

ESSENTIAL TO INDUCT MORE WOMEN IN UN FORCES

Women better in promoting dialogue: President Murmu

NEW DELHI, Feb 24 (PTI)

IT IS essential to induct more women in UN peacekeeping missions as they are better equipped to address gender-based violence, build trust and promote dialogue, President Droupadi Murmu said on Monday.

Addressing a group of women peacekeepers who had called on the President at Rashtrapati Bhawan, she said the presence of women in a peacekeeping mission made it more diverse and inclusive.

"Women peacekeepers often have greater access to local communities and can serve as role models for women and children. They are better equipped to address gender-based violence, build trust and promote dialogue," Murmu said.

The President said peacekeeping missions with a higher percentage of women per-



President Droupadi Murmu poses for a group photo with participants of 'Conference for Women Peacekeepers', at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on Monday.

(PTI)

sonnel had been more effective in reducing violence and achieving long-lasting peace agreements. "It is, therefore, essential that we induct more women in UN peacekeeping missions," she said. The President recalled India's proud history of contribution to UN peacekeeping, with more than 2,90,000 (2.90 lakh) peacekeepers having served in more than 50 missions.

"Today, there are over 5,000 Indian peacekeepers in nine active missions, deployed in often-hostile conditions, for the cause of international peace and security," Murmu said.

"Today, there are over 154 Indian women peacekeepers deployed in six ongoing UN missions. Right from the 1960s in Congo, to policing in Liberia in 2007, our women peacekeepers have exhibited the highest traditions of professionalism and conduct," Murmu said.

Indian Army chief in France: Envoy greets Gen Dwivedi ahead of military talks

NEW DELHI, Feb 24 (IANS)

CHIEF of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi received a warm welcome from India's Ambassador Sanjeev Singla in Paris ahead of the former's interaction with his French counterpart over bilateral Defence cooperation and global security challenges, an official said here on Monday.

General Dwivedi's visit from February 24 to 27, aims to strengthen the military collaboration between India and France, an engagement that comes close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to France where he co-chaired the AI Action Summit in Paris.

Starting with a Guard of Honour, the Indian Army chief's busy schedule on Monday will include discussions with his French counterpart, CEMAT (Chef d'Etat-Major de l'Armee de Terre) General Pierre Schill, to foster stronger military ties between the two nations, said an official statement.

The Indian Army chief's itinerary also includes a visit to the



Ecole Militaire, the prestigious Military School and Institution Complex in Paris, where he will be briefed on Future Combat Command (CCF).

Additionally, General Dwivedi will be briefed at the Technical Section of the French Army (STAT) and visit the Battle Lab Terre at Versailles.

On Tuesday, he will travel to Marseille, where he will visit the third Division of the French Army and will be briefed on its mission and role, the bilateral exercise SHAKTI, the India-France training cooperation, and the French Army modernisation programme (Scorpion).

Israeli tanks enter West Bank for first time in decades as tensions escalate



An Israeli tank enters Jenin camp in West Bank Sunday. Palestinian Authority has said the deployment is a 'dangerous escalation'

Jerusalem: Israel announced Sunday it was expanding its weekslong military operation against armed Palestinian groups in occupied West Bank and had deployed tanks in the territory's north for the first time in two decades.

Adding to the escalating tensions, Israeli defence minister Israel Katz said tens of thousands of Palestinian residents who have left the centres of militancy targeted by the Israeli operation and are displaced within West Bank will not be allowed to return to their homes.

Israel's actions came after bombs exploded on three buses Thursday in different parking depots in the suburbs of Tel Aviv, Israel. At least one other explosive device was discovered and dismantled. Police are still investigating, but they said the devices resembled improvised bombs made in West Bank.

Katz said Sunday that 40,000 Palestinians had left two refugee camp areas in Tulkarem and one in Jenin, adding they were now "empty of residents." He ordered the military to prepare for a long stay over the coming year in the purged camps.

The Palestinian Authority said Sunday it considered Katz's statements, along with the deployment of tanks and what it described as the intimidation of unarmed civilians, to be "a dangerous escalation." NYT

DTC losses mounted by ₹35k cr in 6 years: CAG

Report, To Be Out Today, Flags Multiple Lapses

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has stated that Delhi Transport Corporation's cumulative losses soared from Rs 25,300 crore in 2015-16 to nearly 60,750 crore in 2021-22 as it was weighed down by dwindling fleet, with 45% of buses being overage and prone to high levels of breakdown, resulting in below-par fleet utilisation.

In the long overdue report, expected to be tabled in assembly by the new BJP govt on Tuesday, the auditor pointed to multiple lapses, including the transport utility's inability to augment its fleet, sources told TOI. This is the first of 14 re-

45% OF BUSES OVERAGE IN REDUCED FLEET

➤ DTC's cumulative losses rose from ₹25,300cr in 2015-16 to ₹60,750cr in 2021-22, according to CAG report

➤ As against sanction for 5,500 buses, DTC in March '22 had a fleet of 3,937, of which 1,770 (45%) were overage

➤ DTC was unable to recover operational cost on any of its routes, suffered total loss of ₹14,199 cr on operations during 2015-22, says CAG

➤ Auditor flags 'deficient route planning', says DTC operated only 468 routes (57%) out of a total of 814



ports that the AAP govt had refused to share in the assembly.

The primary reason for the losses was DTC fares remaining unchanged since 2009, sources said, with the Delhi govt refusing to pay heed to multiple requests. The burden further went up as women were given free bus rides. The auditor also pointed to the absence of any business plan and there was no roadmap to check the

bleeding and to ensure its financial viability, said sources who have seen the report.

The skeletal DTC fleet, with broken down buses part of commuters' daily experience, turned into a political issue, with BJP and Congress repeatedly talking up AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal's 2015 promise to boost the fleet by 10,000.

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US abstains from UN vote on own Ukraine resolution

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Amid high drama at the United Nations over two resolutions that were brought in UN General Assembly on the third anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine war — one by the US and other by Ukraine and Europe, **India abstained from voting on both.** Both resolutions were adopted with 93 votes in favour, as the EU seemed to prevail over the Americans in mustering support from the 193-member body for a just peace and for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The voting for American

Zelensky proposes 'all for all' POW swap

Ukrainian President Zelensky proposed a complete exchange of all prisoners of war with Russia as the "start" of a process on ending the conflict. "Russia must release Ukrainians. Ukraine is ready to exchange all for all." AFP

effort, which sought a swift end to the conflict, was more dramatic as the US itself abstained from voting on a resolution it had sponsored.

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