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Current Affairs

Q No 8

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

Answer

A. Introduction:

On 17th September 2025 a deal named as Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA) was signed between Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi crown prince Muhammad bin Salman. The core commitment of defense pact says that "Any act of aggression against one country will be considered an aggression against both." This pact is defensive and does not target any specific state and cover all

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military means of both states.

And in principle the details

of pact are still vague.

Pakistani army has been protecting

Haramain Sharfain since 1960's

but there was no official

defense pact between both

countries. Both countries formalised

The pact after years of

negotiations but time of

Officially announcing the

agreement is very important

There are various reasons

behind this defence pact

and it has certainly

various implications on Pakistan,

Saudi Arabia and on overall

region.

**B. Causes of defense deal
between Pakistan and**

KSA:

There are some - old

and certain new causes

behind this deal. These

causes include:

1) Immediate need for stronger deterrence in an increasing volatile middle East:

Both countries Especially Saudi needed deterrence against all kinds of aggression in an environment which is volatile. The volatility of middle east is observed as israel has defeat all proxies of iran in the region i.e Hezbollah, Houthi and eventually attacked Qatar after attacking iran. This left KSA very insecure in the region and she gained support from Pakistan.

2. It is proved US will not defend its allies against israel:

After this provocation Saudi wanted to expand its defense reliance from US to a trust worthy ally.

3. Strong and Cooperative relations between both countries in defense:

Pakistan has been protecting Haramain Sharfain since 1960's and was training army of KSA also. Years of defense cooperation result in a formal defense deal between two.

4. Pakistan's Strong win in May standoff against India:

The May Standoff has skyrocketed the image of Pakistani military not only within the country but also in the region.

KSA wanted to grab the opportunity and expand its defense by seeking support of a strong army like of Pakistan's.

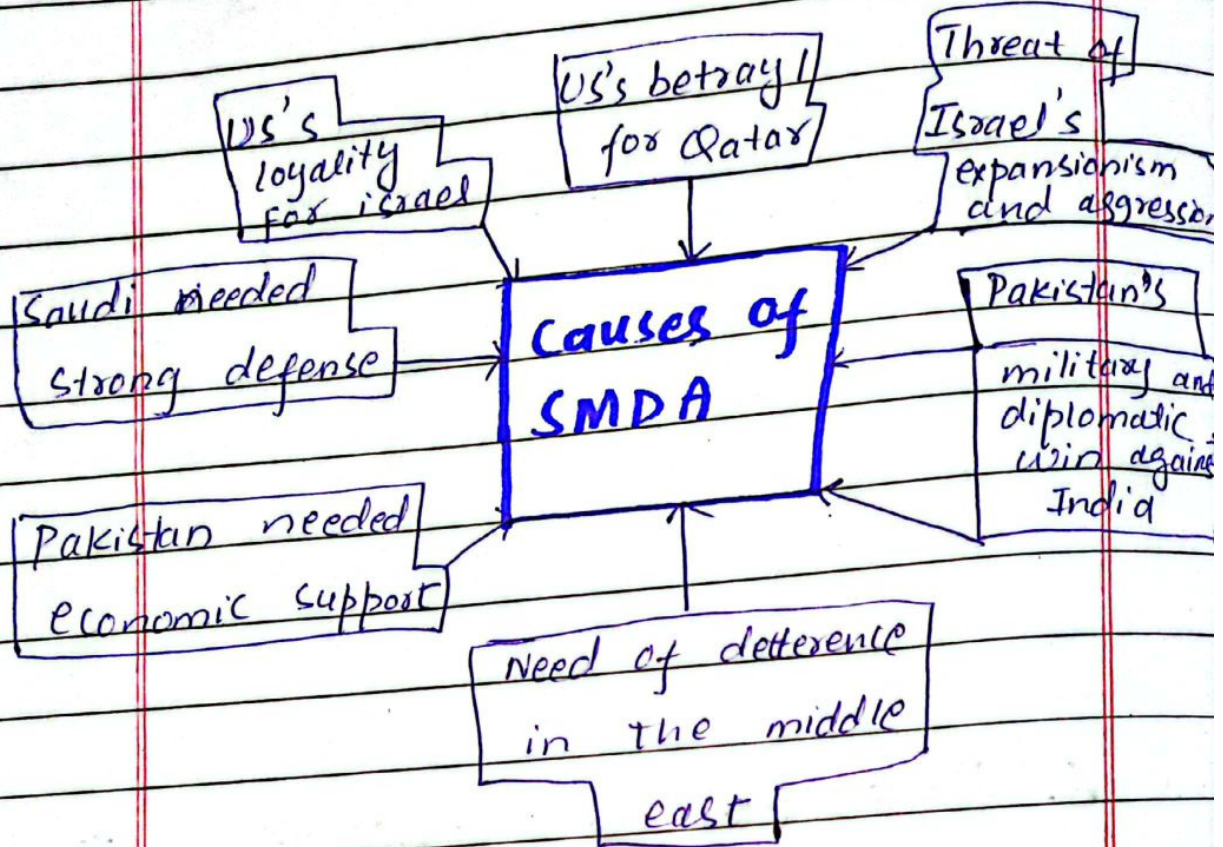
5. Israel's attacks on Qatar, Iran and in the overall region:

