

Book Reviews

India, and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time. Edited by Major General PK Goswami, (KW Publishers Pvt Ltd, 05 October 2022), Pages: 522, Price:1425/-, ISBN-10 : 9394915109.

Since its inception, the United Nations has undertaken a total of 71 Peacekeeping Operations. Besides participation by troops, more than dozens of Indians have held high positions including Head of the Mission, Force Commander, Deputy Head of the Mission, Deputy Force Commander, and other senior-level appointments in some of the most complex peace operations. When it comes to intellectual contributions to peace operations, one is generally compelled to fall back on western literature, which finds more credibility in the academic circle across the world. The western literature on UN peace operations by some of the acclaimed academicians and scholars whose domain expertise comes from their years of research in the academic field. In India, the USI of India is the lead agency for all kinds of UN peace operations-related activities and can be called the unofficial holder of a collection of written works and takeaways from various discussions and engagements in peace operations. Those who contribute to USI either by their participation in discussions or periodical writing for journals are the practitioners some of whom have years of field experience. Besides, a few practitioners have been able to blend their expertise with academic research resulting in the recognition of USI for its resources at the international level. This is what sets apart the USI of India publications from other journals on UN peacekeeping.

The archive of the USI includes personal perspectives of some renowned Indian practitioners from the time of the initial days when India first participated in Korea as part of the Custodian force and until the latest contribution as late as 2022. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time* is a collection of the selected works by UN policy makers, Indian practitioners and diplomats who would have held important assignments in the Government of India as well as a few acclaimed academicians from across the world. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through Prism of Time* is not just picking up contributions from the archive and then compiling them to produce a book. It is about putting together some of the important historical facts about Indian peacekeeping, and articulation on UN policy issues as well as making available the dynamics and challenges of contemporary UN peacekeeping

by statesmen, academicians, and practitioners. For that matter, even though India's earliest contribution to peacekeeping dates to 1960, learning in peacekeeping began from its participation in the custodian force during the Korean War even though it was not classical UN peacekeeping. But it laid out the road map for India's future participation in peacekeeping under the UN banner. To that end, the first two articles of the book – "*The Custodian Force in Korea*" and "*Peace-Making and War-Making in the Twentieth Century*" by Maj Gen Thorat the Head of the Indian Custodian Force in Korea and Mr KM Panikkar respectively, the Indian diplomat in 1956 assume importance. The first-hand account described in "*When Tshombe led the UN troops*", by Wing Commander Situ Mullick, the Press officer with the Indian Brigade of the Indian peacekeeping force that was part of the UN forces against the Katanga secessionist force in Congo brought out interesting information about the secessionist leader himself helping the UN force in its operations against the Katangese rebels. After neutralising the white mercenaries led by the Katanga force in January 1960, the Indian force was poised to take the battle right up to the Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe) border. What however came as a surprise is that Tshombe, the secessionist leader not only made a peace drive but also personally led the UN force through the rebel villages up to the border. His action made sure that the villagers did not fire at the UN troops and the UN troops did not have to retaliate. The history of this peacekeeping mission probably would have been slightly different if it was not for Tshombe. An account like this where the adversary leader or can also be called the enemy commander personally leads the UN force is not likely to be available in any UN chronicle. These three articles dig deep into the history of Indian participation and bring out facts that are generally not known to the public. Similarly, excerpts of talks delivered by senior officials of the UN like the Under Secretary General and author of the famous Brahimi Report (which is still referred to as the watershed study for the reform of UN peace operations) – "*The Role of United Nations in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security*" and "*Analysis of the Recommendations of the Brahimi Panel Report*," are only a few others that need mention.

