

Name : Farah Noor
Batch # ISB OB 83

Mock Exams "Current Affairs"

Part - II

~~SECTION - I~~

Q No. 2

Pak-Afghan Relation

Introduction:

The Conflict took place amid increasing violence by nonstate actors along the two countries 1,600-mile (2,600-kilometer-) border, a Colonial-era demarcation (Durand line) whose settlement and geographic patterns make the area both contentious and

difficult to control.

On October 9, 2025, following an attack on a day earlier in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province by Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on Pakistani soldier, Pakistan carried out an airstrike in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, that target Noor Wali Mehsud, the leader of the TTP. Days later, Afghanistan carried out retaliatory operations that killed at least 23 Pakistani soldiers and left at least 9 Afghan soldier dead, although both sides claimed to have inflicted higher casualties.

Factors behind Pak-Afghan tension

Key factors behind Pakistan-Afghanistan tensions include the disputed Durand line border, with Afghanistan not recognizing it as a legitimate boundary and Pakistani concerns over Afghan Taliban's alleged sheltering

of the TTP. Other contributing factors are the ongoing deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan, a history of geo-political competition and interference, and the spillover of instability from Afghanistan into Pakistan.

(i) Durand Line

The primary issue with the Durand line is Afghanistan's refusal to recognize it as legitimate international border despite Pakistan and international law viewing it as such. This dispute stems from the 1893 treaty that created the line, which Afghanistan claim was made under duress, a claim that divides Pashtun and other ethnic groups across the border. ~~This~~ The disagreement fuels ongoing tensions and security issues, including border clashes and concern over cross-border militant activity.

(ii)

TTP

Pakistan claims TTP militants are using Afghan soil as a base to launch attacks into Pakistan and demands the Afghan government prevent this. Since the Taliban took power, the TTP has intensified its attack in Pakistan, with report of its deadliest month in years in August 2025. In response to the TTP's resurgence, Pakistan has increased its military pressure, including conducting airstrikes inside Afghanistan and deporting Afghan refugees.

The TTP and Afghan Taliban have ideological, cultural and ethnic ties, which complicates Pakistan's efforts to get the Afghan Taliban to fully act against the TTP, according to Al Jazeera and Pakistan Social Sciences review.

However, Pakistan alleges the Afghan Taliban have provided support to the TTP, refusing to dismantle its network and sometimes even offering reconciliation with the group.

(iii) Geo-Political Conflicts

Geo-Political competition between Afghanistan and Pakistan stems from their shared, contested border, the Durand line, and differing strategic alignments during the Cold war and Post 9/11 era.

Following Pakistan's creation in 1947, Afghanistan initially refused to recognize it and voiced territorial claims over parts of present-day Pakistan. And after that Pakistan's support for anti-Soviet Afghan groups was appreciated by some, but many Afghans perceived it as meddling and fostering instability.

Recommendations for ~~Pak~~-Improvement of Pak-Afghan Relations

(i) Political and Security Cooperation

Prioritize direct, effective communication and establish Joint action committees at border crossings to resolve issues immediately. Work together on Counter-terrorism including sharing intelligence and taking Joint action against groups like the TTP, and denying the use of each other's soil for hostile activities. Both sides should cooperate on border management using mechanisms like fences, radar and sensors to control illegal trade and movement, with bilateral intelligence sharing to enhance capacity.

(ii) Economic and humanitarian Cooperation

Softening border to facilitate trade

with which can be more economical in the long run than solely relying on security measures. Mega-energy projects like TAPI and CASA-1000 could also be revitalized.

Amicably resolve the issue of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, possibly facilitating their return, especially as the situation in Afghanistan has improved.

Prioritize initiative that promote inclusive education and economic development empowerment, particularly for women and girls in Afghanistan.

(iii) People to people and diplomatic initiatives

Increasing interaction through measures like a better visa regime, medical tourism, educational scholarships, and media and Track-II dialogues.

Utilize media to build confidence and counter hostility and encourage

Date: 1 / 20

Day: _____

empathy and a recognition of each other's perspectives.

