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INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE: A STUDY

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Abstract

India's unique combination of being the largest democracy in the world with a strong tradition of respect for rule of law and the successful experience in nation building makes it particularly relevant in the context of twenty-first century peace building. India is a member of Organizational Committee of the Peace building Commission (PBC). India is strongly supportive of nationally-led plans for peace consolidation, while arguing for a constructive approach and a 'lighter touch' by the PBC in extending advice, support and in extending its involvement. India has also been contributing to the UN Peace building Fund. This paper looks at In particular, it seeks to explain the inescapable paradox of India's 'peace operations' since independence: while India has frequently used force in neighbouring states to achieve political objectives, at the global level it has stressed the importance of state sovereignty and has cautioned against military intervention in states' internal affairs. To put it another way, there is a tension between India's unilateral execution of 'peace operations' in and around the Indian subcontinent and its insistence on peace operations elsewhere being multilateral and authorized by the UN.

Keywords: Peacekeeping, leadership potential, third party intervention, troops contributing countries, military observers, disarmament.

Introduction

The foreign policy of India aims to maintain international peace and security, to oppose imperialism, to stand against the apartheid policy, to propagate the peaceful and political settlement of international disputes, to foster peaceful coexistence, to remain non-aligned and non-committed, and to maintain the unity and solidarity of the Third World. The important objectives of India's foreign policy include preservation of national interest, achievement of world peace, disarmament, independence for Afro-Asian nations. These objectives are sought to be achieved through some guiding principles such as Panchsheel, NAM, and others.

India's intensive participation in international peace operations, and that of other South Asian states, cannot be understood without a serious look at the military legacy of the British Raj. From the late 18th century to World War II, the armed forces of pre-partition India were at the very centre of the defence system of the British Empire, which stretched from the eastern Mediterranean to the South China Sea. From Egypt to China and from southern Africa to the Philippines, the Indian Army participated in British imperial 'stability operations' throughout the 19th century. In the 20th century the Indian Army played a critical part in the two world wars—with more than a million Indian soldiers participating. By 1945 the Indian Army was the largest volunteer army the world had ever seen, and India's material and human

During the cold war India contributed 38000 troops to UN operations on the Korean Peninsula, in Indochina, in the Middle East and in the Congo. The end of the cold war increased both push and pull factors for India's participation in multilateral peace operations. Since that time there has been a significant increase in both UN and other, regional, multilateral peace operations. The UN has frequently turned to India and South Asia to meet the new demands for military manpower. Meanwhile, the debate on the reform and expansion of the UN Security Council at the end of the cold war provided a political incentive for the Indian Government to intensify India's participation in international peace operations, based on the hope that this

The changing international context of peace operations provides a new basis for productive engagement in this area between India and the West. The high point of the post-cold war Western enthusiasm for the use of force to achieve political and humanitarian objectives, even without the consent of the host state, may have passed, given the recent experiences of interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Declining domestic public support for such operations and the difficulty of sustaining a high level of military expenditure in the prolonged financial crisis have inevitably eroded Western readiness to bear the burden of interventionist operations. US President Barack Obama, throughout his first term and in the election campaign of 2012, insisted on the importance of 'nation building at home'.¹⁶ At the inauguration of his second term in January 2013, Obama emphasized the needs to avoid 'perpetual war' and focus on domestic policy. Furthermore, there has been increasing resistance from China and Russia in the UN Security Council to Western-proposed peace-enforcement operations. The record of UN peace operations in achieving their proclaimed objectives has also

been mixed. The question, then, is not about the absoluteness of the principles of sovereignty and humanitarianism but about building a new understanding of when, where and how the international community can use force either collectively, at the international or regional level, or through coalitions. The focus must necessarily be on judicious and responsible use of force in situations where they do no harm and have a reasonable chance of success.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know the India's contribution in International peace and assesses the prospects for its future evolution.
2. To maintain just and honourable relations between nations.
3. To foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings of organised people with one another.
4. To ensure that the defence and security of India is not compromised.
5. To protect the unity and integrity of the country.
6. How To maintain international peace and security

Research Methodology

This paper is basically descriptive and Theoretical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been taken to analyse the contribution of in India in international peace. The data used in it is purely from secondary sources according to the need of this study.