From the time of its inception until now, the character of the UN peace operations has changed. What however has not changed

are the challenges and the basic idea of addressing these challenges to make peacekeeping more effective. In *“Global Flux and Dilemmas in UN Peacekeeping”*, Gen Sanderson the Force Commander of UNTAC highlighted the importance of the necessity to adhere to the UN Charter, the ambiguous definition of self-defence and the constraints of using force to implement the mandate. He reported that UNTACT had to defend an essential element of the mandate – the electoral process. In that context use of force against the rebels might compromise the strategic aim of the mission. He observed that the benefit of complying with an agreement must exceed the consequences of non-complying. Gen Sanderson raised a very relevant question about the use of force. He was of the opinion that when the mandate draws the authority from a charter to defend the sovereignty of states, and promote human rights, authorising the use of force against any party will be acting against the charter. Some of the shortcomings of peacekeeping which plagued even UNTACT like the complexity of command and control and lack of coordination between strategic and operational levels and within the mission continue to contribute towards the success or failure of peacekeeping. The need for politics to take the driver’s seat is one of the main or the first recommendations for peacekeeping reform.

In her address – *“The Challenges of Peacekeeping and Peace Support into the 21st Century 2015 – A Perspective”*, during the Challenges Forum meeting at USI of India, New Delhi in 2000, Annika Hilding-Norberg spelt out one of the key objectives of the projects that were undertaken with partners in the Challenges Forum as: “To encourage and facilitate increased co-operation and coordination between influential organisations and agencies from a wider variety of nations and cultures”. Even after two decades, this objective is the reality. For example, this was the idea of the annual event of Challenges Forum 2022 which was held in New Delhi in collaboration with USI of India.

One of the main challenges of some of the current peacekeeping missions in the African Region is the death of innocent civilians and the threat to the peacekeepers. The onus to protect its citizens and peacekeepers is that of the host state. This can happen only if there is a presence of democratic governance and a stable security sector. To this end, the General Assembly adopted the Global Framework for security sector reform

in the form of Agenda 2030 and 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. When peacekeeping missions operate in an intra-state conflict environment, Security Sector Reform (SSR) must be part of the broader agenda of the mission. SSR-related activities must be aimed at improving the governance and the security sector. Attempts to reform the security sector by focusing only on modernizing the government military and police force with expensive equipment and training unless it includes civil society will be only temporary. More importantly, when the host states are involved in crimes against their citizens and the peacekeepers and are not amicable to support UN peace operations as seen in Mali, DRC, and South Sudan. This aspect was brought out by Amb Mukerji and Gen Chander Prakash in *"India and UN Peace Operations: Security Sector Reforms"* and continues to resonate across all peace operations.

It was a challenging task for the editor to be able to go through dozens of such works and then carefully select and compile them to make the edited book worth its content. The compilation of the articles in the edited volume of the book is listed chronologically. It begins with India's first foray into peacekeeping as part of the Custodian Force and ends with some contemporary ideas and thoughts about the future challenges of UN peacekeeping in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Students of peacekeeping and those who are inclined to research UN peacekeeping will now find the important information in one single place i.e. *India and UN Peacekeeping: Through the Prism of Time* edited by Maj Gen PK Goswami. The edited volume on UN peacekeeping has been able to achieve the objectives that were intended.

Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai, (Retd)

Keeping the Peace - UN Peace Operations and their Effectiveness: An Assessment. Edited by Major General (Dr) AK Bardalai, Retd. (Pentagon Press LLP, 206, Peacock Lane, Shahpur Jat, New Delhi - 110049, Oct 2022); Pages 272; Price Rs 995/-; ISBN-978-93-90095-66-7

The book was released on 06 Oct 2022, at the USI of India by Per Olsson Fridh, Chair, Challenges Forum Partner Meeting, Director General of the Folke Bernadotte Academy and former Minister for International Development Cooperation in Sweden. The occasion was a seminar co-hosted by USI of India, New Delhi with

Challenges Forum, Sweden. The seminar theme 'Future of peacekeeping' was appropriate to the book. Authored by Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai, the book reflects the author's ability to painstakingly scan all the critical events, which he had experienced first hand, while on the post as a Deputy Head of Mission and Deputy Force Commander in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It also brings in a larger landscape of various UN Peace Operations (UNPOs), deliberating on these from the perspective of their success or failure.

