HISTORY OF THE ROLE OF INDIAN PEACEKEEPING FORCES UNDER THE AEGIS OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION SINCE 1947

SUMMARY

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BY

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The Indian citizens and soldiers take pride in stating that the Indian Army is the world’s most professional and second biggest Army with strength of over a million. The Indian Army today is on the threshold of transformation into advance weaponries force by undertaking modernization more rapidly and stepping up its pace to upgrade its weaponry. The Indian Officers and men are upholding their unparalleled professional standards of valour and unstinted loyalty of the Indian Army to their ‘Tricolor’ as well as ‘UN Flag’, whenever tasked for UN peacekeeping operations.

The Indian Army has doubtlessly acquired and assimilated latest fighting technology, which is indeed the need of the hour. It has also well acquainted itself with the futuristic weapon systems like new front line tanks, network-centric radars, sensors and unmanned aerial vehicles. India also possesses other force multipliers which include long-range nuclear capability i.e. surface-to-surface missiles, supersonic cruise missiles and long range multi barrel rocket systems. Thus, the fact is that war potential and the mighty strength of the Indian Armed Forces is well known to the world at large.

India has the world’s most battle hardened Armed Forces and rouses awe and admiration among the world’s best Armies. Indian Army stands with Absolute Dedication, Resilience, Unflinching and Selfless Devotion to safeguard its mighty Nation with the highest standards of Training and Operational preparedness. Having adapted new Doctrines, Indian Army stands ever ready to surmount the internal and external challenges of tomorrow. Thus the Indian Army has been in public glare in the world not only for the pantheon of heroes it has spawned but also for its tireless efforts in stiff torn areas of Jammu and Kashmir, North Eastern region of India and its continued efforts in contributing its Armed Forces for the cause of international peace.
It is highlighted that, **India has repeatedly risked the lives of its soldiers in peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations, not for any strategic gains, but merely in the service of an ideal i.e. strengthening the world body and contributing towards maintenance of international peace and security.** India has thus based itself on certain basic principles while approaching Indian Army’s participation in different peacekeeping operations. The main principles being, all means for the peaceful settlement of disputes should be exhausted before establishing a peacekeeping operation, peacekeeping operations should strictly adhere to principles of the UN charter, resources for peacekeeping activities should not be at the expanse of resources for development activities of the UN and there should be no hesitation in ending those operations, which have been overtaken by events or become inconsistent with their mandates.

It is heartening to state that **Indian troops have taken part in the UN peacekeeping operations in four continents which included some of the most difficult operations in the service of the UN. Its most significant contribution has been to peace and stability in Africa and Asia. It has demonstrated its unique capacity of sustaining large troop commitments over prolonged periods. Presently, India is ranked one of the largest and most reliable troop contributor Nations to the UN. India has also offered one brigade of troops to the UN stand by arrangements.**

With the above background, this vast and indeed interesting topic has been addressed by carrying out detailed analysis of the necessitated ingredients which needed to be included so as to make it a wholesome and justifiable work. Vastness of topic can well be gauged from the fact that a period of history of about six decades has been critically examined. This work commenced practically from the beginning of the concept of United Nations peacekeeping, its follow up actions during post cold war period and its continuity todate.

Further, **an endeavour has been made to address in totality the role of Indian Peacekeeping Forces in various peacekeeping operations undertaken by the Indian Armed Forces todate.**
War has been a phenomenon in existence ever since the beginning of mankind. However, keeping in mind the desirability of maintenance of peace and harmony, the need for understanding ‘War and Peace’ has been highlighted in ‘chapter one’. Having critically examined the dimensions of war as well as peace, the work progressed in ‘chapter two’ by addressing various Holocausts which the world has seen to date. It has special reference to the fact that a large amount of valuable human life has been lost just to satisfy the false ego’s of some of the world’s renowned stalwarts such as Alexander and Genghis khan in the ancient history and the doings of Napoleon, Mussolini and Hitler in the recent past.

The outcome of both the World Wars led to the necessity of ensuring international peace by way of creating world level Organisations such as the United Nations Organisation. Thus, in ‘chapter three’, the importance and functions of United Nations Organisation have been dealt highlighting UNO’s role in maintenance of international peace. Thereafter, the research work progressed in ‘chapter four’ with the detailed analysis pertaining infact to what peacekeeping operations are all about. The desirability of addressing certain important training issues which are needed as basics for the peacekeepers have been stressed and the mode of imparting such universal training to peacekeeping troops has also been highlighted. In the same chapter, peacekeeping operations conducted world over to-date have also been addressed.