Renegotiate a strategic partnership Agreement to create a structured mechanism for resolving disputes and ensuring consistent decision-making in times of crisis.

ii

Q No. 3

Formation of New Provinces

Introduction:

The creation of new provinces in Pakistan is a recurring debate driven by demands for better governance and resource distribution, particularly in underserved regions like South Punjab. However, major hurdles include the constitutional requirement of a two-thirds majority in parliament and provincial assemblies, political resistance from ruling elites and concerns about fueling ethnic tensions and the high economic costs of new administrative structures.

Hurdle to Creating new Provinces

(i) Constitutional and Political Barriers:

A bill to create a new province

Date: / / 20

Day:

requires approval by a two-thirds majority in both ^{the} National Assembly and the Senate. The provincial assembly of the concerned province must also approve the creation of the new province, which can be difficult to secure. And the constitutional mechanism in Article 239 of Pakistan's Constitution is extremely rigid, making the process constitutionally complex.

Major political parties may oppose the creation of new provinces due to concerns over their own power bases and interest in the existing provincial structures. Demand for new provinces are often based on ethnic and linguistic identities, which can exacerbate existing tensions and lead to opposition from major regional groups.

The creation of new provinces has significant economic consequences. It

can affect the NFC's Composition, requiring a new agreement on resource distribution, and ~~could~~ could complicate matters like the Water Accord of 1991.

Some argue that the focus should be on decentralizing power to local governments rather than creating new provinces, which could lead to further centralization if not handled properly.

There can be lack of national consensus on the timing and necessity of creating new provinces especially when the country is facing ~~lack~~ other major challenges.

Socio-

(iii) Economic Concerns and administrative Challenges

Each new province would require new provincial assemblies, governors, Chief ministers, cabinets and high courts, creating a significant and potentially unfeasible financial burden on the

Date: / / 20

Day:

national treasury. The establishment of new secretariats, government buildings and other necessary physical infrastructure for each province would be expensive.

The creation of new provinces Provincial civil services and administrative structure adds to the overall cost of public expenditure. This is especially concerning in an environment with limited resources.

Dispute New provinces could lead to dispute over the allocation of the national budget, with provinces competing for financial resources, Centre for development and stability. com. which could exacerbate regional inequalities and economic disparities.

A new province's ability to generate its own revenue may be limited, potentially placing a larger tax burden on its citizens to cover new non-development expenditures. In a country facing other significant

Challenges like terrorism, economic recovery, and geopolitical tensions, the costs and complexity of new provinces might make it an impractical and impractical undertaking, Dawn.

(iii) Ethnic and Linguistic Challenges

Creating more chaos among the provinces over the proper distribution of resources aggravates national disintegration.

Case in point: Sindh and Punjab tussle over the distribution of water and economic resources adding fuel to the fire.

Providing an opportunity to certain political leaders to propagate their ethnic politics divides people on tribal and lingual base basis.

Case in Point: Creation of Saraiki province in Punjab would certainly trigger Hazara Community in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa (KPX) deteriorating integration

Rising conflicts over national issues weaken the united image of the country internationally

Case in point: Conflict between the federal government and the government of Balochistan over Reko Diu certainly causes internal rift as well as mudding the country's image internationally.

Emerging new ethnic and linguistic groups dilute national integration.

Case in point: The emergence of ethnic and linguistic groups such as the Hazara Democratic Party and Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party in Balochistan raising alarms for separation.

Recommendations:

Engage all stakeholders, including political parties, civil society and the general public to build a national consensus. Conduct consultations with movement leaders and political parties to address their concerns.

Avoid a rushed process; instead, take a gradual, phased approach to the creation of new provinces. Create a detailed roadmap that clearly outlines financial allocations, water distributions, civil services and legal structures before implementation.

Base the creation of new provinces on administrative needs, economic viability, geography and development requirements, rather than solely on ethnicity or language, to mitigate potential conflicts. Conduct referendums in areas with a lack of consensus.

Date: ___/___/20

Day: _____

to ensure local people support the division.

Empower local governments by giving Cities, towns and districts more authority and resources, as Provinces alone may not solve governance issues.

