

Instructions to Secure Good Marks in the Current Affairs Paper

Important Note: Marks will be awarded strictly on the following parameters: Content 60%, References 15%, Subject-specific language 15%, Graphs, charts & diagrams 10%.

Key Guidelines: Each question should be attempted with 12-13 clear headings. The answer must be 8-9 pages (sides) in length to score above 15 marks per question. Questions usually contain 3-4 parts; each part carries equal weightage, so all parts must be discussed equally and proportionately.

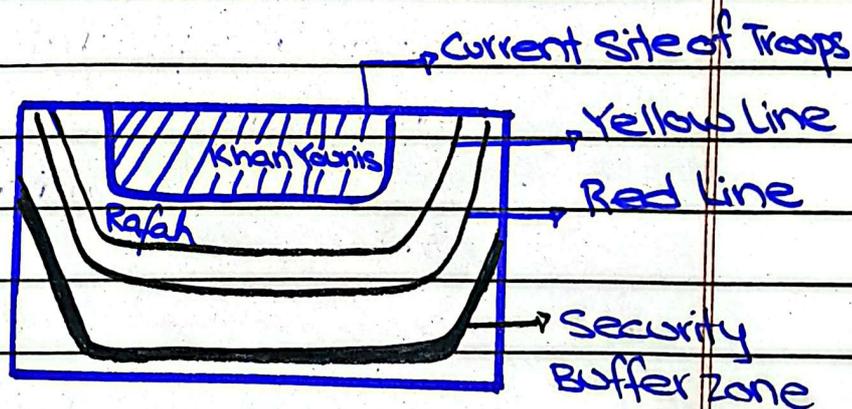
Content & Argumentation: Always use examples from current and ongoing events to justify your arguments. Demonstrate strong analytical depth not mere narration of facts. Support arguments with relevant "data, reports, international indices, treaties, and recent developments.

Structure & Presentation: Begin every answer with an attractive, context-setting introduction. End with a forward-looking, well-linked conclusion that ties back to the question. Use headings directly derived from the question statement - pick words and phrases from the question itself. Alignment with the Question: Each argument must be explicitly linked to the specific part of the question being asked. If your heading is not aligned with the demand of the question, the content - no matter how accurate - will not be rewarded. Avoid generic or unrelated headings; precision is key.

Language & Visuals: Use subject-specific terminology relevant to international relations, geopolitics, economics, and security studies. Incorporate simple graphs, flowcharts, tables, or maps wherever relevant to enhance clarity and scoring potential.

(1) Gaza Peace Plan - An Overview:

The Gaza Peace Plan was approved on 17 November 2025 by UN Security Council under the Twenty Points Peace Agenda of US President Donald Trump. The Plan operates under a three-level idea of staged removal of Israeli forces from Gaza:



• Three-Phased Evacuation Plan of Gaza

In the first phase, IDF shall move outwards till yellow line. Phase-2 proposes further withdrawal till the Red Line. The final phase will see the movement far away to a security buffer zone.

(2) Analysis of UN SC Resolution 2803:

Materializing Trumps' 20 point agenda, The UN SC passed a resolution. It can be divided into five phases as follows:

(2.1) Phase 1: Development of Board of Peace (BOP)

A body headed by President Trump himself to monitor the day to day administrative affairs of Gaza is proposed.

It will be operation from:

25 October 2025 - 31 December 2027.

The withdrawal of troops shall also be monitored by the BOP.

(2.2) Phase 2: Establishment of International Stabilisation Force

An International Stabilisation Force would be established to manage security situation

in Gaza. The IDF troops can however, remain for indefinite period of time.

(2.3) Phase:3 Transitional Framework

This phase is further classified into three subphases as follows:

- i) Immediate POW Release:**
Immediate release of prisoners.
Talks for phase-2.
- ii) Interim Set-up: (6 Months)**
Set-up of technocratic government.
ISF materialization
- iii) Permanent Govt: (18 months)**
Permanent Palestinian Authority to take charge.

(2.4) Phase:4 Palestinian Statehood

This phase mentions the controversial conditioned set-up of a Palestinian state.

It does not explicitly mention the term statehood.

(2.5) Phase 5: Time Duration

The ISF and BOP shall be empowered until 31 December 2027. In case of need for extension, a new resolution would be required.

(3) An Analysis on Chances of Success for the Peace Plan:

Unfortunately, very minimal chances for the success of this plan are anticipated. It is just a reflection of failed Oslo Accords. Multiple reasons account for this:

(3.1) Hamas Disarmament

Ambiguity:

Hamas has not agreed to fully disarm and very low chances of future agreement exist.

