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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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S.NO. TOPIC

1. AGONY STILL IN MANIPUR, A YEAR LATER
2. AGNIPATH SCHEME-WILL IT BE REVAMPED?

POOJA PRADEEP

Please do not write anything except the question number in the space provided for this purpose only.

UPSC

55
10

Answer Questions in NOT MORE THAN the Word Limit specified for each in the Part (b) (Specimen Answer Booklet - For Practice Purpose Only)

Q The proposed infrastructure upgrade at Great Nicobar Island has been described as a threat to island's indigenous inhabitants and fragile ecosystem. What are the projects strategic importance for India, the environment and social concerns it raises for environment.

Ans- Niti Aayog unveiled a 2,000 cr plan called 'Holistic Development of Great Nicobar Island at Andaman and Nicobar islands', a island that is hilly and covered with lush rainforests.

Good Intro

An overview of its importance to India as well as social and environmental concerns.

Importance to India →

1) Strategic significance - Since great Nicobar island is located at south eastern end of Andaman and Nicobar archipelago, close to Malacca strait, one of busiest sea route, it will boost india's presence in Indian Ocean region intuan will help in naval operations, enhancing national security.



2) Tourism - will help to develop eco-tourism, providing a new source of revenue.

3) Economic development - With the project, it will lead to development of airports, ship ports, improvement in township, improving trade, creating more employment, attract more foreign investments.

Social and Economic Concerns ⇒

1) Lead to Biodiversity loss - Great Nicobar hub of many endangered species, these construction of projects can lead to habitat loss.

2) Indigenous Communities - Island is home to two tribal communities - Shompens and Nicobarese, these projects may lead to their displacement, and these also project can lead to compromise their cultural and social rights.

3) Environmental degradation - Mega project lead to deforestation, can affect coral reef, can bring disaster like earthquake as Great Nicobar are vulnerable to climate change, can lead to rise in sea levels.

UPSC

Answer Questions in NOT MORE THAN the Word Limit specified for each in the Parenthesis.
(Specimen Answer Booklet - For Practice Purpose Only)

In summary, Niti Aayog's mega project holds significant potential for enhancing India's strategic and economic interest but it will be completely successful if environment and social concerns are taken care off through using methods like sustainable development, with proper environment impact assessments and by involving local communities in implementing this megaproject.

conclusion can be shortened (map 20-25 words)



Name:- Arushi

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Q. The proposed infrastructure upgrade at Great Nicobar Island has been described as a threat to the Island's indigenous inhabitants and fragile ecosystem. What are the project's strategic importance for India, the environmental and social concerns it raises for environment? (150W/10m)

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Can do better!

Ans The Great Nicobar Island (GNI) project, launched in 2021, is a mega project to be implemented at Southern end of the Andaman and Nicobar islands.

Good start

It involves developing a transhipment port, an international airport township development, and a 450 MVA gas and solar-based power plant on the island.

Features of this project :- (i) It is mega infrastructure project implemented by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO).

Not Required! skip

(ii) It is close to the Molucca Strait, the main water-way that connects the Indian Ocean into the Pacific, a major player in "cargo transshipment"

(iii) The site for the proposed ICIT and power plant in Chalukya Bay on the southern eastern corner of Great Nicobar Island, where there is no human habitation.

