

## India's role in UN Peacekeeping Missions

### Why in news?

There is a need to invest more in technology and resources for the safety of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers deployed in conflict-torn regions.

### What is UN peacekeeping?

- **UNDPO** - The UN Peacekeeping, governed by the Department of Peace Operations (UNDPO), assists countries tormented by conflict in their journey towards sustained peace.
- It follows 3 fundamental principles: consent of the parties, impartiality, and refraining from the use of force, except in self-defence.
- Since 1948, UN Peacekeepers have undertaken 71 Field Missions.
- There are approximately 81,820 personnel serving on 13 peace operations led by UNDPO, in four continents currently.
- **Countries contributed** - A total of 119 countries have contributed military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping.

### What is the role of UN peacekeepers?

- **Peacekeepers** - They protect civilians, actively prevent conflict, reduce violence, strengthen security and empower national authorities to assume these responsibilities.
- This requires a coherent security and peacebuilding strategy that supports the political strategy.
- UN peacekeeping helps host countries to become more resilient to conflict, laying the groundwork to sustain long-term peace, including by addressing root causes of conflict.

### What is India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping?

- India has a long history of service in UN Peacekeeping, having contributed more personnel than any other country.
- India has also provided, and continues to provide, eminent Force Commanders for UN Missions.
- **TCC** - India is the fifth largest troop contributor (TCC) with 5,323 personnel deployed in 8 out of 13 active UN Peacekeeping Missions, of which 166 are police personnel.
- India ranks third after Bangladesh (7,237) and Nepal (6,264) in troops contribution.
- **Highest fatalities** - India also holds the unfortunate record of having the highest fatalities due to malicious acts, during UN peacekeeping missions.
- A total 175 Indian peacekeepers have so far died while serving with the United Nations.
- India has lost more peacekeepers than any other UN Member State.

## What are the incidents of India's participation in UN Peacekeeping missions?

- **Korea** - India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping began with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in the 1950s.
- India's mediatory role in resolving the stalemate over prisoners of war in Korea led to the signing of the armistice that ended the Korean War.
- India chaired the 5 member Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, while the Indian Custodian Force supervised the process of interviews and repatriation that followed.
- **Middle East** - The UN entrusted the Indian armed forces with subsequent peace missions in the Middle East, Cyprus, and the Congo.
- **East Asia** - India also served as Chair of the 3 international commissions for supervision and control for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos established by the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina.

## What is the role of women in Indian Peacekeeping?

- India has been sending [women personnel](#) on UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- In 2007, India became the *first country to deploy an all-women contingent* to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.
- The Formed Police Unit in Liberia provided 24-hour guard duty and conducted night patrols in the capital Monrovia, and helped to build the capacity of the Liberian police.
- These women officers not only played a role in restoring security in the West African nation but also contributed to an increase in the number of women in Liberia's security sector.

## What are the additional services offered by India?

- **Medical camps** - Medical care is among the many services Indian Peacekeepers provide to the communities in which they serve on behalf of the Organization.
- **Veterinary support** - They also perform specialised tasks such as veterinary support and engineering services.

## Are Indian efforts recognised?

- The Indian contingent in the Upper Nile region have all received UN Medals of Honour.
- India had the honour of providing two Military Advisers, one Female Police Adviser, and one Deputy Military Adviser to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

*India was the first country to contribute to the Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse, which was set up in 2016.*

## What is the way forward?

- It is critical that troop and police contributing countries should be fully involved at all stages and in all aspects of mission planning.

- There should be greater financial and human resources for peace-building in post-conflict societies, where UNPKOs have been mandated, according to officials.
- India is of the view that the international community must grasp the rapid changes that are underway in the nature and role of contemporary peacekeeping operations.
- The Security Council's mandates to UN Peacekeeping operations need to be rooted in ground realities, and co-related with the resources provided for the peacekeeping operation

## Quick Facts

### United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF)

- The first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was established to supervise the ceasefire between Egypt and Israel, which operated along the border for the next 10 years.

### United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC)

- Days after the Republic of the Congo, a former Belgium colony attained independence on 30 June 1960, disorder and chaos broke out.
- This prompted Belgium to send its troops to the Congo in the name of restoring law and order and protecting Belgian nationals, without the consent of the Congolese Government.
- The need for authorised military assistance led to the formation of the United Nations Operation in the Congo/ Opération des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC).

### United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM)

- Following President Siad Barre's downfall in 1991, Somalia plunged into a civil war between factions supporting Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Farah Aidid.
- The UN and other organizations intervened to resolve the conflict and provide humanitarian aid.
- This led to ceasefire and the establishment of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

## References

1. [The Indian Express | India's role in UN Peacekeeping Missions](#)
2. [The Hindu | 75 years of peacekeeping](#)