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Working toward a meaningful 'victims' register' in Bastar

(Culture & Society: The Hindu, 23-10-24)

Context: Union Home Minister's meeting with Naxal violence victims and the potential of a victims' register in resolving left-wing extremism in Chhattisgarh, particularly in the Bastar region.

What is the current government approach to tackling Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)?

- Holistic approach covering
 - Security
 - Development & governance improvement
 - Local community rights
 - Public perception management
- Recent engagement with victims indicates shift beyond law-and-order approach, where by government wants to engage with victims for sustainable solution.

Who are the different categories of victims in the conflict zone?

- Victims of Maoist violence
- Those who suffered at hands of state security forces and criminal justice system
- Victims of Salwa Judum (vigilante army)
- Internally displaced people (about 55,000 tribals living in Andhra Pradesh after fleeing their homes in Chhattisgarh)
- Victims of long-term structural violence since colonial times

What is the significance of the victims' register initiative?

- Previously successful in resolving conflicts in countries like Colombia
- Potential to address tribal communities' grievances
- Can serve as a confidence-building measure
- Aims to document and address various forms of victimization

What are the key considerations for implementing the victims' register?

- Must be agnostic to nature of perpetrators
- Should follow spirit of truth and reconciliation
- Need to give benefit of doubt to victims' stories
- Implementation must be based on trust
- Should avoid creating new societal divides

Can you answer the following question?

The success of counter-insurgency operations must be complemented by addressing historical injustices and structural violence. Examine this statement in the context of Left-Wing Extremism in India's tribal regions.

The world needs blue helmets who act as blue helmets

(The Hindu - 23-10-24)

Context: Recent criticism on UN's current "bystander" role in major global conflicts despite having substantial peacekeeping capabilities

What is the background for UN peacekeeping forces (Blue Helmets)?

- Chapter VI commits to peaceful dispute settlement
- Chapter VII authorizes use of armed force with Security Council approval
- Chapter VIII allows for regional peacekeeping arrangements
- Maintains over 100,000 peacekeepers globally

Significance of UN Peacekeeping Mandate:

- Serves as primary global mechanism & international oversight for conflict resolution and peace maintenance
- Enables deployment of military and police forces for civilian protection
- Facilitates peaceful settlement of disputes through Chapter VI mechanisms
- Provides legitimacy for international intervention in conflict zones
- Establishes international standards for protecting vulnerable populations
- Allows for rapid response to emerging threats to global peace
- Promotes post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization

Successful peacekeeping missions

- Kosovo model (6,000 UN personnel)
- Timor Leste model (3,000 UN police + infantry brigade)

What are the Challenges of UN Peacekeeping Mandate?

- Veto power of P5 members often paralyzes decision-making
- Inadequate deployment despite having 100,000-strong peacekeeping force
- Limited effectiveness in contemporary conflicts (Ukraine, Gaza)
- Structural constraints in rapid force deployment
- Historical failures in preventing genocides (Rwanda, Bosnia)
- Lack of executive authority for ground commanders
- Resource constraints and funding issues
- Political interference in operational decisions
- Complex mandate interpretation and implementation
- Difficulty in maintaining neutrality while protecting civilians

What measures can be taken to strengthen the UN's peacekeeping mandate?

- Institutional Reforms:
 - Expansion of Security Council permanent membership to P7 (including India and South Africa)
 - Reform of veto power through voting system for contentious issues
 - Creation of permanent rapid reaction force
 - Standard operating procedures for civilian protection
 - Enhanced accountability mechanisms
- Operational Improvements:
 - Swift redeployment capabilities between missions
 - Enhanced civilian protection mechanisms
 - Stronger mandate for use of force when necessary
- Resource Management:

- Dedicated peacekeeping budget with stable funding
- Enhanced training facilities for peacekeepers
- Better equipment and technological support

Can you answer the following question?

"UN Peacekeeping operations represent both the greatest achievement and the greatest challenge of international cooperation. Examine this statement in light of recent global conflicts."