Israel has been portraying itself as a rogue state since October 7. Israel has attacked Iran after defeating Iran's proxies and then it attacked Qatar which is a Gulf country led by Saudi. These attacks pushed KSA to sign this deal.

6. Pakistan's economic vulnerability:

Pakistan is facing economic crisis in last few years and she wanted to gain economic benefits from KSA by signing this defense deal with KSA. Pakistan needed economic support and Saudi needed military support, through

this deal both countries
saw their interest and
sealed it.



C. Implications of SMDA:

1- Strategic

implications for Saudi Arabia:

1. Saudi has got stronger defence against aggressions:

In an increasingly volatile region i.e. middle east Saudi

has got deterrence.

1.2 Diversification of security guarantee beyond traditional reliance on US:

Saudi has tried to move on and diversified its security guarantee beyond US. There was no formal defense agreement between Saudi and US. So, now KSA got an official defense pact.

2. Implication for Pakistan:

2.1: Reinforces its role as a major security partner in Islamic world.

Pakistan's role will be reinforced as a security partner in Arab or Muslim world.

2.2 Potential economic, diplomatic and military benefits:-

At a

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time of external and internal pressure Pakistan got the got which will give potential benefits to it.

3. Regional Repercussions:

3.1 Possible

Shift in regional power balance:

India, Iran and Israel watched closely the deal. Iran has welcomed it while India and Israel see it as a threat.

3.2 Raises question about nuclear umbrella.

It has raised question in the region that whether Pakistan will extend its nuclear umbrella or not.

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3.3 Stronger Joint deterrence may
deter Coercion from others:

This pact
will deter aggression and
coercion against all threats

4- Deal
Could lead to extended
defense Cooperation:

This may
include joint training, intelligence
Sharing and coordinated
strategies.

5- Possibly other Arab states
will join a similar framework:

Other
Arab states which are
feeling insecure may join
such framework in near
future.

6- Possibility of misinterpretation:

There can
be a situation when one
party will see a situation
as aggression while other
will not. So it can have

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certain negative implications too.

D. Conclusion:

The strategic mutual defence agreement (SMDA) between Pakistan and Saudi is not the deal that happened within days. It has various reasons behind it and took years for final agreement. Israeli aggression, Saudi insecurity and Pakistan's military win in May standoff and many other causes led to the finalization of deal. This deal will provide KSA with strong defence, Pakistan with economic support and can has regional repercussions also. But in this point of time, it seems to be very beneficial for both Pakistan and Saudi.

Q no 4

There is dangerous revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan. Critically evaluate the reasons and give recommendations.

(Answer)

1. Introduction:

There is a dangerous revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan which is a challenge to Pakistan's security dynamics due to a combination of historical grievances, strategic significance and active militant movements.

To address this, pragmatic measures are needed.

Such measures must include both kinetic and non-kinetic means along with addressing socio-economic grievances of locals.

2- Reasons behind revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan:

There are two School of thoughts about revival of militancy in Balochistan. These are

1- The Centralist School of Thought.

2- The federalist School of thought.