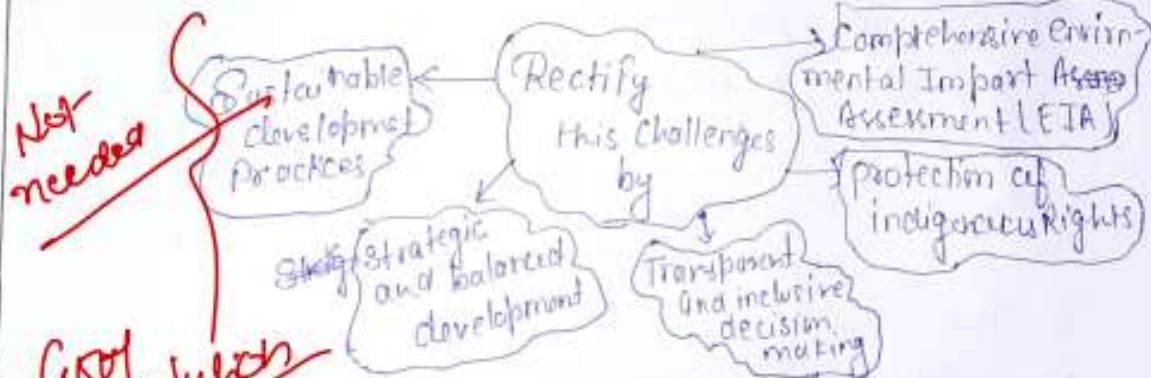
Strategic Importance of GNI project

this part needs elaboration

- Aim to facilitate the deployment of additional military forces, which is importance to India's national security.
- Allow Great Nicobar to participate in the regional and global maritime economy by becoming a major player in cargo transshipment.
- To counter China presence.

Challenges related to the Great Nicobar Island Project

- (i) Impact on Indigenous tribes :- The Shompa and Nicobarese are a (PVTG) of hunter-gatherers, this project impact on tribe and their way of life also.
- (ii) Threat to Island Ecology :- It is feared that the port project will destroy coral reefs and local marine ~~eco~~ ecosystem, and pose a threat to the terrestrial Nicobar megabird bird.
- (iii) Seismic vulnerability :- It is experienced permanent subsidence around Islet during the 2004 tsunami.



Good conclusion

The potential impact on the island's biodiversity, the rights of indigenous communities, and ecological balance has led to calls for an immediate suspension of all clearances and a thorough, impartial review.



Ayushi Jaiswal
Date - 25/06/24



Cheetah

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The proposed infrastructure upgrade at Great Nicobar Island has been described as a threat to the island's indigenous inhabitants and fragile ecosystem. What are the project's strategic importance for India, the environmental and social concerns it raises for environment? (150w/10M)

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Good
Intro

In March, 2021, NITI Aayog unveiled a 72,000 crore plan called Holistic Development of Great Nicobar Island at Andaman & Nicobar islands.

Why as a threat?

1) Diversion of forest land :- This project requires the diversion of about 130 sq km of forest land & felling of 10 Lakh trees.

2) Denotified Sanctuaries - The Galathea Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and the Megapode Wildlife Sanctuary to make way for the project.

3) Ancestral land - Some of the land identified as "Uninhabited" in NITI Aayog's plan is also part of the Great Nicobarese ancestral land.

4) Located in the "Ring of fire" - The Andaman & the Nicobar islands are located in the ring of fire (a seismically active region that experiences several earthquake throughout the year).

<u>Social Concern</u>	<u>Environmental Concern</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shompen and Nicobarese communities face displacement.• Loss of traditional land.• Cultural erosion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deforestation.• Habitat Destruction.• Increased pollution risk inevitable ecological damage.

Way forward -

- 1) Balancing strategic interest.
- 2) Environmental preservation *very good*
- 3) Providing indigenous rights to the various communities.
- 4) Ensuring the sustainable development at the same time.

Cost conclusion

Thus, this proposed infrastructure upgrade at Great Nicobar island is strategic significance for India due to its location. It aims to bolster India's geopolitical stance, improve connectivity and foster economic development through improved port facilities, a transshipment terminal, and an airport.



Q. Do you think that even after years of implementation, the result of the environmental impact assessment has not been encouraging? Critically examine. (10M, 150 words)

5
10

Good Start

If Environmental Impact assessment is a tool to identify environmental, social and economical impact of the project prior to a decision making. It is an important tool for ensuring optimal use of natural resources for sustainable development.

EIA has a mixed response. It has success as well as limitations.

Success of EIA-

- 1) Environmental benefits - as this tool examine the environmental impact before implementation of the project, so it will help to conserve the environment.
- 2) Improved project design - conducting EIA has a benefit if any project not found to meet EIA's criteria it can be improved/modified so that ultimate goal of the project should be safe, conservative environment.