India's Reputation in UN Peacekeeping

India has a relatively good peacekeeping reputation, which can be measured at different levels. The appointment of India to head UN peace missions is an indication of its growing reputation. Although such appointments may be rare, the opportunity to lead peace operations is closely linked to India's growing peacekeeping reputation. For instance, India sent its top-ranking officer, General Satish Nambiar, to head the mission as the force commander of UNPROFOR in former Yugoslavia (1992). In 2000, India's General Vijay Jetley was appointed to lead the peace operation in Sierra Leone. However, the appointment was marred by the bickering between General Jetley and his Nigerian deputy, General Mohammed Garba, which in turn caused a long-standing stalemate and personal International Studies, 47, 2-4 (2010): 225-246 A Case for India's 'Leadership' in United Nations Peacekeeping 237 rivalry. With much hesitation and coming under pressure from Nigeria, Kofi Annan had to intervene and replace General Jetley. Although the UN indicated that it still wanted the Indian contingent to serve as a part of UNAMSIL, India had announced its decision to withdraw from the

UN peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone. In July 2010, the UN appointed India's Lieutenant-General Chandra Prakash as the Force Commander for the UN peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). This appointment was made despite the high level resistance following allegations of misconduct by Indian troops and objections by Congolese officials to the presence of Indian peacekeepers in Congo. India's appointment to several high-level posts in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations within the UN Secretariat at New York is another measure of India's peacekeeping reputation. It is not naïve to assume that states making active and direct contribution in many UN peace missions at the field level would also desire some level of involvement in the UN's decision-making on peace and security matters (Krishnasamy 2001: 59). However, recognition of Indian peacekeepers at this level, though limited, has been gaining some momentum. The 1990s saw the appointment of India's Brigadier Mano Bhaghat to a high-level post within the UN for his exemplary performance and role in Somalia. The Indian Express (9 January 1995) reported that in a letter to the Indian government, the SSRG for Somalia (James Victor Gbeho) praised the Indian force commander for his 'mature guidance and exemplary leadership'. Subsequently, Brigadier Bhaghat was not only awarded the highest medal by his country but was also later selected to be the Deputy Military Advisor to the UN Secretary-General in New York (1996–2000). The twenty-first century has been witnessing the UN's growing recognition of India as having an important role to play at the higher levels of policy-making on peacekeeping matters. In 2008, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Jane Holl Lute, who was highly appreciative of the role played by Indian peacekeepers in various parts of the world, invited New Delhi to take part in the Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) Manual Review Exercise held in New York. The Indian Defence Secretary, Vijay Singh, responded by committing a high-level delegation to take part in the review, both at the technical and working levels. In 2010, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Atul Khare of India as Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.² Khare has served in high-level posts in different roles and capacities as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste from December 2006 to December 2009, and as Chief of Staff and later as the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General with the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (The Statesman, 4 May 2010). India's good peacekeeping reputation has been also on the high among other active peacekeeping nations. Troop-contributing nations such as Canada, Australia, Norway and Sweden have all established strong peacekeeping training International Studies, 47, 2–4 (2010): 225–246 238 Kabilan Krishnasamy linkages with India. The United Services Institution of India—Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (USI-CUNPK), which has been set up in New Delhi, draws on India's vast peacekeeping experiences and conducts international training capsules on a range of areas including handling conflicts situations without the use of arms for de-escalation, language skills and cross-cultural communication. The CUNPK has trained nearly 445 officers from more than seventy countries including participants from Canada, the US, Australia, Sweden and The Netherlands. Further, the CUNPK not only has ongoing instructor-exchange programmes with other peacekeeping training centres of the world such as the Australian Defence Force Peacekeeping Centre, Germany UN Training Centre and the Canadian Peace Support Training Centre, it is

also a partner in the UNITAR's (United Nations Institute for Training and Research) programme of Peace Operations Training Institute (POTI)

India's Contribution to Promoting international peace.

