness and a regional security dilemma where rival seek to arm themselves.

3.3. Shift in Middle Eastern Power Balance

The agreement subtly challenges the traditional US-centric security arrangement in Gulf. It is indirectly creating an opening for China to deepen its influence through its strong economic partnership with Saudi Arabia.

3.4. Strategic Concerns for India and Israel

India now faces the possibility that military action against

Pakistan could trigger significant economic and diplomatic responses from a major player like Saudi Arabia.

3.5. Deeper Defence Industrial Collaboration

This will facilitates the co-production of conventional weapons and a transfer of expertise, especially in several modern facility fields like drone technology and cyber warfare.

3.6. Greater Economic Leverage for Pakistan

This formalized partnership is expected to result in more consistent and diversified financial assistance from Saudi Arabia, moving beyond one-off crisis aid to sustained support.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, Pakistan-Saudi Mutual Defence Agreement is a pivotal event that elevates a decades old relationship into a formal, binding military alliance. It is primarily driven by KSA's strategic necessity to find reliable partners outside the US sphere and Pakistan's urgent need for economic stability and enhanced security.

Q No 7

1. Introduction

Pakistan is currently navigating a delicate geopolitical balancing act between its "all-weather strategic partner", China and its renewed, though historically transactional, engagement with the US. Pakistan seeks to leverage both relationships without pressure of choosing sides in the intensifying US-China rivalry. This strategy is critical for preserving Pakistan's sovereignty and maximizing national interests.

2. Major Factors Affecting the Balancing Act

2.1. China's Strategic Primacy

The relationship of Pak-China is reliable. Over

80% of Pakistan's recent major arms imports come from China, and the CPEC provides unmatched long-term infrastructure investment.

2.2. US Transactional Engagement

Past instances of US aid cutoffs and sanctions demonstrate a history of unreliability, forcing Pakistan to avoid over-dependence on Washington.

2.3. Pakistan's Economic and Debt Dependence

China is Pakistan's largest bilateral creditor, and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (influenced by the US) remains primary source of bailouts needed to avoid default.

2.4. US Alignment with Pakistan's Rival - India

US diplomatic and military engagement with India often leads to Pakistani concerns about regional strategic encirclement, posing it closer to China.

2.5. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC's) Geopolitical Framing

US officials have often criticized lack of transparency and potential debt burden associated with CPEC, creating a point of friction in bilateral ties.

2.6. Critical Minerals and Investment Competition

The US and Pakistan's rare earth cooperation deal and US financing for the Rikio Div

copper and gold projects, an area where Chinese firms also hold interests.

3. Recommendations: How Pakistan Could Achieve Balance

3.1. Deepen Economic Diplomacy with the US

Actively pursue US investments in non-CPEC sectors like mining, IT, and agriculture to diversify partnership and access Western markets.

3.2. Maintain CPEC Transparency and openness

Welcome third-party collaboration, improve transparency and accountability on CPEC projects where possible (in infrastructure and financing to

counter US concerns about exclusivity.

3.3. Strategic Non-Alignment in Global Forums

Continue participation in multilateral organizations like SCO and the UN, maintaining an autonomous, neutral voice.

3.4. Develop Domestic Institutional Strength

A stable economy and consistent domestic policy reduce dependence on emergency loans and increase Pakistan's ability to withstand external pressure from both sides.

3.5. Functional Security Cooperation

Successfully negotiate the

Sustainment package for the F-16 aircraft while firmly reassuring China that military cooperation with the US is tactical and non-strategic alignment.

3.6. Focus on Regional Connectivity

Use CPEC as a platform to draw investment for complementary projects from other nations, positioning Pakistan as a "bridge" for trade rather than a battleground for rivalry.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Pakistan's ability to balance its relations with the US and China is not a mirage but a challenging necessity that demands pragmatism over rigid alignment. The strategy must be rooted in economic nationalism, leveraging the competition between two powers to its benefit.

Q No 3

1. Introduction

The formation of new provinces is a recurring and highly emotional debate in Pakistan. It is often proposed as a solution for unequal developments and poor governance. Proponents in regions like South Punjab and Hazara seek it to bring resources closer to the people. However, this demand, while based on real grievances, faces massive political, financial and constitutional challenges that must be understood alongside more practical recommendations.

2. The Hurdles: Why New Provinces are So Hard to Create

2.1. The Constitutional Hurdle in Creating New Provinces

The biggest challenge is legal, as creating a new province requires constitutional amendments. This needs a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly, the Senate and the relevant provincial Assembly. (Article 239)

2.2. The Massive Financial Cost: Hurdle in Creation of New Provinces

A new province requires a new capital, Governor's House, Secretariat, High Court, and entire civil service. Ministry of finance projections show this costs hundreds of billions of rupees — not affordable for cash-strapped Pakistan.

2.3. Political Resistance from Major Parties - Hurdle

Established parties fear losing their vote banks and political strongholds if their home provinces are divided.

This political self-interest is the reason why resolutions are passed but never implemented. - PIDE Analysis

2.4. No Consensus on New Borders: Hurdle in Creation of New Provinces

There is no consensus on New borders, which creates new conflicts.

The Sistani demands, for example, conflicts with the separate movement to restore the Bahawalpur Province.

