

UN funding crisis to send 1,400 Bangladeshi peacekeepers home by mid-2026

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A severe funding shortfall at the United Nations has prompted a major downsizing of peacekeeping missions worldwide, under which about 1,400 Bangladeshi peacekeepers are set to return home by mid-2026.

The UN Department of Peace Operations has recently informed Bangladesh and other troop-contributing countries of this decision.

According to sources at the Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN, around 25 percent of Bangladeshi peacekeepers will be affected by the cuts, while Nepal and Rwanda will face reductions of 27 percent and 31 percent, respectively. Currently, Bangladesh has about 6,000 peacekeepers deployed across 10 countries, making it one of the UN's largest troop contributors.

An official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Bangladesh has urged the UN to ensure fairness in troop reductions among all nations. "We also requested that Bangladeshi personnel be considered for reappointment if and when the peacekeeping budget increases," the official added.

Since 1988, Bangladesh has participated in 63 peacekeeping missions in 43 countries, involving nearly 200,000 members of its armed forces. Over the decades, 165 Bangladeshi peacekeepers have lost their lives, and 258 have been injured in the line of duty.

The reduction follows a directive from UN Secretary-General António Guterres during the September General Assembly, calling for a 15 percent cut in peacekeeping expenditures. In July, the UN General Assembly approved a \$5.38 billion budget for 2025–26, down from \$5.6 billion the previous year.

UN peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix recently warned that the funding crisis is "more daunting than ever," saying the cuts will significantly affect patrols, protection operations, logistics, air support, and civilian assistance.

Although UN peacekeeping accounts for less than half of one percent of global military spending—which totaled about \$2.7 trillion in 2024—it remains one of the UN's most visible and vital tools for maintaining international peace and security.