

# India's role in UN Peacekeeping Missions

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**In news**– Two BSF personnel who were part of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), were killed during a protest in an eastern town near the border with Uganda.

## **What is Peacekeeping by the United Nations?**

- **The U.N. Peacekeeping mission is a joint effort between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support, and aims to assist host countries to transition from situations of conflict to peace.**
- **It is distinguished from peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peace enforcement** although the United Nations does acknowledge that all activities are “mutually reinforcing” and that overlap between them is frequent in practice.
- **Peacekeepers monitor and observe peace processes in post-conflict areas** and assist ex-combatants in implementing the peace agreements they may have signed.
- Such assistance comes in many forms, including **confidence-building measures, power-sharing arrangements**, electoral support, strengthening the rule of law, and economic and social development.
- Accordingly, UN peacekeepers (often **referred to as Blue Berets or Blue Helmets because of their light blue berets or helmets**) can include soldiers, police officers, and civilian personnel.
- **The United Nations Charter gives the United Nations Security Council the power** and responsibility to take collective action to

maintain international peace and security.

- For this reason, the international community usually looks to the Security Council to authorize peacekeeping operations through Chapter VII authorizations.

- **The three basic principles that guide U.N.'s Peacekeeping missions are:**

1. Consent of the parties.
2. Impartiality.
3. Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

- Since 1948, UN Peacekeepers have undertaken 71 Field Missions.
- There are approximately 81,820 personnel serving on **13 peace operations led by UNDP0**, in four continents currently.
- **A total of 119 countries have contributed military and police personnel to UN peacekeeping.**

### India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping-

- **India has a long history of service in UN Peacekeeping, having contributed more personnel than any other country.**
- To date, more than 2,53,000 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN Peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948.
- **Currently, there are around 5,500 troops and police from India** who have been deployed to UN Peacekeeping missions, the fifth highest amongst troop-contributing countries.
- India has also provided, and continues to provide, eminent Force Commanders for UN Missions.
- **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's contribution to UN Peacekeeping began with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in the 1950s**, where 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 five-member Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, while the Indian Custodian Force supervised the process of interviews and repatriation that followed.
- The UN entrusted the Indian armed forces with **subsequent peace missions in the Middle East, Cyprus, and the Congo (since 1971, Zaire)**.
- **India also served as Chair of the three international commissions** for supervision and control for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos established by the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina.
- **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.

### **Role of women in Indian Peacekeeping-**

- **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.

### **Medical care as part of India's Missions-**

- In addition to their security role, the members of the Indian Formed Police Unit also **organised medical camps**

**for Liberians, many of whom have limited access to health care services.**

- Medical care is among the many services Indian Peacekeepers provide to the communities in which they **serve on behalf of the Organization.** They **also perform specialised tasks such as veterinary support and engineering services.**
- **Indian veterinarians serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS),** stepped up to help cattle herders who were losing much of their stock to malnutrition and disease in the war-torn nation.
- **The Indian contingent in South Sudan has provided vocational training and life-saving medical assistance,** as well as carrying out significant road repair work.
- In September 2020, based on an urgent request received from the UN Secretariat, **India deployed two medical teams of 15 medical personnel each at Goma (DRC) and Juba (South Sudan).** The main command-and-control hub of MONUSCO is located in Goma, DRC.
- The Hospital by India in Goma, operational since January 2005, has 90 Indian nationals including 18 specialists.

#### **Current Missions of India are:**

(a) Lebanon (UNIFIL) (Since Dec 1998), (b) Congo (MONUSCO) (Since January 2005), (c) Sudan and South Sudan (UNMIS/UNMISS) (Since April 2005), (d) Golan Heights (UNDOF) (Since February 2006), (e) Ivory Coast (UNOCI) (Since April 2004), (f) Haiti (MINUSTAH) (Since December 1997), (g) Liberia (UNMIL) (Since April 2007).

#### **Recognition of Indian efforts-**

- **The Indian contingent in the Upper Nile region** (includes the Indian Battalion, the Horizontal Mechanical Engineering Company, the Level II hospital, the Petroleum Platoon and the Force Signal Unit) **have all received UN Medals of Honour.**

- India has provided 17 Force Commanders to various Missions. Besides the Force Commanders, India also 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.