



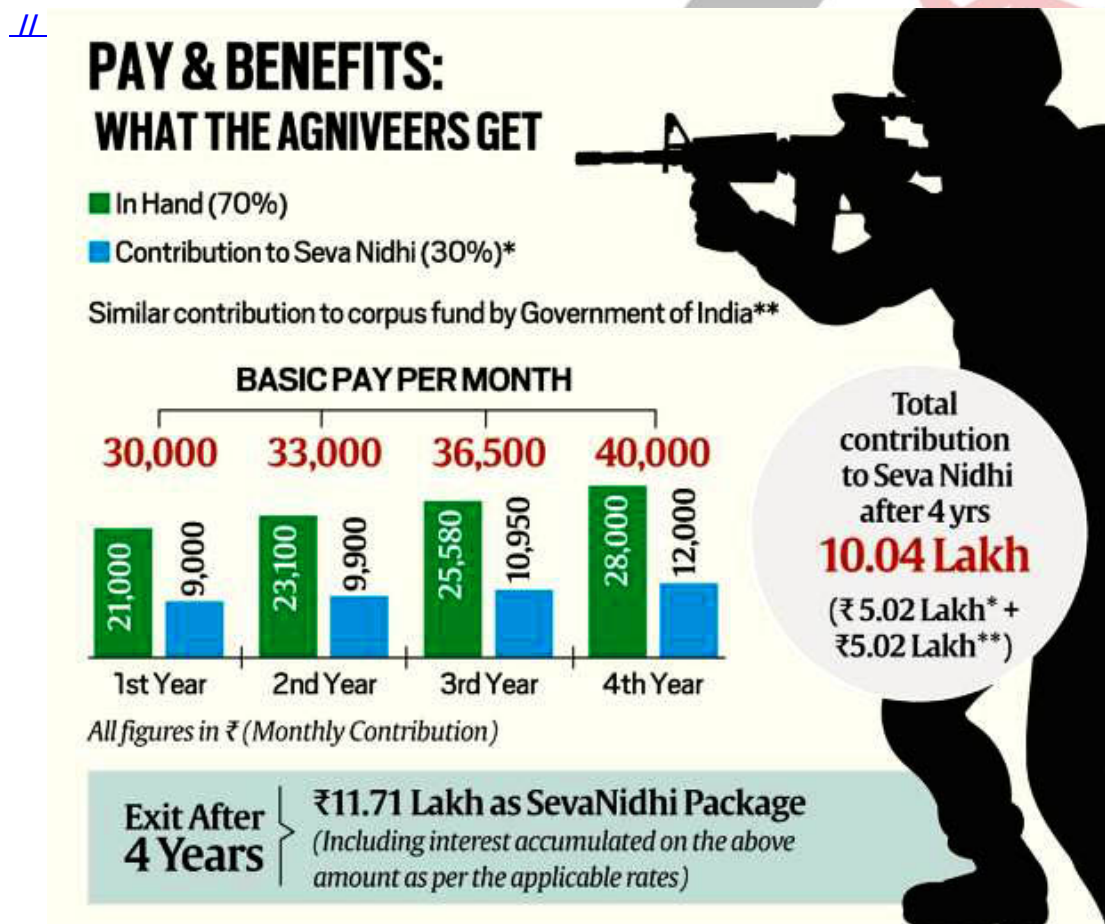
Agnipath Scheme

For Prelims: Agnipath Scheme and Benefits to Soldiers, Agniveer Army, Navy and Airforce

For Mains: Significance of Agnipath Scheme, Government Policies & Interventions

Why in News?

Recently, the government has unveiled **Agnipath scheme for recruiting soldiers** across the **Three services (Army, Navy and Airforce)**.



What is the Agnipath Scheme?

- **About:**
 - It allows **patriotic and motivated youth to serve in the Armed Forces for a period**

of four years.

- Under this scheme, the **youth joining the army will be called Agniveer**. Youth will be able to be recruited into the army for a short duration.
- Under the new scheme, around 45,000 to 50,000 soldiers will be recruited annually, and most will leave the service in just four years.
- However, after **four years, only 25% of the batch will be recruited back** into their respective services, for a period of 15 years.

▪ **Eligibility Criteria:**

- It is **only for personnel below officer ranks** (those who do not join the forces as commissioned officers).
 - Commissioned officers **are the army's highest ranked officers**.
 - Commissioned officers **hold an exclusive rank** in the Indian armed forces. They often hold a **commission under the president's sovereign power** and are officially instructed to protect the country.
- Aspirants between the ages of 17.5 years and 23 years will be eligible to apply.

▪ **Objectives:**

- It aims at **providing an opportunity to the patriotic and motivated youth** with the 'Josh' and 'Jazba' to join the Armed Forces.
- It is expected to bring down the average age profile of the Indian Armed Forces **by about 4 to 5 years**.
- The scheme envisions that, the average age in the forces is 32 years today, which will go down to 26 in six to seven years.

▪ **Benefits for Agniveers:**

- Upon the completion of the 4-years of service, a one-time 'Seva Nidhi' package of Rs 11.71 lakhs will be paid to the Agniveers that will include their accrued interest thereon.
- They will also get a Rs 48 lakh life insurance cover for the four years.
- In case of **death, the payout will be over Rs 1 crore**, including pay for the unserved tenure.
- The government will **help rehabilitate soldiers who leave the services after four years**. They will be provided with skill certificates and bridge courses.

What are the Related Concerns?

▪ **Difficult to Find Another Job:**

- The 'Agnipath' scheme opens the way for recruitment of about 45,000 soldiers into Army, Navy and Air Force in the first year but on a short-term contract of four years. After the completion of the contract, 25% of them will be retained and the rest will leave the forces.
- **Our four years of service will mean other jobs will be out of reach after that**, and we will be left behind our peers.

▪ **No Pension Benefit:**

- Those hired under the 'Agnipath' scheme will be **given a one-time lumpsum** of a little more than Rs 11 lakh **when they end their four-year tenure**.
- However, they **do not receive any pension benefits**. For most, **seeking a second job is essential to support themselves and their families**.

▪ **Training May Remain Unutilized:**

- Forces will **lose experienced soldiers**.
- The jawans joining the Army, Navy and Air Force will be given technical training so that they are able to support the ongoing operations. But these men and women will leave after four years, **which could create a void**.

What is the Significance of Such Step for the Country?

▪ **Future Ready Soldiers:**

- It will create **"future-ready" soldiers**.

▪ **More Employment Opportunities:**

- It will **increase employment opportunities** and because of the skills and experience acquired during the four-year service such soldiers will get employment in various fields.

▪ **Higher Skilled Workforce:**

- This will also lead to **availability of a higher-skilled workforce to the economy** which

will be helpful in productivity gain and overall **GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth.**

Source: IE

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/agnipath-scheme>