2.5. Fear of Ethnic Conflict - Hurdle

Basing new provinces on languages (like Hazara's Hindko) can isolate other ethnic groups living there and spark new divisions. This ethno-linguistic

basis is often seen as a threat to national integration. (ICG reports)

2.6. Fear of Fragmentation of the Country - Hurdle

Many politicians fear that if one province is made, it will trigger dozens of other smaller demands. This makes all parties hesitant to support the first one.

3. The Recommendation: A More Realistic Path Forward

3.1. Empower Local Governments First: The Real Solution

The first step should be empowering local city and district governments as power is stuck in provincial capitals. (As per Article 101 of Constitution)

3.2. Create a Fair PFC (Provincial Financial Commission)

This automatically sends a fair budget share to every district based on its population and poverty, not politics. As per World Bank reports on fiscal decentralization.

3.3. Make Administrative Secretariats Meaningful

The South Punjab Secretariat failed because it was symbolic. Thus, give these units real financial control, separate from capital. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics reports have analyzed the failure of powerless South Punjab Secretariat.

3.4. Use Data to Spend Money

Use a transparent "Needs Index" to allocate all funds to the poorest areas, instead of letting

Politicians give development funds to their voters. As per UNDP's Human Development Index, which tells where the money should go.

3.5. Devolve the Civil Service

Make local bureaucracies in health, education, police accountable to the local mayor, not distant boss in Lahore or Peshawar.

Dr. Ishrat Hussain's civil services reforms strongly recommend decentralization for efficiency.

3.6. Promote Regional Languages and Culture

Address the identity grievances by funding local regional languages in local schools and media. UNESCO's

Policies on Cultural preservation show that respecting identity does not require changing borders.

4. Conclusion

The grievances that fuel the demand for new provinces are real. However, the political and financial hurdles are massive. So, a practical solution is to empower local governments. Thus, true reform is about devolving power to the people, not just redrawing lines on the map.

1. Introduction

Pakistan is facing a dangerous and escalating wave of militancy. In Kyber Pakhtunkhwa, the threat is a reinvigorated TTP. However, In Balochistan, it is a persistent ethno-nationalist separatist insurgency (BLA, BLF). To counter this, a genuine political and economic reforms and diplomacy is crucial.

2. The Reasons: Why Militancy in KPK and Baluchistan is Reviving

2.1. Reasons of Revival of Militancy in KPK

2.1. Reasons of Revival of Militancy in Baluchistan

2.1. Reasons of Revival of Militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

2.1.1. TTP's Resurge and Unity — Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Militancy

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan has unified and become more deadly terrorist organization.

PIPS reports show a massive spike (70% in 2021) in terrorist attacks from TTP.

2.1.2. Afghan Safe Havens: Reason of Militancy in KPK

The TTP's entire leadership and operational bases are located in Afghanistan, from where they launch cross-border attacks on Pakistani security forces. (ISPR Confirmation)

2.1.3. The Afghan Taliban's Enabling role -

The Afghan Taliban is as the TTP's ideological ally, are either unwilling or unable to take decisive action to expel them from Afghan soil. UNSC reported links between them.

2.2. Reason of Revival of Militancy in Baluchistan

2.2.1. Separatist Ideology - Baluchistan

The Baloch insurgency (BLA, BLF) is a long-running political conflict, not a religious one, driven by an ethno-nationalist ideology seeking independence.

ICG reports have documented this as a secular, separatist conflict for a decade.

2.2.2. Deep Economic Grievances in Baluchistan

The insurgency is fueled by a powerful local narrative that the state is "exploiting" Baluchistan's natural resources (gas, minerals, CPEC) while the local population remains in deep poverty. UNDP Human Development Index Reports show Baluchistan as most deprived province.

2.2.3. Governance and Trust Vacuum - Major Reason

In the remote areas of both provinces, a weak state presence, slow justice system, and corruption creates a trust deficit.

This vacuum, noted in World Bank governance indicators, is exploited by militants.

3. Recommendations to Counter Revival of Militancy in Both Provinces.

3.1. Sustained Kinetic Operations to Encounter Militancy

The state must continue high-tempo, "Intelligence-Based Operations (IBOs) to hunt and neutralize militant cells and leadership.

3.2. Comprehensive Border Management is Crucial

The state must complete and effectively manage the Pak-Afghan border fence to stop the free flow of terrorists, weapons, and smugglers.

3.3. Coercive Diplomacy with Afghanistan - Important

Pakistan must use all diplomatic and economic levers e.g. trade, refugee status to force the Afghan Taliban to take verifiable action against TTP.

3.4. A "New Deal" for Baluchistan to Overcome Grievances

A purely military response cannot work. A credible political and economic package is needed that visibly gives Baluch locals control over resources and benefits from these.

3.5. Fully Implementation the National Action Plan

The state must fully implement all 20 points of NAP, especially choking terror financing,

Stopping hate speech, and police reforms - NACTA must be fully empowered.

3.6. A Strong Counter-Narrative is Required

State must launch a powerful, unified counter-narrative to win back youth and discredit both religious and ethnic extremism.

4. Conclusion

The revival of military has two different natures. one, ideological (TTP) and ethno-nationalist (BLA) - the other one. ~~The~~ military approach along with coercive diplomacy is essential for peace and stability.