Galaxy S23

From the below factors we can see it's not encouraging the peoples after implementation of EIA still there are problems -

- 1-) Forest cover - India has one of the lowest levels of green cover per capita.
- 2-) Air pollution - In metropolitan cities, like Delhi and Mumbai have high level of air pollution which is destroying the life of residents.
- 3-) Destruction in Himalayas - Glaciers are rapidly melting which are reservoir of fresh water.

Two part of green

1st second?
part elaborated

EIA has some limitations due to that peoples are not encouraging for the development -

- 1-) Time consuming
- 2-) Little public participation
- 3-) Sometimes too focused on scientific analysis
- 4-) Economic and political pressure

As we have seen proper above problems and benefits of EIA, so proper conduction of EIA is very important for the sustainable development and for this problems should be looked from the grassroot level.

Group



AGONY STILL IN MANIPUR, A YEAR LATER

Agony still in Manipur, a year later

The high-level security meet on Manipur convened by the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, in New Delhi on June 17, 2024, was loudly conspicuous by its exclusion of the Manipur Chief Minister, N. Biren Singh. It also threw light on the way the Centre has been handling the violent ethnic clashes in Manipur between two of its major communities, the Meitei and Kuki-Zo tribes. There seem to be no signs of respite even after a year of bloodletting. It seems to confirm the long-held suspicion that there has been undeclared President's Rule in the State, with the Manipur government having been placed in virtual animated suspension.

Those invited for the meeting included Indian Army Chief Manoj Pande, Army Chief-designate Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi, Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla and Intelligence Bureau director Tapan Kumar Deka. From the State were the Director General of Police Manipur, Rajiv Singh, and the Security Adviser, Kuldeep Singh – both brought in from outside the State and appointed to these posts in the wake of the outbreak of violence on May 3, 2023. As a media columnist pointed out, also conspicuously absent were officers from Manipur's stakeholder communities.

Considering that this meeting had quickly followed another one Mr. Shah had had in New Delhi with the Manipur Governor, Anusuiya Uikey, speculations were rife that this was a prelude to a formal invocation of Article 365 to impose a spell of President's Rule in the State. This anticipation, however, proved premature, as it is now clear that the meeting merely chalked out a strategy to contain the violence so that a dialogue process between the two warring communities can be initiated.

The messaging about the State government

Not long after the ethnic violence broke out, it had become clear that the State government was no longer in charge. First, there was a viral news that Article 355 had been imposed in the State, passing on the State government's responsibility of law-and-order upkeep to the Centre. This was later officially denied. Still, from the patterns of security deployments and operations henceforth, it was more than apparent that the State government had been almost sidelined. For instance, Mr. Biren Singh was unceremoniously removed from the customary chairmanship of the unified command of the different security establishments in the State by an order of the Governor on May 31, 2023. Only his power to summon meetings of this body was retained.

It was probably unintentional, but in noisy



Pradip Phanjoubam

Editor, Imphal Review of Arts and Politics

With the conflict dragging on, even the idea of victim and perpetrator has become blurred amidst an elusive peace

cross-questioning in the Lok Sabha on August 9, 2023, during the no-confidence motion faced by the then National Democratic Alliance government, Mr. Shah when asked why the Manipur Chief Minister had still not been removed, again gave a glimpse of 'this unofficial Central rule'. In a Freudian slip, he said that there was no need for this as the Chief Minister was "cooperating" with the Centre.

Earlier, when Mr. Shah made his first trip to Manipur on May 29, 2023, after a fortnight of lull punctuating the outbreak of mayhem in the State, violence again exploded in several places along the foothills. Mr. Shah made another declaration. There was to be a buffer zone along the foothills where the Imphal valley meets the surrounding hills. And, the hills were to be looked after by central forces while the State police were for the valley.

