



International Day of Peace

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Why in News

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on **21st September**.

Theme for 2020 : Shaping Peace Together.

Key Points

- The **United Nations (UN) General Assembly** has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing **24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire**.
- **Background:** The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly.
In 2001, the General Assembly unanimously voted to designate the Day as a **period of non-violence and cease-fire**.
- **Other:** The United Nations (UN) will celebrate its **75th anniversary on 24th October 2020**.

- **Challenges to Global Peace:**

- **Global Unrests:** Over 25 countries are facing deadly wars today. According to the **World Population Review**, 8 countries including Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Turkey, Somalia, Iraq, Mexico and Libya suffered at least 1,000 deaths each (mainly civilians) through militarised attacks and battles in 2019.
- **Refugee Crisis:** According to the **UN Refugee Agency**, 79.5 million were displaced at the end of 2019, due to armed conflicts, persecution and other reasons.
- **Role of Global Powers:** The USA, Russia and China are required to uphold peace and international harmony being the permanent members of the UN Security Council. However, on the contrary, they have been found to fuel instability in order to achieve geopolitical hegemony. **Examples:**
 - The **tragedy in Yemen**, which the UN has declared as the world's worst humanitarian disaster, is the outcome of indiscriminate attacks by the U.S.-backed coalition of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, whose geopolitical goal is to counterbalance Iran.
 - **Libya's descent into chaos** is the product of the active involvement of mercenaries and weapons pumped in by Russia and the USA-allied Gulf Arab monarchies to push back Turkey's influence.
 - **China's hegemonic expansionism** against its neighbours and its 'new Cold War' with the U.S. have significantly raised risks of military clashes in Asia.
- **Domestic Suppressions:** Domestic surveillance and repression with the use of technology is being used by countries to suppress dissenting voices.
- **New Power Tussle:** The conflict and competition between the powerful countries, like the **USA-China New Cold War** is also going on, risking global peace.
- **Pandemic Challenge: Covid-19** has posed a new concern that may directly and indirectly affect the global peace through lack of access to resources, health and education, displacement etc.

International Day of Non-Violence

- The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2nd October, the birthday of **Mahatma Gandhi**.
- It was established by the UNGA in 2007 to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness".

Way Forward

On the International Day of Peace, the unjust structure which privileges great powers and permits their ghastly machinations should be diagnosed and challenged. Intellectuals, social movements and responsible states should prioritise struggling for an equitable world order.

Source: TH