

# MHA ANNOUNCES 10% QUOTA FOR AGNIVEERS

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CAPF personnel at a railway station during the previous Lok Sabha polls. File photo  
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In a bid to defuse the violent protest that emanated after the Agnipath scheme was announced, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said on June 18 that 10% of all vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or the paramilitary will be reserved for the recruits under the scheme.

However, the new reservation promise that will have to fit horizontally alongside the existing caste-based quota and physical eligibility requirements in the CAPFs is proving to be a challenge for the Ministry.

While the minimum height requirement across all armed forces under the Agnipath scheme is 152.5 cm, the minimum height required for a general duty constable in a combat role in all CAPFs is 165 cm.

The armed forces do not recruit according to caste-based formula but enrolment in the CAPFs is done as per the existing reservation system and cannot exceed the 50% cap as fixed by the Supreme Court.

If new battalions in CAPFs are not raised, the recruitment can be done only against the existing vacancies arising out of retirement, death or any miscellaneous reason. "If a Scheduled Caste constable in CAPF has retired, the slot can be only filled by an SC Agniveer, else it might upset the overall quota," said a senior government official.

The CAPFs have also sought clarity from the MHA regarding the implementation of the 10% reservation.

On June 18, the MHA announced through a tweet that 10% of all vacancies in the CAPFs and Assam Rifles will be reserved for the armed forces recruits who have completed four years of service under the Agnipath scheme. The Ministry also announced a five-year age relaxation for the first batch of Agniveers.

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