This may have been well-intentioned, but it proved to be ill-conceived. Probably, the assumption was that separating the warring communities would freeze the feud, and that normalcy would return. But when the conflict dragged on longer than anticipated, several unanticipated consequences became obvious. For one, the Meiteis, now confined in the valley, began to suspect the central forces, especially the Assam Rifles, of siding with the Kuki-Zos in the hills. And, conversely, the Kuki-Zos began viewing the State police as partisan to the Meiteis. This is despite the fact that the Assam Rifles has several Meitei officers and troopers, just as the Manipur police constabularies draw their recruits from the many communities in the State. These forces may just have been doing their brief, but amidst the dangerous and hateful passions, they ended up being coloured with communal hues.

The drift

The wisdom in the cliched adage that peace is not merely the absence of violence seems to have been completely missed. The absence of violence does give a semblance of normalcy, but when no efforts are made alongside to identify the underlying causes of discord and put them to rest, a single spark – intentional or accidental – can cause an inferno. This has been the pattern of clashes in Manipur's year of mayhem so far.

Today, the number of central and State forces in Manipur is estimated to be about 70,000 personnel. Yet, the outlook of unofficial President's Rule in Manipur has been to manage and moderate the feud, so as to keep the damage minimal and not resolve it. It is bewildering to wonder why no move has been made yet to clamp down on both sides of the fence, using proportionate and legitimate force, to establish

the law firmly and to strengthen the hands of the law. Maybe it was the forthcoming general election then, and the issue of optics being the inhibitor – to have a Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled State under President's Rule would have been damaging. That the public resented this approach was demonstrated empathetically. In the 2024 general election, voters across the conflict buffer rejected the BJP in Manipur's two seats.

Reminiscent in this is also what Jolle Demmers writes in her book, *Theories of Violent Conflict: An Introduction*. In 1993, the United States-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization was set to strike Bosnia when genocidal clashes between Serb and Albanian Muslims broke out. The Albanians bore the brunt of it. But U.S. President Bill Clinton is said to have been gifted Robert D. Kaplan's best-selling *Balkan Ghosts*, which portrays the antagonism between the two communities as primordial. There was nothing much anybody could do to change the situation but to wait "until those folks got tired of killing each other". The intervention was delayed and peace could be restored only in 1995, after much preventable damage.

It is true that the roots of some conflicts are deeper than others but there can be nothing as primordial. Scholars agree that the objective must be to trace the roots of the problem, at whatever depth, and address them. There are too many, however, who are too eager to oversimplify and caricaturise conflicts, fitting them into set categories they are familiar with. Thus, Hindus, Muslims or hillmen and plainsmen are portrayed as preconditioned to hate each other.

The ground reality

The latest and officially confirmed body count in Manipur's tragic conflict is 225, of whom, 115 are Kuki-Zos, 102 are Meiteis and eight are from other communities. The picture is not very different when it comes to the numbers affected in displacement as well, for there has been mutual ethnic cleansing on either side of the newly-created conflict buffer. A year after the outbreak of violence, even the idea of victim and perpetrator, so readily lapped up by many, has become blurred.

With so many lives and properties having been lost already, asking people who have suffered these losses to come to terms with their losses and move on, especially when it involves loved ones, is never going to be easy. But there is no other way than for those who have suffered to see their trauma being shared by their adversaries. And in the acknowledgment of this shared suffering, find the empathy bond and, ultimately, common redemption in tragedy.

What To note Down ?

- ❖ The emergency provisions are contained in Part XVIII of the Constitution of India, from Article 352 to 360. These provisions enable the Central government to meet any abnormal situation effectively.
- ❖ The rationality behind the incorporation is to safeguard the sovereignty, unity, integrity and security of the country, the democratic political system and the Constitution.



- ❖ The Constitution stipulates three types of emergencies:
 - ☛ National Emergency
 - ☛ Constitutional Emergency
 - ☛ Financial Emergency

President's Rule:

- ❖ Article 355 imposes a duty on the centre to ensure that the government of every state is carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.
- ❖ It is this duty in the performance of which the centre takes over the government of a state under Article 356 in case of failure of constitutional machinery in a state.
- ❖ This is popularly known as 'President's Rule'.
- ❖ Grounds of imposition: the president's ruler can be proclaimed under Article 356 on two grounds:
- ❖ Article 356 empowers the President to issue a proclamation if he is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.
- ❖ Article 365 says that whenever a state fails to comply with or to give effect to any direction from the centre, it will be lawful for the President to hold that a situation has arisen in which the government of the state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

