



# Horizontal Reservation for Agniveers in UP

## Why in News?

The **Uttar Pradesh government** has announced a **20% horizontal reservation** to former **Agniveers** in various positions within the state police force.

- In addition to reservation, the government has also provided a **3-year age relaxation** to facilitate their recruitment.

## Key Points

- **The Agnipath Scheme:**

- **About:**

- The term "**Agniveer**" translates to "Fire-Warriors" and is a **new military rank**.
- It is a scheme of **recruiting army personnel below officer ranks** such as **soldiers, airmen, and sailors** who are not commissioned officers to the **Indian Armed Forces**.
- They are recruited for a **period of 4 years**, after which, **up to 25%** of these recruits (called Agniveers), can join the services on a **permanent commission** (another 15 years), subject to merit and organisational requirements.
- At present, **all sailors, airmen, and soldiers**, except the technical cadre of the medical branch, are recruited to the services under this scheme.

- **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Candidates between the age of **17.5 years to 23 years** are eligible to apply (the upper age limit was increased from 21).
- **Girls under the given age limit are open for agnipath entry**, while there is no such reservation for women under this scheme.

- **Pay & Benefits:**

- **Death on Duty:** The family gets a combined sum of **Rs 1 crore**, which includes both the **Seva Nidhi package** and the soldier's unserved salary.
- **Disability:** An Agniveer can receive compensation up to **Rs 44 lakh** depending on the severity of the disability. This amount is provided **only if the disability is caused** by or worsened due to military service.
- **Pensions:** Agniveers won't receive a regular pension after their 4-year service, unlike soldiers in the traditional system.
  - **Only the 25%** who get selected for permanent commission will be eligible for a pension.

- **Goal of Agnipath:**

- This scheme aims to **maintain a youthful profile in the armed forces** while **optimising the force structure**, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and ensuring **long-term fiscal sustainability in defence spending**.

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## Reservation

- Reservation is a form of **affirmative action, created to promote equality among marginalized sections**, so as to protect them from social and historical injustice.
- Generally, it means giving **preferential treatment to marginalised sections** of society in **employment** and access to education.
- It was also originally initiate **to correct historical injustice of discrimination and to give a boost to disadvantaged groups**.
- In India, people have been historically discriminated against on the basis of caste.
- **Vertical Reservation:**
  - Reservation for **Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes** is referred to as vertical reservation.
  - It **applies separately for each of the groups** specified under the law.
  - **Example: Article 16(4)** of the Constitution contemplates vertical reservation.
- **Horizontal Reservation:**
  - It refers to the **equal opportunity provided to other categories of beneficiaries** such as women, veterans, the transgender community, and individuals **with disabilities**, cutting through the vertical categories.
    - The horizontal quota is **applied separately to each vertical category, and not across the board**.
  - **Example: Article 15 (3)** of the Constitution contemplates horizontal reservation.

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