

Part - II

Q.8.

Pakistan Saudi Arabia have signed a historic defense Pact. Critically evaluate the causes and implications of the deal.

• Strategic mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA):

On September 17, 2025, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed a strategic mutual Defense Agreement (SDMA). Decade of security cooperation are formalized by the Pact, which require the nations to view an act of attack against one as an act of aggression against both. It has wide-ranging and intricate ramifications, especially with reference to India, the US, and regional security dynamics, and its reasons are rooted in a changing geopolitical environment.

- Causes of the defense Pact:

- Saudi Arabia's strategic shift:
 - Diminished faith in US security assurances:

Riyadh sought the SMOA as it reevaluates its defense dependence on the United States, a worry made worse by recent regional tensions and perceived American passivity following the 2019 Houthi attacks on Saudi oil facilities. The urgency for Gulf states to explore new security architecture was heightened by the September 2025 Israeli bombing on Qatar, which targeted Hamas officials.

• Defense alliance diversification:

Saudi Arabia is working to lessen its reliance on any one country for security by implementing a "multi-alignment" policy as part of its Vision 2030. The agreement with Pakistan enhances

its geopolitical adaptability and support current defense industry partnership with nations such as Turkey.

- **Managing regional threats:**

The agreement gives Saudi Arabia an additional line of defense against adversaries like Iran and Israel.

- **Pakistan's strategic objectives:**

- **Economic salvation:**

In the face of dire economic difficulties, Pakistan is using its military might to entice wealthy Gulf nations to provide much need investment. It's anticipated that this will bring huge Saudi investment into Pakistan's mining, energy, and other sectors.

- **Increase strategic influence:**

Pakistan improves its geopolitical stature, especially

in the Islamic world, by formalizing its security role in Gulf. It uses Saudi influence to address security issues, such as Afghanistan.

- Implication of defense Pact:

- For Saudi Arabia:

• Diversified deterrence:

This ^{Pact} strengthens Saudi Arabia's defenses by adding a powerful military ally.

• Reinforce economic alliance:

^{Saudi Vision 2030}
objectives of locating its defense sector are anticipated to be supported by military links.

• Complicated relationships: IMEC

- For Pakistan:

• Nuclear ambiguity:

• Secured economic support:

By ensuring

investors and improving economic links.

- Increased risk of entanglement:

Being involved in Middle Eastern crises that are not directly beneficial to its interest. The act of balancing between US, China, Iran and Saudi Arabia has increasingly complicated.

- For the United states:

- Undermining U.s. influence:

The pact put the U.s led security architecture in the Gulf in jeopardy.

- Complex alliance management:

The SMDA challenges the US. to traverse a more web of alliances, especially if Saudi seek comparable assurance from Washington.

- China competition:

It deepens Saudi-Pakistan military collaboration. The agreement strengthens Beijing's influence.

- For India:

- Socioeconomic and diplomatic risks:

A military escalation with Pakistan could threaten New Delhi's economic interest in Gulf, as Saudi is a key energy supplier and trading partner.

- Counter alignment:

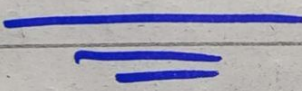
In response, India may enhance its strategic ties with Israel, perhaps forming a regional counter-axis.

Conclusion:

SMOA is a watershed moment that confirms the increasing dissolution of the U.S led unipolar order and growth of the middle powers with their own strategic goals. The agreement is a smart step by both countries to

Guarantee their future in an uncertain global context.

However, the agreement's long term viability is dubious. Its success is dependent on clear definition, effective management of regional conflicts, and both countries capacity to navigate complex ties with external power. The true significance of the pact will ultimately come to light by how key players act in the following years.



Q. No. 2

Pak-Afghan relations continue to remain tensed even after mediation by China. What do you think are main factors and how could it be improved.