This book looks at the elusive topic of establishing an assessment criterion for the UNPOs. After creating a design and scale the author applies it to assess the performance of UNIFIL. The book in a lucid and easy-to-understand language develops a conceptual framework for the evaluation of UNPOs, assesses an existing mission and provides a validated scale. The scale can be used by future researchers or the UN Headquarters to assess the performance of any other UNPO. The author juxtaposed various research outcomes with his interpretations before developing an assessment criterion. He has a wonderful ability to put together events from the UN Headquarters, Mission and Force Headquarters' operational and tactical perspectives, thereby devolving a unique clarity to the entire picture.

The author in his book uses a conceptual framework for the evaluation and thus anchors the entire study in a priori literature and existing theoretical models. The scholarly works of each chapter are based on other UNPOs, specifically in the areas of inter-state conflicts. The author builds up the conceptual framework for the identification of criteria for the evaluation. In the research process development of a new scale or instrument of enquiry needs strict validity through an identified conceptual or theoretical model. In this case, the author used a case method approach and applied the identified variables to the UNIFIL. Modern research has been supporting a mixed method approach; thus Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai has used the both quantitative and qualitative treatment on the scale, highlighting his research ability with data. The mixed approach provides empirical as well as perceptual study and offers a more robust treatment of the subject and wider acceptability of the results. The unique nature, location and complexities of UNIFIL make this mission a fit case on the criterion to assess a peace operation's outcomes.

The author has used UNIFIL as a case study because even though it is a traditional UNPO, the mission is unique in several ways. The mission is deployed in a geopolitically sensitive area and has witnessed the recurrence of violence and major conflicts between Israel and Lebanon. If a new inter-state conflict was to occur in this region again, the scope of the violence is likely to expand beyond the geographic region of the Middle East. UNIFIL is the only traditional peacekeeping mission where peacekeepers and formed units from a few European nations have participated. These peacekeepers are equipped with advanced weapons and equipment including main battle tanks and artillery guns, which are rare in a traditional peace operation mandated under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Despite the prevailing security situation of the region and the delicate bilateral relationship between Israel and Lebanon, there has not been any major conflict between Israel and Lebanon for close to three decades, after the deployment of the UNIFIL-II after the war in 2006. These complexities make UNIFIL an exclusive case to develop and test a reliable set of criteria to assess a peace operation's outcomes.

The book is deftly organised into six chapters, providing a gradual backdrop and build-up to the final assessment. Chapters 1 and 2 introduce a reader to the emerging concepts of UNPOs, the causes for failure and their relevance. Besides the concepts, the author takes a reader through a well-discussed question as to why the UN missions fail. Ambiguity in the principles of UNPOs, mandate, latest debates on the protection of civilians, peace agreement, local stakeholders, leadership and UN budgetary controls form other parts of initial discussions. All these issues have an extremely important place in any UNPO and thus the author sets the stage for a clear understanding of the functional levels at the UN HQ and Mission areas.

Chapter 3 of the book explores a conceptual framework for assessing traditional UNPO. It goes through the existing evaluation practices and development evaluation criteria. UN missions are highly complex with many international and local stakeholders. In some of the missions, as many as 120 countries may be participating, and a large number of civilian staff, UN volunteers, and non-government organisations will also have some stakes in a mission's success. The main stakeholders will always be the local population and the host country's governing structures. The

chapter, therefore, looks at the UN performance evaluation discussing the evaluation design in a mixed-method approach. Mission effectiveness has been studied by many researchers and the same is different from different stakeholders' perspectives. The Chapter provides a peep into the effectiveness areas, thus setting the framework for evaluation. Innumerable factors can influence the effectiveness of a UNPO. The chapter provides an appropriate scale and design for the evaluation process.