Parliamentary approval and duration:

- ❖ A proclamation imposing president's rule must be approved by both the houses of parliament within two months from the date of its issue.
- ❖ However, if the proclamation of President's rule is issued at a time when the Lok Sabha has been dissolved or the dissolution of the Lok Sabha takes place during the period of two months without approving the proclamation, then the proclamation survives until 30 days from the first sitting of the Lok Sabha after its reconstitution, provided that the Rajya Sabha approves it in the meantime

Consequences of the President's rule:

- ❖ The President acquires the following extraordinary powers when the President's rule is imposed in a state:
- ❖ He can take up the functions of the state government and powers vested in the governor or any other executive authority in the state.
- ❖ He can declare that the powers of the state legislature are to be exercised by the parliament.
- ❖ He can take all other necessary steps including the suspension of the constitutional provisions relating to any body or authority in the state.

Scope of Judicial Review:

- ❖ The 38th Amendment act of 1975 made the satisfaction of the President in invoking Article 356 final and conclusive which would not be challenged in any court on any ground.
- ❖ But, this provision was subsequently deleted by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978 implying that the satisfaction of the President is not beyond judicial review.



R. Bommai v. Union of India

R. Bommai v. Union of India is a landmark decision of the Supreme Court of India, where the Court discussed at length provisions of Article 356 of the Constitution of India and related issues. This case had huge impact on Centre-State Relations.

The principles laid down by Supreme Court

Presidential decision regarding this is open to judicial review

Satisfaction of the President should be based on relevant material

Burden lies on the centre to prove relevant material exist to justify the imposition

Court cannot go into the correctness of the material but it can see whether it is relevant to the action

State legislative assembly should be dissolved only after the Parliament has approved the Presidential proclamation

Question of state government losing the confidence should be decided on the floor of the house

Where new ministry takes power in the centre, they do not have the right to unseat those government where opposition is in power

These provisions should be used only in exceptional circumstances

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Subjective Question for Practice:

Q.1 What are the circumstances under which President's rule can be imposed in a state? Has the executive misused these provisions of late? Critically examine. (150 w/10m)



Objective Question:

Q.2 Consider the following statements:

1. The President's Rule can be proclaimed under Article 356 on two grounds - one mentioned in Article 356 itself and another in Article 365.
2. A proclamation imposing President's Rule must be approved by both the Houses of Parliament within one month from the date of its issue.
3. The President either suspends or dissolves the state legislative assembly.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 2 and 3

Answer: The correct answer is 1 and 3 only.

Key Points

❖ President's Rule:

☛ Grounds of Imposition:

- Article 356 empowers the President to issue a proclamation if he is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Notably, the president can act either on a report of the governor of the state or otherwise too (i.e., even without the governor's report).
- Article 365 says that whenever a state fails to comply with or to give effect to any direction from the Centre, it will be lawful for the president to hold that a situation has arisen in which the government of the state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.
- Hence statement 1 is correct.

☛ Parliamentary Approval and Duration:

- A proclamation imposing President's Rule must be approved by both the Houses of Parliament within two months from the date of its issue. Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.
- However, if the proclamation of President's Rule is issued at a time when the Lok Sabha has been dissolved or the dissolution of the Lok Sabha takes place during the period of two months without approving the proclamation, then the proclamation survives until 30 days from the first sitting of the Lok Sabha after its reconstitution, provided the Rajya Sabha approves it in the meantime.
- If approved by both the Houses of Parliament, the President's Rule continues for six months.
- It can be extended for a maximum period of three years with the approval of the Parliament, every six months.

☛ Consequences of President's Rule:

- S/He can take up the functions of the state government and powers vested in the governor or any other executive authority in the state.
- S/He can declare that the powers of the state legislature are to be exercised by the Parliament.



- S/He can take all other necessary steps including the suspension of the constitutional provisions relating to anybody or authority in the state.
- ❖ The President either suspends or dissolves the state legislative assembly. In case of dissolution, fresh elections are held for constituting a new legislative assembly in the state.
- ❖ Hence statement 3 is correct.