For revival of militancy in ^{both} KP and Balochistan certain reasons are mentioned below.

2.1 Sardari or Feudal Systems:

Such systems does not support the socio-economic progress of provinces and somehow they contribute to militancy in the region. For example BLA was founded by

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a Baloch Sardar named
as Baloch Mari.

2.2 RAW involved in insurgency
in Pakistan:

RAW is continuously
funding insurgency in
both KP and Balochistan.
For instance Kulbushan Yadev,
a RAW agent was captured
in Balochistan by
Pakistani security forces.

2.3 Afghanistan Soil being
used as heaven for insurgency
in Pakistan:

Afghanistan
Soil is being used as
launching pad for
terrorist attacks in
Pakistan and they are
using US and USSR left
weapons.

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2.4 Alienation of Common people:

Common people of Balochistan are being alienated by state as their resources are being exploited. It can be seen in case of Sui-gas which was explored in 1959 and provided to all major parts of country while Sui people did not get.

2.5 Socio-economic grievances:

Socio-economic grievances of the regions have contributed to revival of militancy in Balochistan. There is a lack of education, skills and overall low low human development index.

2.5 Poverty: Poverty is a key driver of militancy because poor and unemployed

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people are easily used by militants for their own purposes.

3 Pragmatic measures to Cater KP and Balochistan insurgency:

There is need of strong internal security measures:

3-1 Combination of kinetic and non-kinetic approach:

To address revival of militancy in the country a combined approach is needed.

Military operations, like **Zarb-e-azb**, are needed at first place. Soft power of diplomacy must also be used.

3-2 Intelligence based Operations:

IbOs are effective because they do not

Cause collateral damage
but their cost is high

3.3 Strengthening local enforcement and paramilitary with accountability:

To ensure writ
of state, law enforcement
must be ensured and
paramilitary must also
be strengthened with
transparency and accountability.

3.4 Negotiations with Strong approach:

State must not
negotiate with those
committing heinous crimes
but can negotiate with
others with strong approach
and conditions.

3.5 Need of Police Reforms:

Police
vacuum and weak police
in KP and Balochistan

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are main reasons behind insurgency. So, there is a strong need of police reforms in these regions.

3.6 De-weaponization of War-zone areas:-

It is a very tedious and long process. So, state should purchase weapons from militias and public weapons display must be banned.

3.7 Development projects:

Development projects are strongly needed to increase human development index and to address people's grievances which are causing insurgency.

3.8 Revenue Sharing:

Revenue

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must be shared fairly in these provinces and compensations are strongly needed.

3. Conclusion:

Insurgency revived in KP and Balochistan because of some internal weaknesses like socio-economic grievances, and police vacuum while India has also funded this by all means. Long-term peace is needed which depends on inclusion, justice and local empowerment.

Therefore, there is an immediate need for a balanced approach which involved security, development and diplomacy.

QNo3

The formation of new provinces is a recurring discourse in Pakistan. Critically evaluate the hurdles and give recommendations.

Ans

A- Introduction:

To create a balanced and competent federation in terms of serving the needs of people in Pakistan, the formation of new provinces and its discussions again resurfaced. There are various factors that lead the discourse of new provinces but there are also various hurdles in this way. So, Pakistan can adopt a gradual approach and empower its local government.

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B. Hurdles to the creation of new provinces in Pakistan:

1. Framework of 1973 Constitution has made it difficult:

It requires resolution initiated by respective provincial assembly and it needs $2/3^{\text{rd}}$ majority for favour of resolution from respective provincial assembly. This procedure is given in Article 239-4 of Constitution.

2. Consensus of political parties is difficult:

PML-N has strong support in Punjab and it will never allow its division while PPP will oppose division of Sindh and in the same way PTI in KPK. So political parties consensus

is almost impossible.

3. Huge economic cost:

Huge economic cost for formation of new provinces hinders this discourse because Pakistan is facing economic instability.

4. Emotional attachment of people with existing geographic identity:

People's consensus is also difficult as they are emotionally attached with these borders and ethnic fault lines can also increase.

5. Risk of increasing ethnic Fault lines:

Ethnic fault lines can increase by

creation of new provinces.

