



India's Commitment to UN Peacekeeping

For Prelims: [UN peacekeeping mission](#), India-ASEAN Initiative for women in UNPK operations, [International Day of UN Peacekeepers](#)

For Mains: [Role of UN Peacekeeping in resolving conflicts and promoting peace](#), India's contributions, India-ASEAN Initiative for women in UNPK operations

Why in News?

Recently, the [Indian Army](#) commemorated the **75th International Day of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers on 29th May (which was designated by the UN General Assembly)** at the [National War Memorial](#) in New Delhi.

- **Theme 2023: 'Peace begins with me'.**
- This day holds significance as it marks the anniversary of the first [UN peacekeeping \(UNPK\) mission in 1948](#).
- Additionally, India unveiled plans to conduct two initiatives later in 2023, specifically designed to train **women personnel from South East Asia, as part of their collaboration with ASEAN in the defence sector.**

What is India-ASEAN Initiative for Women in UNPK operations?

- The 'India-ASEAN Initiative for women in UNPK operations' refers to a collaborative effort between **India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** to promote the **participation of women in UNPK operations.**
- This initiative focuses on **providing training and support to women personnel** from ASEAN member-states who are interested in serving as peacekeepers.
- Under this initiative, India has announced two specific initiatives:
 - **Specialized courses at the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK)** in New Delhi. These courses will offer targeted training in peacekeeping operations to women peacekeepers from ASEAN countries.
 - The aim is to **equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge** to effectively contribute to UNPK missions.
 - **Table Top Exercise for women officers from ASEAN.** This exercise will **simulate various scenarios and challenges faced by UN peacekeepers**, allowing participants to enhance their understanding and preparedness for UNPK operations.

What is UN Peacekeeping?

- **About:**
 - UN Peacekeeping is a vital tool employed by the [United Nations](#) to help **countries navigate the path from conflict to peace.**
 - It involves the **deployment of military, police, and civilian personnel** to regions affected by conflicts or political instability.

- The primary objective of UN Peacekeeping is to **facilitate peace and security, protect civilians**, and support the **restoration of stable governance structures**.
- It brings together **the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the Secretariat, troop and police contributors** and the host governments in a combined effort to maintain international peace and security.
- **First Mission:**
 - The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in May 1948, when the **UN Security Council** authorized the deployment of **UN military observers to the Middle East** to form the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to monitor the **Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours**.
- **Mandates:**
 - The mandates **vary from operation to operation**, but they generally include some or all of the following elements:
 - Monitoring ceasefires, peace agreements, and security arrangements.
 - Protecting civilians, especially those at risk of physical harm.
 - Facilitating political dialogue, reconciliation, and supporting elections.
 - Building rule of law, security institutions, and promoting human rights.
 - Delivering humanitarian aid, supporting refugee reintegration, and promoting environmental sustainability.
- **Principles:**
 - **Consent of the Parties:**
 - Peacekeeping operations require the **consent of the main parties involved in the conflict**.
 - Without consent, a peacekeeping operation risks becoming a **party to the conflict** and deviating from its peacekeeping role.
 - **Impartiality:**
 - Peacekeepers should maintain **impartiality in their dealings** with the parties to the conflict.
 - **Impartiality does not mean neutrality**; peacekeepers should **actively execute their mandate and uphold international norms**.
 - **Non-use of Force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate:**
 - Peacekeeping operations should refrain from using force, except when necessary for **self-defence** and **protection of their mandate**.
 - "Robust" peacekeeping allows the use of force with Security Council authorization and consent from the host nation and parties involved.
- **Achievements:**
 - Since its inception in 1948, UN Peacekeeping has played a crucial role in ending conflicts and promoting reconciliation in numerous countries.
 - Successful peacekeeping missions have been carried out in places like **Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, and Namibia**.
 - These operations have **made a positive impact on restoring stability**, enabling the **transition to democratic governance**, and fostering economic development.

What are India's Contributions in UN Peacekeeping?

- **Troop Contribution:**
 - India has a rich legacy of contributing to UN Peacekeeping operations. It is one of the **largest troop-contributing countries**, with a history of deploying soldiers, medical personnel, and engineers to various peacekeeping missions worldwide.
 - India has contributed approximately 2,75,000 troops to peacekeeping missions so far.
- **Casualties:**
 - Indian Army soldiers have made significant sacrifices while serving in UN Peacekeeping Missions, with 179 soldiers losing their lives in the line of duty.
- **Training and infrastructure:**
 - The Indian Army has established the **Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK)** in New Delhi.
 - This center provides specialized training for more than 12,000 troops every year in peacekeeping operations, hosting national and international courses for potential

peacekeepers and trainers.

- CUNPK plays a crucial role in sharing best practices and enhancing the capacity of peacekeepers.

▪ **Women in Peacekeeping:**

- India has taken proactive measures to promote gender equality in peacekeeping operations.
 - India has deployed **Female Engagement Teams** in **United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission** in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and **United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei**, which is the **second largest women contingent after Liberia**.
 - India has also deployed **Women Military Police in United Nations Disengagement Observer Force** and women staff officers and military observers in various missions.

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