(3.2) Legitimacy of BOP:

The issue prevails that a UNSC body is headed by

politician. It escalates chances of partisan decision making.

(3.3) ISF Members - No Absolute Mechanism:

No structured mechanism exists on who will form ISF and will Gaza accept it.

(3.4) Conditional Setup of a Palestinian Authority:

In violation of Article 1 of UN Charter, People of Palestine are being devoid of their inherent right to self-determination. It has been conditioned on the reform agenda.

(3.5) Lack of Accountability Framework:

No International Body is responsible to check matters like withdrawal of Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) or the BOP's role in brokering peace. 96/400 Aid ships are allowed in Gaza, 1500+ buildings have been attacked post-ceasefire but no monitoring.

(3.6) In-built Expiry Mechanism:

The plan states that if peace talks stall within 6-weeks of exchange of Prisoner of War, the plan shall stand cancelled.

(4) Insight to Islamabad's Policy Regarding the Peace Plan:

• Pakistan has been diplomatically extending support to Gaza in an attempt to remain relevant in International Politics, it has adopted a Foreign Policy of Flattery (Machiavelli's concept of a fox as mentioned in 'The Prince') towards the United States.

Pakistan along with other Muslim states has been extending agenda of separate Palestine or at least halt in hostilities. Pakistan wants to grab its position as security enabler in the region.



(5) Possible Fallouts for Pakistan:

There is a multi-domain threat to Pakistan in joining hands with USA on Gaza Peace Plan:

(5.1) Domestic Backlash:

Ideologically charged right-wing political parties (TLP) and also public are a threat. There could be immense backlash, unrest and protests.

(5.2) Pressure from Iran:

Sectarian and Ideological pressure from Iran can be forced to joining hands with KSA or western-led bloc to solve Gaza issue.

(5.3) Involvement in Middle Eastern Tensions:

Pakistan can not afford to get involved in foreign chaos. It has alot on its plate to handle already.

The Foreign Office has issued a formal statement on joining the issues of today. The potential threats outweigh the benefits.

CONCLUSION:

Gaza Peace Plan is hanging by a thread. Post-release of Israeli prisoners, the hype has silenced and global attention has faded. Millions in Gaza remain troubled with extreme cold and floods, still hoping for a permanent resolution of issue.



ANSWER: 5

Pak-KSA DEFENCE PACT

INTRODUCTION:

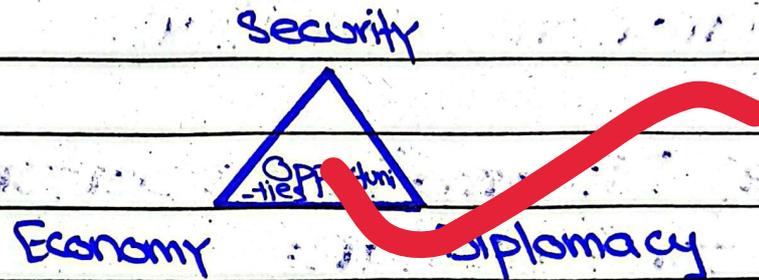
Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have signed a Defense Pact on 17 September 2025. It has institutionalized years of military cooperation and diplomatic ties between the both.

This pact provides economic benefits to Pakistan, strategic and diplomatic advances to both the parties.

Analysts claim that this deal has shifted the Perception of Pakistan from beggars to a great military power in the eyes of KSA.

(1) Geo-Political Achievement:

The Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement has been termed "watershed pact" for both countries by Asfandyaar Mir from Stimson Centre USA's South Asia Department.



(2) Strategic Opportunities for Pakistan:

This pact has formalized security relations between both states. Pakistan can now focus on joint military exercises, troop sharing, positioning of troops in Saudi Arabia. Both countries can also focus towards coproduction of weapons.

Operational Leadership:

The pact can also account for operational military leadership for joint programmes.

For example,

Former COAS General Raheel Shareef is heading the Islamic Militants Counter Terrorism Coalition.

(3) Diplomatic Opportunities for Pakistan:

Post 9 May, the diplomatic standing of Pakistan has improved many folds. Through this deal, Pakistan can boost its stance on Kashmir, attain focus of OIC and global powers towards South Asia's issues and also extract benefits for its expatriates in the kingdom.

(4) Economic Incentives for Pakistan:

This deal can have great benefits for macroeconomic growth of Pakistan. Saudi Arabia has always aided Pakistan in times of aid.

(4.1) Deferred Payments for Oil:

Pakistan sees a probability of getting oil on deferred payment.