AGNIPATH SCHEME-WILL IT BE REVAMPED?

Will the Agnipath scheme be revamped?

Will the formation of a new government lead to a more detailed discussion on the recruitment of soldiers as Agniveers? How have the NDA allies reacted? What is the government's stance?

Dinakar Peri

The story so far:

The recruitment of soldiers into the armed forces as Agniveers under the Agnipath scheme has been a major issue in the recent general election. After the election results, NDA allies, the Janata Dal (United) and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), raised the issue of Agnipath and called for a discussion on it. The government is open to changes and discussions are on, officials in the know said.

What is the Agnipath scheme?

The Agnipath scheme for recruitment of soldiers, sailors and airmen into the three services was announced on June 14, 2022 doing away with the earlier process of permanent recruitment. Under the new scheme, Agniveers are recruited for four years on the completion of which, up to 25% would be selected into the regular ranks on a permanent basis. The age

bracket for new recruits was fixed at 17 and a half to 21 years of age and till 2026 the overall intake has been capped at 1.75 lakh. Subsequently, the Army is inducting 40,000 Agniveers per year and the Navy and Air Force are recruiting around 3,000 Agniveers each. Agniveers during their tenure can get class 12 certificates or a Bachelor's degree in addition to other skill certificates and when leaving after four years will get a lumpsum amount but are not eligible for pension. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had termed it a transformative initiative and a win-win situation for all.

The government has stated that the Agnipath scheme would bring down the average age of the armed forces from 32 to 26 years in line with the age profile of major armies worldwide. And that when Agniveers return to society, they will contribute to nation-building.

What are the concerns?

One of the biggest concerns for the armed

forces, especially the Army, is the accentuating shortage of personnel in the 'below the officer's rank' cadres. There was no recruitment during the COVID-19 period for over two and half years which created a deficiency. For context, around 60,000 soldiers retire from the Army every year, while 40,000 are being recruited every year. So effectively the shortage is adding on year by year. Additionally, the low conversion rate of 25% from Agniveers to regular soldiers is going to further accentuate the shortfall. Given the short duration of four years, the training schedules have also been compressed accordingly.

With the huge demand for recruitment into the Army in some parts of the country, the scheme became a political issue as well as a campaign issue during the election. The country was rocked by violent protests when the scheme was announced. Several parties have demanded that it either be scrapped or the concerns addressed.

There is anger among "certain sections" on the Agnipath scheme, said JD(U) leader K.C. Tyagi amidst talks within the NDA on government formation. "The Agnipath scheme should be reviewed clause by clause," he said.

What is the current status?

As reported by *The Hindu* earlier, as the Agnipath scheme completes two years of implementation, the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) in the Defence Ministry headed by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) has sought feedback from the forces on the scheme. This, officials said, is in line with the regular practice in the armed forces of reviewing any major scheme introduced or any weapon platform inducted to make required changes based on a detailed assessment.

Broadly, recommendation for enhancing intake numbers, increasing the permanent recruitment from 25% to at least 50% are among the suggestions. Also, there is a proposal to increase the age limit for entry though the technical route from 21 to 23 years to attract enough technically qualified individuals. This is not a new proposal but also existed in the recruitment process earlier.

Defence officials have stated that Navy and Air Force have compiled the feedback to be sent to the DMA. However, the Army is still in the process of compilation and will take some more time, multiple officials confirmed. The DMA will compile all the recommendations and send it to the Defence Ministry.

Question:

Q.3 Consider the following statements with respect to the Agnipath Scheme:

1. It is aimed at recruiting young individuals for direct entry into the officer cadre of the military.
2. All recruits are hired only for a four-year period.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Notes: Explanation :

- ❖ Statement 1 is incorrect. The Agnipath Scheme is aimed at recruiting young individuals as soldiers, airmen, and sailors (personnel below the officer rank) in the Indian Armed Forces, not for direct entry into the officer cadre.
- ❖ Statement 2 is correct. Under the Agnipath Scheme, recruits, known as Agniveers, are hired for a four-year period. After completing the four-year tenure, 25% of the Agniveers will be selected to continue their service in the Armed Forces, while the remaining 75% will be discharged with a financial package and potential opportunities for employment in other sectors.