Pakistan-Afghanistan ties have remained problematic in 2025, as seen by a recent escalation into open border clashes begun October 9, despite prior diplomatic efforts, including China's bilateral mediation. While a ceasefire was agreed upon on October 19 primarily by Qatar and Turkey underlying issue remain, namely mistrust and the possibility of future flare-ups.

- Major factors contributing to tension:

- Terrorism and cross border militancy: Tension have risen since the Taliban took power in 2021, with both sides

accusing others of aiding extremist groups. Pakistan accuses the Afghan Taliban of hosting TTP members, prompting airstrikes on Afghan soil. In response, Afghanistan accuses Pakistan of supporting ISIS-K, which has caused instability.

- The Durand line:

Afghanistan continues to challenge the legitimacy of the Durand line, the colonial era border that divides ethnic Pashtun communities.

- Political and diplomatic concerns:

- Trust deficit:

- ~~Trust deficit~~ The relationship has suffered from decades of mistrust. The Taliban regime opposes Pakistan's previous intervention in its domestic affairs, while Pakistan believes they are failed to control anti-Pakistan insurgents. This imbalance weakens diplomatic interaction.

- India influence:

India's growing ties with

with Afghanistan has heightened Pakistan anxieties.

- Humanitarian issues:

- Refugee crisis:

Pakistan's drive to expel unauthorized Afghan refugees has become a significant flashpoint.

- Economic instability: sanctions - refugee flow and trade ^{disruption}

- Potential paths to improving relations:

- Sustained dialogue and diplomacy

- Open and consistent communication is key for addressing mutual issues and finding common ground.

- Enhanced border management:

A joint force for border management and intelligence sharing could help the both countries to combat with terror.

- **Economic cooperation:**

Expanding trade and economic cooperation through trade agreement (APTTA) and regional connectivity projects, such as CPEC.

- **Managing the refugee crisis:**

Pakistan could revise its repatriation policy to adhere to human rights standards and work with international organizations to develop a more humane and orderly process.

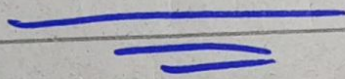
- **People-to-People contact:**

Cultural exchanges, sports, and educational opportunities could help bridge the trust deficit, and foster a more positive public sentiment.

- **Regional consensus:** Involving regional stakeholders, including Russia and Iran, can help build a more holistic and stable political environment.

Ultimately, a sustained improvement in

relations requires both sides to
acknowledge each other's security
concern and commit to resolving their
long-standing dispute through peaceful
negotiation.



Q.no. 7

Pakistan can balance its strategic partnership with China and its recent engagement with the U.S. by adopting a policy of pragmatic non-alignment focused on its core national interests, primarily economic stability and security.

Prioritizing Economic Diplomacy and Diversification:

• Non-exclusive economic Partnership

Pakistan must clearly articulate that its economic cooperation, as a CPEC, is not a zero sum game. It should seek US and other investment in sectors outside the immediate CPEC framework, such as mining, agriculture, IT.

• Transparency and policy consistency:

To ~~reassure~~ reassure international investors, about its financial dealings, especially regarding CPEC related.

• Strengthening Domestic Economy

Stable domestic economy is Pakistan's great leverage. Reducing dependence on foreign aids.

2. Maintain strategic Autonomy and communication:

• Issue based alignment:

Pakistan should avoid rigid ideological alignment with either power. Instead, its cooperation with each nation should ~~be~~ ^{not} be issue-based and focused on its national interest.

• Clarity in Message:

Reassuring China that US engagement will not compromise their partnership.

• serving as a bridge:

Historically, Pakistan has played a role in facilitating US-China communication. While direct mediation is less likely today.

- Potential risks and challenges

Despite the strategy, balancing these relationships comes with significant challenges.

- Great Power Pressure
- o Economic vulnerability
- o Internal instability

Pakistan's success hinges on its ability to navigate these complexities by strengthen its economy and pursuing consistent, long term strategic planning.