(4.2) Reserve Rollout in SBP:

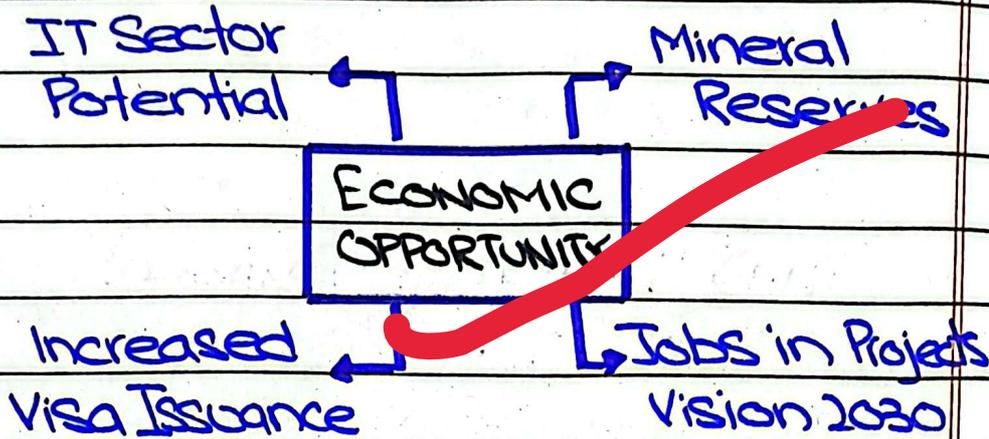
Saudi Arabia has rolled out its reserves worth \$3 Bn in SBP for another year. It favours foreign exchange stability for Pakistan.

(4.3) Remittances:

KSA alone has generated \$9.4 billion of foreign remittances for Pakistan in FY 25. The 2.5 Million expat of Saudi is from Pakistan. This is huge for our economy.

(4.4) Further Economic Opportunities:

Pakistan must use this pact to further achieve economic benefits



(5) Geopolitical Achievements for Saudi Arabia:

Saudi Arabia can draw strategic benefits and diplomatic gains from SMDA.

(5.1) Strategic Benefits:

Saudi Arabia can get trainings, seminars and joint defense collaborations with the fifth-largest military in the world.

• Nuclear Umbrella:

SMDA Provides Saudi an opportunity to access nuclear umbrella via Pakistan.

A Saudi official has told Reuters, "It is a comprehensive defense agreement — encompasses all aspects." This hints towards Nuclear Aspect of deal.

Boob Woodward in his book 'War' mentions the reply of Muhammad Bin Salman when asked about production of a Saudi Bomb,

"I will just buy one from Pakistan"

• Repurcussions for Pakistan:

This exerts pressure of IAEA threat of nuclear proliferation on Pakistan. It also amplifies Israeli antagonistic view of Pakistan.

Deputy PM & FM Dar has explicitly mentioned, "Nuclears not on Radar."

• Saudi Defense Industry Chances are Amplified:

MBS mentions the aim of an indigenous Defense industry for KSA. This deal with Pakistan enables the establishment of such an industry.

(S.2) PIVOT AWAY FROM WESTERN SECURITY GUARANTEE:

SMDA enables US to shift from security guarantee to of USA. The Attack on Qatar on 9 Sep 2025 indicates USA's weakness to protect allies in MENA region. This deal allows Saudi to shift away towards China's weaponry.

It is notable that US had made \$142 Bn Arms Deal with KSA in 2025.

The pivot shall take time.

(6) DIPLOMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS FOR SAUDI:

Saudi Arabia can regain its relevance in OIC as the leader of the Muslim world.

It can also operationalize the idea of an Arab Islamic NATO, one in pipeline for long.

(7) THREATS FOR BOTH STATES:

SMDA also draws criticism and creates issues for both parties. Involvement of both signatories in tensions of others' region remains prevalent.

India Factor:

Increased Defiance by Pakistan threatens more heinous aggression by India.

On Saudi part, it has disturbed Indian strategic calculus. It must be skeptic of IMEC's operationalization.

"Kanwal Sibal, an Indian Analyst has termed this move "a grave misstep" on the part of Saudi Arabia.

IRAN FACTOR:

KSA and Pakistan face sectarian threats from Iran after the SMDA. However, Iran has approved of this plan.

CONCLUSION:

Lloyd Austin from US Dept. of Defense mentions that security alliances provide mutual benefits.

The SMDA also opens a plethora of opportunities in varied domains for the governments and public of both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.



ANSWER: 7

US CHINA TRADE WAR

INTRODUCTION:

John Mearshiemer in his thesis, "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" clearly mentions the antagonistic policies adopted by competing great powers in a quest for hegemony.