AGNIPATH

SCHEME

BY RUCHI
SINGH

Agnipath Scheme

- What's the ongoing story
- What the scheme is all about?
- Objective-Why it was introduced?
- What are the concerns raised?
- Similar Programmes In Other Nations
- Recommendation of Indian Army

What's the ongoing story?

- The [Bharatiya Janata Party](#)-led government's ambitious [Agnipath](#) scheme has faced opposition, from political parties and Armed Forces veterans alike, since it was announced in June 2022.
- During the election campaigns various political parties raised serious questions on Agnipath scheme -one such questions was that this was unilateral decision of PMO and it did not involve the discussions with chief of armed forces.
- Also there were cases of suicides among Agniveers which fuelled the uproar further.
- As we all know that NDA alliance formed the government, its allies JDU, LJP has been expressing concerns over the scheme and urged the government to review it.



What the scheme is all about?

- The scheme was announced in June 2022, after military recruitment was paused for two years due to the [Covid-19](#) pandemic.
- [Agnipath](#) was aimed at recruiting personnel below officer ranks — soldiers, airmen, and sailors who are not commissioned officers — to the Indian Armed Forces for a period of four years. (use a biannual exercise)
- At the end of this tenure, upto 25% of these recruits, the so called ‘Agniveers’, can join the services on a permanent commission (another 15 years), subject to merit and organisational requirements.
- Aspirants between the ages of 17.5 years and 23 years are eligible to apply (the upper age limit was increased from 21), and the recruitment standards remain the same as with regular service, prior to Agnipath.
- Agniveers draw a basic salary of Rs 30,000-Rs 40,000 per month, and are entitled to other risk and hardship allowances.
- Unlike soldiers in regular service, Agniveers do not draw pensions post-retirement.
- Only the 25% of Agniveers who get absorbed into the forces after four years will receive pensionary benefits, although the initial four years of service will not be considered for these.
- It will aid in the rehabilitation of troops who leave the military after four years.
- They will receive **bridge courses and skill certificates** as part of a "whole of government" approach. The goal will be to **foster entrepreneurship**.

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)

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

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



Why was Agnipath introduced?

- The Agnipath scheme, beyond reducing the Armed Forces' wage and pension bill, aims to ensure a **youthful profile for the forces**.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh described the scheme as a game changer, intended to make the Armed Forces youthful, high-tech, and ultra-modern.
- The average age in the Armed Forces, currently 32 years, will be reduced to 26 years with Agnipath's implementation.
- The government also argues that Agniveers, after completing their service, will positively contribute to civil society with their skills, discipline, and education.
- This is expected to enhance workforce quality, productivity, and overall GDP growth.

Concerns raised on Agnipath Scheme-

- 1)lack of training and expertise among newly recruited soldiers-
- 2)Lack of motivation to serve
- 3)What will they do after they exit the services after 4 years?

Similar Programmes In Other Nations-

- Voluntary tour of duty:** Depending on the requirements of the military and the branch of service, tours of voluntary duty in the USA can last anywhere from six to nine months to a full year.
- Required military service (also known as conscription):** Israel, Norway, North Korea, Singapore and Sweden are among the nations that use this practice.

Indian Army Recommends Major Changes to Agnipath Scheme-

The Indian Army has now conducted a review to ensure smooth inclusion of Agniveers and maintain “operational efficiency.”

- Increasing the percentage of Agniveers, who join regular service after completing 4 years, from the current 25 percent to 60-70 percent.
- The Indian Army suggested increasing the service period from 4 years to 7-8 years.
- They recommended increasing the entry age for Agniveers in the technical field to 23 years.
- They also suggested that ex-gratia should be provided for disability during training and that exit management should be handled by a professional agency. Moreover, if an Agniveer dies in war, their family should receive a subsistence allowance