

Cabinet clears 'AGNIPATH' scheme for recruitment of youth in the Armed Forces

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Recently, Union Cabinet approved 'AGNIPATH' recruitment scheme for Indian youth to serve in the Armed Forces.



Image posted on Facebook by ADGPI - Indian Army

[Ref: NDTV]

About the Scheme:

- Under Agnipath scheme, Indian youngsters will be provided an opportunity to serve in armed forces as **Agniveer**.
- Around 45,000 to 50,000 **soldiers will be recruited annually**. Of the total annual recruits, only 25% will be allowed to continue for another 15 years under **permanent commission**.

What is the Agnipath scheme?

- The scheme is the armed forces' new short-term recruitment programme for personnel below officer rank (PBOR), a classification that includes sepoy, sailors etc.
- Those hired under this will be called 'Agniveers' and will be recruited for four years, but the new system will have a provision to retain around 25% of them for 15 more years after another round of screening.

[Ref: Hindustan Times]

Eligibility Criteria:

- It is only for **personnel below officer ranks** (those who do not join the forces as commissioned officers).
- **Aspirants between the ages of 17.5 years and 21 years** will be eligible to apply.
- **Recruitment standards will remain the same**, and will be done twice a year through rallies.

What Happens after Selection?

PAY & BENEFITS: WHAT THE AGNIVEERS GET

- In Hand (70%)
- Contribution to Seva Nidhi (30%)*

Similar contribution to corpus fund by Government of India**



All figures in ₹ (Monthly Contribution)

Total contribution to Seva Nidhi after 4 yrs
10.04 Lakh
(₹ 5.02 Lakh* + ₹ 5.02 Lakh**)

Exit After 4 Years } ₹11.71 Lakh as SevaNidhi Package
(Including interest accumulated on the above amount as per the applicable rates)

Graphics: Ritesh Kumar

[Ref: Indian Express]

- The aspirants will go through **training for six months** and will be deployed for three and a half years.
- They will get a starting salary of Rs 30,000, along with **additional benefits** which will go up to Rs 40,000 by the end of the four-year service.
 - 30% of their salary will be set aside under a **Seva Nidhi programme**.
- Government will contribute an equal amount every month, and it will also **accrue interest**.
- They will also get a **life insurance cover** for the four years. In case of death, the pay-out will be over Rs 1 crore, **including pay for the unserved tenure**.
- However, after four years, only 25% of the batch will be recruited back into their respective services, for a period of 15 years.

- For those who are re-selected, the initial four-year period will not be considered for retirement benefits.

Benefits for Armed Forces and Recruits:**Why has the scheme been rolled out?**

- The government said the move will help include more youngsters in the military so that the armed forces are at their fighting best at all times.
- It will, the government added, also help attract young talent from the society to effectively adopt and use emerging technologies.
- The scheme will also help youngsters build a better resume, the government said.

[Ref: Hindustan Times]

- The **average age in the forces is 32 years today**, which will go down to 26 in six to seven years.
- It will increase **employment opportunities** and such soldiers will get employment in various fields.
- This will also lead to availability of a **higher-skilled workforce to the economy** which will be helpful in **overall GDP growth**.
- Government will help rehabilitate soldiers who leave the services after four years.
 - They will be provided with **skill certificates and bridge courses**.
 - The impetus will be to create entrepreneurs.
- It will make permanent force levels leaner for the over 13-lakh strong armed forces in the country. This will, in turn, **reduce the defence pension bill**, which has been a major concern for governments for many years.

Advantages:

- A **transformative reform of recruitment policy of the Armed Forces**.
- A **unique opportunity to the youth to serve the country** and contribute to Nation Building.
- Armed Forces profile to be youthful and dynamic.
- Opportunity for Agniveers to train in the best institutions and enhance their skills & qualifications.
- **Availability of well-disciplined and skilled youth with military ethos** in civil society.