Begin with a pilot project, such as the Creation of South Punjab province, to serve as a test case for future divisions.

Ensure that the necessary constitutional amendments are made to accommodate new provinces, which requires a two-thirds majority in both houses of parliament. And establish a Constitutional Commission to regularly review and resolve issues related to the formation of new provinces.

QUESTION #08

Pakistan - Saudi Arabia Defense
Pact : Causes and Implications.

Pakistan - Saudi Arabia Defense Pact

On 17 September 2025, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed a strategic mutual defense Pact in Riyadh.

The pact's key clause declares that
"Any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both."

On its face, this is a strong language echoing collective-defense pledges like NATO's Article 5. However, it largely codifies an existing strategic partnership rather than making a radical new commitment. The two states have enjoyed close military ties since the 1960s, when Pakistani troops first deployed

to protect Saudi frontiers during regional conflict. The new pact formalizes a deep alliance that has historical roots, rather than creating one out of thin air.

* Causes of the Pak-Saudia Defence Pact:-

Following are the causes of Pak-Saudia defence pact:

1. Impact of Israel Gaza Conflict and Israeli strike on Qatar:-

The Israeli strike on Qatar in September 2025 deeply unsettled Gulf states and was a major catalyst for the new pact. The incident reinforced doubts among Gulf leaders about their reliance on United States and galvanized a need for self-reliance and diversified security benefits. Qatar was ~~no longer~~ playing the role of mediatory body.

body between Hamas and Israel with the consent of US and Israel. According to international law, one cannot attack on a country which plays the role of mediation or negotiation between two rival countries. On the contrary, Israel attack on Qatar bases claiming to kill the Hamas group.

2. Deminishing Trust in US:-

The Gulf states have increasingly questioned the 'United states' commitment to their security. Years of shifting US foreign policy, alongwith its unwavering support for Israel, have made Saudi Arabia and its neighbours to seek alternative defence alliance. Moreover, US has strong partnership with Qatar and has its largest airbase in the Qatar, despite of this fact Israel attacked ~~Qatar~~ Hamas group in Qatar, and USA did not stop Israel

Israel by doing so while US radar can even intercept the air strike of Israel. This has led to Saudi Arabia and its neighbours to seek alternative defense alliance.

3. Expanding Strategic Partnerships ^{due to} Growing Instability in Region:-

Growing instability in the Middle East, including the war in Yemen, Israeli strikes on Qatar, has prompted Saudi Arabia to bolster its security architecture. US guaranteed Saudi Arabia ^{and Middle East countries} for providing security but presently US has proved practically that if Iran attacks Arab countries then US will defend them but if Israel attacks them then US will not defend Arab countries against Israel. So, security concerns rise in middle East and Arab countries. Therefore, this led Saudi Arabia to seek alternative alliance.

4. Pakistan is the Only Reliable Option for Saudi Arabia for strategic and Security Alliance:-

Current regional instability led Saudi Arabia to seek alternative security alliance. Russia is already involved in war so it cannot become Saudi Arabia's security alliance. On the other hand, China has the policy to not involve in war. The famous strategical thinker of China Sun Tzu said about China's strategy: "It is far better to win war without fight." China has proved it practically by not fighting for Iran despite being

its strategic partner. China does not have reputation of jumping into war for sake of allies, as China has the policy of "**Peaceful coexistence**". So China cannot be strategic partner of Saudi Arabia. Turkey and Saudi Arabia has also intense relationship. USA has also been the strategic partner of Saudi Arabia and Middle East but it proved Middle East and Saudi Arabia that US is not ready to defend Saudi Arabia ^{against Israel}. So, only reliable option left for Saudi Arabia is Pakistan, as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have informal and unannounced defense agreement since 1967.

- Pakistan's Army protected Makkah and Haramain Shar'ef in 1979.
- Pakistan's Over the years, Pakistan has trained over 80,000 - 10,000 Saudi military personnel and periodically stationed units in the kingdom.
- Pakistan is also training Islamic military **Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC)**

in which 41 muslim countries are allied, IMCTC rely on Pakistan because Pakistan is the most expert army against terrorism.