6. Huge infrastructure needed:

For new provinces, new infrastructure, new jobs and new offices and Pakistan cannot afford it.

C. Final Recommendations:

1. Need of a Balanced approach:

Pakistan should adopt a balanced approach and proceed this process gradually through proper channel after channelizing all risks in the way. Pakistan cannot afford any new adventure at this point of economic and political stability. So, a balanced

equation must be made and implemented

2. Empower local government:

local government must be empowered to ensure public service delivery. Citizens will be able to approach the government more easily and more effectively.

3. Increase Spending on HDI:

Pakistan should enhance its spending on human development index i.e. Health, education and human capital.

4. Ensuring Good Governance:

Just creation of

new provinces do not ensure good governance. So, good governance must be ensured by public service delivery and rule of law. Then thoughts on new provinces will be accepted.

D. Conclusion:

Formation of new provinces is a difficult task to do as Pakistan's constitution has made it difficult by its procedure. Political and economic instability also does not favour. So Pakistan must ensure political consensus, people's consensus and follow evolutionary process of new provinces with gradual phases.

Q no 2

Introduction:

In October 2025 Pakistan attacked terrorist hideouts in Afghanistan, Kabul. Afghanistan retaliated and Pakistan further escalated its military response to Kabul. It resulted in tensed relations between two countries even after continuous efforts of China for mediations. There are several reasons behind these constraints. Relations and militancy by TTP is on the top of reasons. Pragmatic efforts are needed to resume peace, and diplomacy between two neighbour countries.

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Major factors behind Pakistan
Afghanistan tensed relations:

1. Safe heavens
of TTP in Afghanistan:

Pakistan
claims that TTA is giving
safe heavens to TTP which
is causing terrorism in
Pakistan while Afghanistan
deny this. United nation
report of 2025 has also
stated that Afghan
government is supporting
TTP.

2. Unresolved Durand Line
Dispute.

Afghanistan government
TTA does not admit durand
line as a boundary and
it creates tension. Even
after Doha mediation in
15th October 2025 Afghanistan's

foreign ministers and spokes-
-person openly said that
they do not consider
durand line as a boundary.

3. Indian Ties with Afghanistan:

India
has resumed its warm ties
with Afghanistan. **Afghanistan
Foreign Minister visited
India in Oct 2025** and
India announced to reopen
embassy in Afghanistan.

4. Cross - border Airstrikes and Retaliation:

Oct 2025 airstrikes
by Islamabad on Kabul and
Kabul's retaliation have
further tensed the
relations. TTA responded
by saying that this
will not be unanswered.

5- Afghan Refugee Expulsions:

Since 2023 Pakistan has expelled almost 800,000 Afghan refugees due to economic constraints and security concerns. While Afghanistan considers it human rights violation.

6. Mutual distrust and Governance Gap:

Because of burden of history i.e Pakistan's support for US in war on terror there is a mutual distrust between Kabul and Afghan Islamabad. Governance gap between two is also making their relations further tensed and severe.

Final Recommendations:

1- Resume Bilateral

Negotiations:

Both countries must resume peace and diplomacy with bilateral talks e.g. Doha peace talks happened in 15th Oct 2025 and ceasefire must be permanent.

2- Counter Terrorism

Cooperation:

Afghanistan must cooperate with Pakistan in counter terrorism and Pakistan must not compromise on its security by any ways.

3. Refugee Management:

Pakistan need to expel the afghan refugees in a

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proper procedure through
proper phases.

4- Economic partnership:

economic
partnerships will align
interests of both and
it will help Afghanistan
must be added in CPEC
and CASA-1000 electricity
project must be resumed.

5- International support:

International
world like UN and OIC
must support both and
give funds to Afghanistan
through WB and ADB
for counterterrorism.

6- Track II Diplomacy:

Think
tanks must resume
diplomacy and media

campaigns are necessary sports like cricket matches between both countries must be revived.

7. Address Historical grievances:

Both countries must address historical grievances for long-lasting peace.

Conclusion:

Both Pakistan and Afghanistan are muslim countries and they share border too.

Due to burden of history and terrorism they are facing bad patch in their relation. Strong diplomacy is needed to de-escalate tensions and ensure long lasting peace.