The US and China's world's two largest economies are currently imposing tariffs, protectionist policies and export controls on each other. The competition over rare earth minerals, the new oil of the world, further aggravates the notion. The strategic flashpoint remains greatly centred upon Taiwan, the world's 19th largest economy.

(1) Trade War between US and China - Protectionism:

US president Donald Trump in an attempt to extend his protectionist zero-sum agendas and pursue policy of

MAGA - Make America Great Again

has imposed extensive tariffs on countries.

In 2025, USA introduced **IEEPA - International Emergency Economic Protection Act**

that allows it to impose tariffs on any state in its best interests.

In an attempt to counter growth of China, **30% Tariff** was imposed on Chinese Products. Chinese Vehicles and Technology exports were particularly targeted.

Huawei case study provides an exemplary example.

(2) Chinese 'Tit for Tat' Response:

Unlike states that depend on USA for its exports like Mexico and Canada (80% + trade exports to US) China has an upper hand in this war.

China reduced its total exports to USA to 15% from 21% back in 2019.

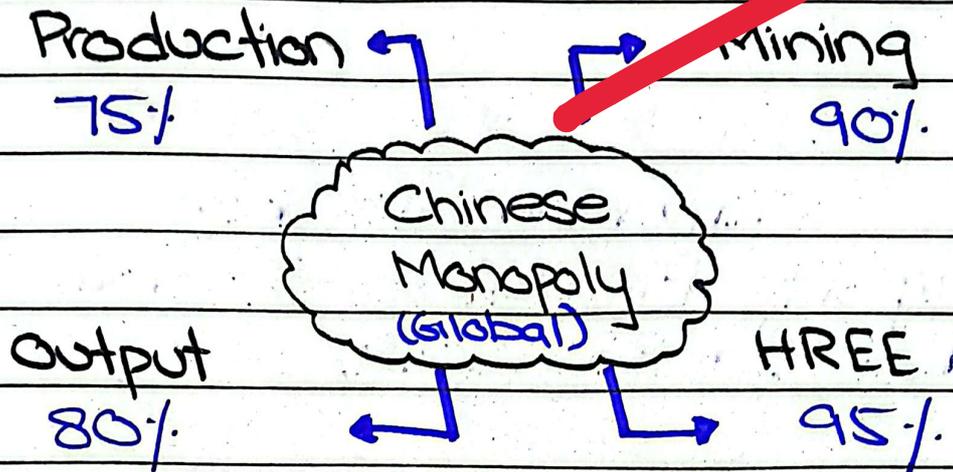
China maintains a striking balance against the protectionist measures of Trump.

(3) Chinese Monopoly of Rare Earth Minerals:

"The world has oil but, China has Rare Earth Metals"

- Deng Xiaping
(1992)

China is known for its long-term strategic planning. It has a monopoly over Rare Earth Minerals in the world.



(3.1) Chinese Investment:

From 1990, China has spent over **\$150 Billion** on REs, including on R&D in this domain.

(3.2) Intellectual Property Strategy:

Since 2000, China has purchased over **25,000 Patents** in REs.

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(3.3) US Dependence on China:

15/15 Heavy Rare Earth Metals required for National Security Objectives, The USA is 100% dependent on China for them.

Realising its potential, Chinese, in response to US Tariffs in 2025, imposed a deadly 'Export control on US' for these REMS. This led to a temporary ~~truce~~ between the two competing powers.

(4) US-China Trade Deficit:

The United States has a trade deficit of whopping \$300 Billion towards China.

This equips China with an upper hand in the trade war.

Also, it uses its REM monopoly to subsidize US hegemonic agendas.

(5) Impact on USA → Automobile:

US has faced deep strokes to its indigenous industry. Tesla, Volkswagen operations witness delays and 25-30% price hikes due to market prices touching skies.

(6) Strategic Industry Faces Burnt of War:

US Defense Industry is facing severe repercussions. There is extensive delay (3-6 month) with price hike of 35-40% in weapons.

(7) Chinese 'STICKS POLICY' Towards US Allies:

US Allies have suffered China's wrath. Japan had to shutdown manufacture of Suzuki SWIFT due to delay in supply of US Chinese REMS.

(8) Bifurcation of Global Supply Chains:

This rift has resulted in global supply chain disruptions.

EU has become China's largest partner.

EV Industry has suffered great losses.

ASEAN Countries are actively collaborating with China.