In Chapter 4, the author discusses the UNIFIL mission, its challenges and the complexity of the mission. The mission has a substantial number of Western peacekeepers on the ground, but it also hosts a large number of non-Western boots on the ground from the global South. For any UNPO, local legitimacy and credibility are defining parameters to enable peacekeepers to help the UN in keeping the peace. Chapter 5 of the book is devoted to an assessment of UNIFIL through primary and secondary data. The author collated the primary data through a painstaking perception survey across the globe which also included the UN, non-UN, Western and Indian respondents, who had worked or were still working on that mission. Secondary data was operational data and activities of the mission available from open sources, interviews, responses to open-ended questionnaires, the UN data and many local newspaper reports.

The criteria identified through various studies, inputs of experts and iterations have been applied to the UNIFIL. The author has assiduously applied each criterion to identify important organisational and conflict-specific variables, with a direct influence on peace operations. The author further traces the indicators to assess the success or failure and applies these to the outcome of any traditional UNPO, in this case, UNIFIL. The use of qualitative and quantitative data at the operational level has been successfully made to carry out an objective assessment of this mission, thereby validating the scale of assessment. The data and arguments presented in the book are convincing, well-cited, and accurate, and are mostly brought to the current levels. The book has appropriate readability for those who are generally aware of the UNPOs. This is a well-documented book for research scholars interested in global conflict resolution, the functioning of the UN HQ as related to the UNPO and the complexities of a mission due to the local actors.

The final Chapter of the book gives a reader an overall assessment and recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of UNPOs. The book is timely as with the Russia-Ukraine war and continuing dead-locks in the UN Security Council, many researchers and policymakers have again started questioning the utility of large-scale UNPOs. UNIFIL is a lighter mission with a combination of military observers and armed contingents, thus providing an alternative discussion point. Evaluating ongoing 12 UNPOs, especially those with multi-dimensional character, requires objective criteria and variables. The book provides a validated instrument and thus has implications for practitioners and academicians. The novelty of the book is that Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai has provided a validated criterion for evaluations of the success or failures of any UNPOs. Applicability in all scenarios with appropriate selection of the samples and stakeholders for wide-ranging responses. Use by researchers in future evaluations of UNPOs and reframing UN security council mandates to target vulnerable areas.

Maj Gen (Dr) AK Bardalai concludes that UNIFIL has been successful in preventing bloodshed since the 2006 war and has contributed effectively towards the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the geopolitically sensitive region of the Middle East. With his astute blending of personal experiences, he has applied his wide-ranging UN and UNPO knowledge to the research design and tested it on the UNIFIL mission to substantiate the assessment scale. The book has implications for both practitioners and academicians to apply the criterion and further develop it for multi-dimensional peace operations. This is a book that will be added to the larger UN-related literature, with a wide-ranging application on the ground.

Colonel (Dr) KK Sharma (Retd)

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USI

(Estd. 1870)

OUR ACTIVITIES

Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. Library was automated in 2002.

Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) wef 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peace-keepers, observers and staff officers – both

Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)

The USI-Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (USI-CMHCS) was established in December 2000 at the behest of the three Service Headquarters for encouraging an objective study of all facets of Indian military history with a special emphasis on the history of the Indian Armed Forces. It focuses on diverse aspects of the history of Indian military evolution, policies and practices-strategic, tactical, logistical, organisational, socio-economic, as well as the field of contemporary conflict studies in the broader sense.

Gold Medal Essay Competition

Every year the Institution organises a gold medal essay competition open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition

This essay competition was instituted in 2021 after signing of the MoU between USI and the War Wounded Foundation. The competition is open to all across the globe and must be on the subject of issues relating to the experiences and/or rehabilitation of war disabled personnel of the Armed Forces of India.

Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Class I Gazetted Officers of Group 'A' Central Services.
- Any category mentioned above will be eligible even though retired or released from the Service.
- Cadets from the NDA and Cadets from the Service Academies and Midshipmen.

For further particulars, please write to Director General, USI of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, (Opposite Signals Enclave) Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi – 110 057

Printed by Manish Comprint, New Delhi - 110 015 Phone : 011-41037172