- Pakistan is only muslim nuclear power country so Pakistan can provide nuclear umbrella to Saudi Arabia.

* Balancing Against India:- Pakistan Economic

Interests with Saudi Arabia: For Pakistan, the alliance provides enhanced defence against its long-time rival, India.

India has significant economic interests with Saudi Arabia and the wider Gulf region. Therefore, Pakistan also wanted economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Middle East.

Pakistan needs to secure crucial financial lifelines, including loans, deferred oil payments to address its domestic economic challenges.

Implications of the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Pact.

The Pakistan - Saudi Arabia defense pact has significant implications for regional security, economic relations, and the international balance of power. Strategically, it creates a new deterrence framework in the Middle East, shifting regional dynamic by formally including Pakistan, a nuclear power, in the Gulf security equation.

Implications for Pakistan and Saudi Arabia:-

• Regional Balancing Act:-

For Saudi Arabia, the pact provides a new layer of deterrence against rivals like Israel. Saudi Arabia has possible threats from non-state actors and now from Israel. Saudi Arabia cannot rely on USA for security. Saudi Arabia has significant amount of jets and

other was materials but it needs Pakistan's pilots for operating due to their expertise. Saudi Arabia wants to remain ^{under Pak Nuclear Umbrella.} For Pakistan, this pact enhances its geopolitical standing as a major military and nuclear-armed Islamic power.

* For Deterrence against Israel and India:-

For Saudi Arabia, this pact broadens defense options beyond conventional allies. By anchoring nuclear armed power, Pakistan within its security framework, Saudi Arabia gains access to one of the most **battle-tested militaries** in the Muslim world, strengthening its deterrence against potential threats for example from Israel and regional non-state actors.

For Pakistan, this significantly raises the cost of aggression for India, as New Delhi must now factor the prospect of a combined military and economic response from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Economic Implications:-

The pact creates a pathway for Saudi investment, loans, and defense purchases, which could provide a lifeline for Pakistan's economy.

1. → Saudi Arabia is the largest remitter of Pakistan. Saudi Arabia needs defense and Pakistan needs remittance.
2. → Previously, there was restriction on visa on Pakistanis visas and now this restriction will be removed.
3. → Pakistan needs bail out packages. ~~In 2023~~, Saudi Arabia ~~KSA~~ has ~~ps~~ given three Arab dollars to Pakistan as bail out package. In 2023, Pakistan had 8 million dollars as foreign reserve and now these are 17 million dollars. In future, Saudi Arabia will provide Pakistan more bail out packages to Pakistan.
4. → Due to this pact, Pakistan will receive more oil subsidies from Saudi Arabia in future.

5) In 2021, Sulaiman Sheikh signed 21 MIOU with Pakistan during his visit to Pakistan but investment did not receive from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan. If agreement is (defense pact) is what it says then Pakistan not only MIOU will be signed in Pakistan but also Pakistan will received heavy investment from Saudi Arabia.

6) Saudi Arabia is interested in agriculture and livestock production in Pakistan. Saudi Arabia is investing in multiple countries for fruits and vegetables and Pakistan is one of them.

* Impact on Key Relationships:-

• Effect on India:-

The pact complicates India's strategic calculations, as Saudi Arabia is one of India's top energy suppliers. If this agreement is what it says then if India attacks Pakistan in future, then it will be considered an attack on Saudi Arabia as well.

India's security establishment is concerned ~~that~~ Saudi backing could embolden Pakistan in its rivalry with India, potentially pushing New Delhi into a closer strategic alignment with Israel and U.S.

● Effects on Israel:-

Israel has not officially commented but the pact introduces a new factor into its security calculus. Pakistani military and nuclear capability could serve as a deterrent against potential Israeli aggression in the Gulf region.

● Effect on United States:-

The agreement signals Riyadh's diversification of security partners amid concerns over U.S. commitment and reliability. For Washington, this raises challenges in managing its alliances and influence in the Middle East in an era of great-power competition with China.

Date: __/__/20

Day: _____