

AGNEEPATH RECRUITMENT SCHEME: BENEFICIAL OR DETRIMENTAL FOR INDIA'S FUTURE?

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WHAT IS AGNEEPATH RECRUITMENT SCHEME?¹

Agneepath scheme was approved by the government on 14 June 2022, for recruitment of soldiers below the rank of commissioned officers into the three services of the armed forces is the brainchild of Late General Bipin Rawat. According to the new plan, between 45,000 and 50,000 troops (who will be known as "Agniveers") will be hired each year for four years. Only 25% of the total annual recruits will be permitted to continue under permanent status for an additional 15 years. Candidates must be between the ages of 17.5 and 21 to be eligible to apply. Recruitment: All Indians, regardless of caste, region, class, or religious background, will be recruited for the services under the principle of "all India, all class" recruiting. Training lasts for six months plus three and a half years of deployment. Salary and Perks: New hires will begin with a beginning salary of Rs 30,000 and receive extra benefits worth a total of Rs 40,000 after their four-year employment. During this time, 30% of their pay will be set aside as part of a Seva Nidhi scheme, to which the government would make equal monthly contributions and add interest. Each soldier will receive a lump sum payment of Rs. 11.71 lakh, which is tax-free, after the four-year tenure. For the 25% of troops who are re-selected, the first four years will not be taken into account for retirement benefits.

OBJECTIVE

The government claims that the AGNEEPATH program has been created to enable a youthful profile for the armed forces. By luring in new talent from the society who are more in tune with current technology trends and reinvesting trained, disciplined, and motivated manpower into the society. Will boost its youthful image and give it a new lease on "[Josh and Jazba](#),"² while also bringing about a revolutionary move towards a more tech-savvy military, which is urgently required

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¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1833747>

² <https://www.mygov.in/campaigns/agniveer/>

A SIMILAR APPROACH IN OTHER NATIONS

Military service has been made mandatory in many countries like Israel, Brazil, Iran, Russia, and the USA. Depending on the needs of the military and the field of service, voluntary tours of duty in the USA might last anywhere from 6 to 12 months.

ADVANTAGES OF THE SCHEME

The Agniveers who are not retained will gain practical military experience. Additionally, these people would have a cash cushion of Rs 12 lakhs. If this plan is implemented successfully, the cost of ex-pensions servicemen could decrease by up to 75% after at least two decades. Another enormous perk for "Agniveers" will be a priority in hiring at the security forces of the state governments. A certificate known as the "Agniveer Kaushal" certificate will be given to the Agniveers. The average age of the armed services will drop from 32 to 26 thanks to the addition of recruits every four years.

ISSUES REGARDING THE SCHEME

The "Agnipath" system allows for the recruitment of around 45,000 soldiers into the Armed forces in the first year, but only on a four-year short-term contract. Only 25% of them will remain in the forces after the contract is finished, while the other 75% will be released. After four years of service, alternative occupations won't be within the range and will fall behind their contemporaries. Employees engaged through the "Agnipath" scheme will receive a one-time lump sum payment of slightly more than Rs 11 lakh after their four-year employment. They do not, therefore, receive any pension payments. Most people find that getting a second job is essential to sustain their families and themselves. The forces will lose veterans, individuals will depart after four years, which can leave a gap.

PROTESTS OPPOSING THE SCHEME

In states where the majority of army recruitment occurs, like as Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, and Rajasthan, youth demonstrated against the program. Youth groups protested in Delhi as well, showing support for their colleagues in other states. Students in Rajasthan and Bihar claim that the recruitment process creates job instability. The program will enroll 46,000 young people between the ages of 17 and 21 in three services for four years. The center increased the

cutoff age for the new Agneepath military program on Thursday from 21 to 23 years old. The system will be further strengthened, and it claims that the number of firefighters in the armed forces will increase in the upcoming years. Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the Congress, claimed in a tweet that there was no respect for the government, no rank, no pension, no direct recruitment for 2 years, and no stable future after that.

GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE SCHEME

Increment in job opportunities and work options will expand in a variety of disciplines as a result of the experiences, abilities, and disciplines that will develop during the next four years. The government also intends to cut back on its military spending in conjunction with this approach. Specifically, to lower pension costs, which account for a sizable portion of the military budget. Savings will be used for armed forces, will be given preference in bank loan schemes, and 19% reservation in Assam rifles and CAPF.

ANALYSIS

There are advantages as well as some shortcomings in the Act. On an individual basis, the period between the ages of 17 and 21 is crucial for young people to develop their skill sets for the future, and this 4-year initiative will make them unemployed in the long run because there are no pension benefits provided; the government also needs to increase the 25 percent recruitment rate because the majority are not hired even though they are qualified. Are we capable of reducing military spending on a national level? As a rough estimate of how much money might be saved by lowering the number of personnel, the Army has suggested (2020). Each Sepoy may save Rs 11.5 during their lifetime, per the suggestion (crore). To modernize the Indian Armed Forces, the savings from merely 1000 jawans might total Rs 11,000 crore.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there are various issues with this act that the government needs to factor in the fact, including pension benefits, the age of the soldiers, and the loss of skill sets. Additionally, This scheme is helping soldiers who are "future-ready." Due to the increased career options and the knowledge and expertise, these soldiers have gained over their four-year service, they will be able to find work in a variety of industries. This will also result in the

economy having access to a higher-skilled workforce, which will boost productivity and overall GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth.

