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India Launches SHANTI Campaign for a UN Security Council Seat

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WHY IN NEWS

Around , India formally launched at **UN Headquarters in New York** its campaign for a **non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC)** for the **2028-29 term**. The campaign is branded **SHANTI**, standing for “**Securing Holistic** (<https://ujjari.com/vocab/holistic/>) **Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity.**” External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** foregrounded India’s long peacekeeping record. India is contesting the sole **Asia-Pacific Group** seat, reportedly against **Tajikistan**, with the election due in **June 2027**.

A CAMPAIGN BUILT ON A TRACK RECORD

India’s pitch for the 2028-29 term rests less on **rhetoric** (<https://ujjari.com/vocab/rhetoric/>) and more on a documented contribution to the UN system. The **SHANTI** branding, which also means “peace” in several Indian languages, is a **deliberate** (<https://ujjari.com/vocab/deliberate/>) signal: India frames its candidacy around norms, trust and integrity rather than power projection. The launch event at UN Headquarters allowed New Delhi to consolidate support well ahead of the vote, since campaigns for non-permanent seats are typically won or lost in the years of quiet diplomacy that precede the ballot.

If elected, this would be **India’s ninth term** on the Council. India has previously served as a non-permanent member **eight times**, spanning **1950-51 to 2021-22**. That recurring presence underlines a claim India makes repeatedly: that it is already a stakeholder in global peace and security whose formal weight in the Council does not match its contribution.

PEACEKEEPING AS DIPLOMATIC CAPITAL

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The centrepiece of the SHANTI pitch is India's peacekeeping legacy. India has contributed around **2.9 lakh personnel** across about **50 UN peacekeeping missions**, making it one of the largest troop-contributing countries in the history of the organisation. This record functions as soft-power capital: it lets India argue that it has borne the human cost of collective security for decades, including the loss of personnel in the line of UN duty, without a permanent voice in the body that authorises those missions.

HOW THE UNSC IS COMPOSED

The contest is for a two-year seat governed by a fixed regional-group system. The table below sets out the Council's structure.

FEATURE	DETAIL
Total members	15
Permanent members (P5)	5 , with veto power
Non-permanent members	10 , elected for two-year terms
Elected by	UN General Assembly , two-thirds majority
Allocation	By regional groups
Re-election	Non-permanent members cannot be immediately re-elected

India contests the **single Asia-Pacific Group** seat that falls vacant for the 2028-29 term. The reported rival is **Tajikistan**, and because the winner needs a two-thirds majority in the 193-member General Assembly, the intervening years to **June 2027** are a period of active canvassing for votes.

The Election Calendar

Non-permanent members are chosen roughly a year before they take their seats. A vote in **June 2027** would decide the members who serve in **2028-29**. This lead time is why India moved to launch a formal, branded campaign in 2026 rather than closer to the ballot.

THE LARGER PRIZE: PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP

The 2028-29 bid runs parallel to India's long-standing demand for **permanent membership** and structural reform of the Council. India is a member of the **G4**, alongside **Germany, Japan and Brazil**, a bloc that seeks permanent seats and argues that the Council's 1945 architecture no longer reflects contemporary geopolitical realities.

This push is resisted by the **Uniting for Consensus** group, informally called the **Coffee Club**, which includes states such as **Italy, Pakistan, Argentina and others**. This group opposes new permanent members with veto power and instead favours expanding only the non-permanent category. The deadlock between the G4 and Uniting for Consensus is a central reason UNSC reform has stalled for decades despite broad agreement that the Council is unrepresentative.

A successful 2028-29 term would not by itself deliver a permanent seat, but it keeps India visible and active inside the Council while the reform debate continues, and it reinforces India's claim to be a responsible and consistent contributor to the **multilateral** (<https://ujiyari.com/vocab/multilateral/>) order.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2: India and its neighbourhood and global groupings; important international institutions, their structure and **mandate** (<https://ujiyari.com/vocab/mandate/>); and bilateral, regional and global groupings involving India. The topic maps directly onto UNSC reform, multilateralism in a fragmented order, and peacekeeping as an instrument of India's foreign policy.

Prelims pointers:

- **SHANTI** stands for **Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity**; it is India's campaign for a non-permanent UNSC seat for the **2028-29 term**.
- The election is due in **June 2027**; India contests the sole **Asia-Pacific Group** seat, reportedly against **Tajikistan**.
- India has served as a non-permanent UNSC member **eight times** (1950-51 to 2021-22).
- India has contributed around **2.9 lakh personnel** across about **50 UN peacekeeping missions**.
- The UNSC has **15 members: 10 non-permanent** (elected by the **UNGA** for two-year terms by a **two-thirds majority** under a regional-group system) and **5 permanent** (the **P5**, with veto).
- Non-permanent members **cannot be immediately re-elected**.
- India is part of the **G4** (with **Germany, Japan, Brazil**), opposed by the **Uniting for Consensus / Coffee Club** group.

Mains question: "India's campaign for a non-permanent UN Security Council seat and its parallel demand for permanent membership reflect the tension between working within existing multilateral structures and seeking to reform them. Critically examine India's UNSC strategy and the role of its peacekeeping record as diplomatic capital." (15 marks, 250 words)

FACTS CORNER

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Event (13-14 July 2026): India launched the SHANTI campaign at UN Headquarters for a non-permanent UNSC seat for the 2028-29 term.

SHANTI: Securing Holistic Advancement through Norms, Trust and Integrity.

Election: Due June 2027; sole Asia-Pacific Group seat, reportedly vs Tajikistan.

Past terms: India non-permanent member eight times (1950-51 to 2021-22).

Peacekeeping: ~2.9 lakh personnel across about 50 UN missions.

UNSC: 15 members, 10 non-permanent (UNGA, two-thirds majority, two-year terms, no immediate re-election) and 5 permanent (P5) with veto.

G4: India, Germany, Japan, Brazil, seek permanent seats.

Opposed by: Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club).

Sources: Ministry of External Affairs (<https://www.mea.gov.in/>), Permanent Mission of India to the UN (<https://www.pminewyork.gov.in/>), The Statesman (<https://www.thestatesman.com/>)

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