China invested in:

Malaysia	Nickel Processing
Chile/Argentina	Lithium Extraction

(9) American "Mine to Magnet" Policy:

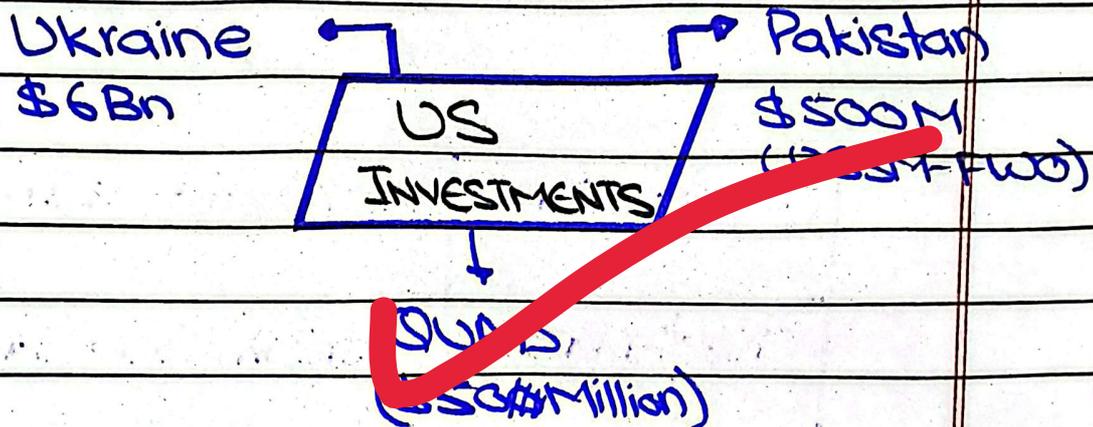
In lieu of intense scenario, USA has passed

"Critical Minerals Security Act, 2025"

that aims to provide US self-sufficiency in supply of REMS.

US Government has invested \$400 Million and \$100 Million has been obtained from private financing. The project is called:

Mine to Magnet Supply Chain Independence by 2027.



(15) Future Impact on the World:

This war of economics can prove destructive for global peace.

"Whoever Controls Money will control the world."

-Henry Kissinger

Global Supply chains are disrupted, prices are increasing and consumers are devastated. It has potential to trigger a never ending arms race (involving new technologies), price hike of Renewable Energy Systems (solar and wind) and also Technology Goods (Gadgets, smart phones) etc.

CONCLUSION:

The issue of chip & REIMS are expanding. Two great economies are fighting and the whole world is choosing sides. This can impact global order and peace at large.



ANSWER: 3

ALTERNATE TRANSACTION SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION:

Economies of the global south are skeptical of the deepening North-South Divide in the world. They have exposed the hypocrisy of western-led economic order, where SWIFT, Sanctions were imposed on Russia but not Israeli. The "Dollar Hegemony" is a tool of Power used by west. China and Global South are establishing counter institutions that focus on collective economic growth



(1) Weaponisation of 'SWIFT' By USA Against Russia:

SWIFT is a US-led global financial institute that imposed harsh sanctions on Russia after it attacked Ukraine in 2021.

This has been breach of global norms because the country was isolated from international markets.

On contrary, on charges of congruent nature, Israel was allowed to trade in energy and other dominant sectors, regardless of International Law breaches in Gaza.

(2) Dollar Hegemony and Grievance of Global South:

No matter what analysts claim, the world largely trades in USD. It has been a weapon of exercising power by the western-led world order.

IMF, WTO are mouthpieces of the west → "Washington Consensus".

Global South is stuck in a 'vicious debt cycle' and perpetuation of dependence by relying on such institutions. Pakistan and its on-going 25th IMF Bail-out Package are stark examples.

(3) BRICS - An Alternate to West-led Economic Order:

BRICS is an IO that claims to represent the Global South. It has created its financial institutions that can be alternatives for the western ones:

- **New Development Bank:**

It provides loans like the IMF, to lenders of

Global south on much lesser interest rates.

• AIIB:

A Chinese-led investment initiative that focuses on development in developing countries.

(4) CIPS - An Alternative to SWIFT:

China has launched CIPS in 2025, one of its kind alternative financial system for SWIFT.

CIPS - Chinese Interbank Payment system.

(5) China-EU signed CAI:

China and European Union have signed:

Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI).

This is indicator of EU's two-pronged strategy.

(a) GDP Share - An Indicator of Preferences of Global South =

Organisation	Contribution to Global GDP
BRICS	45%
G-7	29%

These statistics speak for themselves. The Global South is drifting away from Dollar hegemony.

- Russia is largest trader

than

- Petro-Dollar Agreement b/w US and OPEC ended on 4 June 2024.

- Renmibi and Yuan are growing global influence