- India as a 'newly independent and developing country rightly realized that international peace and development are correlated.
- Her emphasis on disarmament and the policy of keeping away from military alliances is intended to promote global peace.
- . India has been the largest troop contributor to UN missions since inception. So far India has taken part in 49 Peacekeeping missions with a total contribution exceeding 1,95,000 troops and a significant number of police personnel having been deployed.
- India has so far provided 15 Force Commanders in various UN Missions. Presently Gen maj Jai Shanker Menon, VSM is serving as the Force Commander in UNDOF (Golan Heights). Besides the Force Commanders, India also had the honour of providing two Military Advisors and One Deputy Military Advisor to the Secretary General of the United Nations, two Divisional Commanders and seven Deputy Force Commanders. Indian Army has also contributed lady officers as Military Observers and Staff Officers apart from them forming part of Medical Units being deployed in UN Missions. The first all women contingent in peacekeeping mission, a Formed Police Unit from India, was deployed in 2007 to the UN Operation in Liberia(UNMIL).
- Many gallant Indian soldiers have laid their life to bring peace and harmony to the world. While serving under the blue flag, 168 Indian soldiers have, so far made the supreme sacrifice.
- 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.
- 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.
- The organisation commemorated its 75th anniversary of peacekeeping mission and paid tribute to the over 4,000 deceased peacekeepers, with Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, requesting officers and diplomats to observe a moment of silence in honour of the fallen heroes and later awarding medals to ambassadors from the 39 home countries of the 103 peacekeepers who lost their lives in 2022.

Indian Air Force Contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping

- In support of the United Nations call for peace, IAF had deployed various types of aircraft in different roles envisaging various utility and attack operations. Indian Aviation Contingents rose to the occasion and with sheer hard work, dedication to duty, and compatibility to work in international environment brought laurels and appreciation to the country while keeping the UN flag high.
- From a single contingent in 1961, the number of IAF missions with UN rose to four (three in DR Congo and one at Sudan) by Oct 2005. A total of 6,000 air warriors had been deployed along with enormous aviation and supporting assets. A total of 51,755 sorties (28,715 hrs) by Mi-17 in utility role and 10,137 sorties (10,890 hrs) by attack helicopters (Mi-25/35) had been flown in these missions. 10
- In addition to the aviation contingents, since 2005 the IAF has also been deploying Aviation Staff Officers in United Nations peacekeeping missions namely UNMISS in South Sudan and MONUSCO in DR Congo on an annual rotation basis. The professionalism depicted by these personnel has been lauded and commended by various UN dignitaries apart from various high ranking foreign Military Commanders and Civilian Officials

Conclusion

For more than five decades, Indian soldiers have donned the blue helmet in pursuit of global peace and security. India's representation in extra-regional peace operations under the aegis of the UN flag continues with a significant level of activism in the new millennium. As part of its evolving foreign policy, India's proactive commitment to UN peacekeeping has taken shape in pursuit of its political interests. Realization of its ambitions for 'great power' recognition in a globalizing world and a strong desire to be considered favourably as a candidate for a permanent seat on the Security Council have been primary motives driving India's proactivism in UN peacekeeping. This has meant a need for India to enhance its international identity and image by increasing its presence within the UN. It is in this context that India has been participating so actively in UN peacekeeping and demonstrating an unreserved willingness to respond to the growing demands and challenges of today's UN peace operations. India's willingness to undertake peacekeeping in a way that meets some of the unprecedented needs emerging in the field today, its capacity to make large and simultaneous troop commitments in more operations than in the past and its proven track record as a 'reliable' peacekeeper have significantly contributed towards its peacekeeping reputation. As one of the traditional peacekeepers with vast field experience, India should, therefore, take a 'lead' in strategically leveraging its experience to shape new thinking about peacekeeping, though complex political realities may, to some extent, pose significant challenges to India in this regard.

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