The research work has there after dwelled in details in ‘chapter five’ with respect to the Indian contributions in the field of maintenance of international peace under the aegis of United Nations Organisation ever since India became independent in 1947. It is indeed a matter of pride for us as Indians to know that India has willingly and cheerfully stood for the cause of peace and made its most valuable contributions in the field of international peace. The Indian Army in particular has been assigned the responsibility of maintenance of international peace by sending its troops on behalf of the Indian government ever since 1950, when for the first time a medical unit were dispatched during the Korean War. Ever since then, the nation in general and the Indian Army in particular have never looked back and have continued to contribute troops in peacekeeping operations to-date. Needful to state that as on date India ranks third largest troops contributing country in the world.
This research work has been dwelled in detail and new ground has been broken by way of bringing various new facts to light. **This has been done by adopting the methodology of visiting various units which have undergone the UN missions and carrying out detailed interaction with participating troops, perusal of regimental histories, depth study of over 55 years of defence magazines, periodicals and military journals and conducting various interviews etc.** Further, relevant data’s/statistics have also been reconciled from **internet** and various **important archives** housing relevant material on the subject.

In addition to highlighting the actual ground realities, the difficulties faced and the overall achievements of the Indian peacekeepers, various photographs of Indian troops and equipments in action have also been displayed, which further corroborate the facts stated, therein. This is further supplemented in **‘chapter six’** by way of **documentary proof of accolades and appreciations earned by Indian Army** for the missions accomplished by them so far. A voluminous list of **appendices** has also been created and annexed to the thesis with a view to leave no ambiguity, what so ever. **Thus, the detailed facts, supporting documentary evidence, voluminous appendices and detailed bibliography are a testimony to successful completion of the work.**

It is a fact that peacekeeping cannot be equated with normal soldiering where the objectives are clear and straight forward and one is dealing with a known enemy with whom military engagements are implied. On the other hand, a peacekeeping soldiers mandate is much more complicated. Use of his weapons is only a last resort. Neutrality, fairness and respect for human rights have to be an essential component of his training and at all times he has also to provide an element of reassurance by his very presence. Further a peacekeeping soldier is also an important element in the re-establishing and development of trust in the region and society where he is deployed.

Pertinent to state that the Indian Army’s participation in the UN peacekeeping operations spans over a period of **55 years covering 43 UN Missions**, in which over **eighty five thousand** Indian soldiers have served in various parts of the world. In support of UN peacekeeping endeavors, the Indian Army has contributed outstanding **Force commanders, elite military contingents, impartial observers and dedicated staff officers**. Needful to state that professional excellence of the Indian troops, their devotion to duty and excellent performance has been widely acclaimed and won universal admiration for the Indians.
Indian Army has displayed exemplary professionalism and in the discharge of its duties, the Indian peacekeepers have also suffered significant casualties with an honour roll of 123 i.e. the highest figure to date. Needful to state that the Indian Army draws its inspiration from the high moral ethics of Indian long surviving civilization, wherein, it is considered a righteous duty to take up arms against the evils as also stated in ‘The Bhagavad Gita’, a holy religious script. Not surprisingly therefore through the ages, the profession of arms has always held a place of pride in Indian society. The officers and men of the Indian Army are proud of their heritage and culture and have an unmatched reputation to live upto. Their sense of commitment to duty inspires them to make sacrifices of the highest order so as to uphold the glorious traditions of the Indian Army. Thus, as has been in numerous and complex UN mission over the past about five and half decades, the Indian Army can be trusted, when called upon to participate in future UN peacekeeping endeavours with total professional attitude and optimum efficiency by its officers and men in uniform.

On the other hand, it is a fact that never before in peace time has the world witnessed such a free flow of weapons of war, as today. Yet, let us remember the fact that we have the capacity to build a world that is more peaceful, freer and more prosperous than anything man has ever known before. We may, thus, believe that there is every reason to hope that the world one day would enter the era free of nuclear terror through arms reduction and protected by a new strategic defence that can deter war without resorting to offensive weapons. So, the men and women all over the world must raise their voices for peace for an urgent attempt to combine the insides of different countries with advances in technological know-how. Thus, we can survive in peace and goodwill only by viewing the human rise and by looking at the global problems in their totality. This would be possible if and when the human beings across the world rise to higher level of evolution and show their love and respect for humanity.

The mission is still on since war remains the passion of Human race. Though it’s a daunting task to make this world free of war but our unfailing, unflinching and untiring efforts will bring the world without war in times to come…….. whether we remain to see that or not!
And the peace mission under the aegis of UNO goes on……and…..on.

PEACEKEEPERS BEING FLOWN IN UN HELICOPTERS: A MASSIVE EFFORT

INDIAN PEACEKEEPERS ON BOARD : ARRIVE FOR PEACE MISSION
THE ENTHUSIASTIC PEACEKEEPERS: READY TO BE LAUNCHED

MOVING A HEAD ON LEADING ROADS OF PEACE: A CHALLENGING TASK