

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)
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‘हर काम देश के नाम’

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Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addresses first batch of Agniveers through video conferencing; Congratulates them on being the pioneers of path-breaking AGNIPATH scheme

The transformative policy will be a game changer in strengthening the Armed Forces & making them future ready: PM

“Efforts underway to modernise the Armed Forces as well as make them ‘Aatmanirbhar’”

Discussing challenges of new fronts of contactless warfare, PM says technologically-advanced soldiers will play a key role in Armed Forces

Discusses how AGNIPATH will empower women; Says, he looks forwards to seeing women Agniveers in all three forces

Raksha Mantri describes the scheme as a pioneering step towards building a strong & prosperous ‘New India’

Strengthening the country’s security apparatus is Government’s top priority amidst ever-evolving global scenario: Shri Rajnath Singh

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the first batch of Agniveers of the three Services, who have commenced their basic training, via video conferencing on January 16, 2023. He congratulated the Agniveers on being the pioneers of the path-breaking AGNIPATH scheme. He highlighted that this transformative policy will be a game changer in strengthening the Armed Forces and making them future ready for the challenges that lie ahead. The Prime Minister affirmed that the young Agniveers will make the Armed Forces more youthful and tech-savvy.

Hailing the potential of Agniveers, the Prime Minister said that their spirit is reflective of the bravery of the Armed Forces which has always kept the flag of the nation flying high. He said that the experience which they will acquire through this opportunity will be a source of pride for life.

The Prime Minister said that ‘New India’ is filled with renewed vigour, and efforts are underway to modernise the Armed Forces as well as make

them 'Aatmanirbhar'. He said that in the 21st century, the way wars are fought is changing. Discussing the new fronts of contactless warfare and challenges of cyber warfare, he said technologically-advanced soldiers will play a key role in the Armed Forces. He added the current generation of youth especially have this potential and so the Agniveers will play a leading role in our armed forces in the times to come.

The Prime Minister also spoke about how the scheme will further empower women. He expressed happiness at how women Agniveers are adding pride to the Naval forces, and said that he looks forward to seeing women Agniveers in all three forces. The Prime Minister also recalled how women are leading armed forces on various fronts, citing examples of woman soldier posted in Siachen and women driving modern fighter planes.

The Prime Minister said that getting posted in different regions will give them an opportunity to get diverse experiences and that they should try to learn different languages and also about different cultures and ways of living. He said that teamwork and honing of leadership skills will add a new dimension to their personality. He exhorted Agniveers to remain curious about learning new things while simultaneously working on bettering their skills in the fields of their choice. Hailing the potential of youth and Agniveers, the Prime Minister concluded by saying that they are the ones who are going to provide leadership to the nation in the 21st century.

In his welcome remarks, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh lauded the Prime Minister's vision of 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat', under which all sectors have set new targets and are making giant strides towards achieving them. He stated that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has taken a number of decisions to empower the nation, terming AGNIPATH scheme as one of the most important and unprecedented reforms.

The Raksha Mantri asserted that strengthening the security apparatus of the country is the Government's top-most priority amidst the ever-evolving global scenario and geopolitical uncertainty. In such a situation, the AGNIPATH scheme will make the profile of the Armed forces more youthful and tech-savvy, he said. Shri Rajnath Singh added that all efforts are being made so that the Agniveers are able to serve the society, along with the Armed Forces, with their strength and knowledge. The scheme is a pioneering step towards building a strong and prosperous 'New India'.

Shri Rajnath Singh appreciated the fact that the scheme received encouraging response, with a large number of applicants turning up for the recruitment. He made special mention of the women Agniveers who are also being trained along with their male counterparts.

The Raksha Mantri pointed out that several ministries, including MoD, are coming forward for the welfare of Agniveers. "Reservation is being ensured for Agniveers on a number of posts in various departments of Ministry of Defence, Central Armed Police Forces and Ministry of Railways. Arrangements are being made jointly by MoD & Ministry of Education to ensure proper education to the Agniveers. In collaboration with Ministry of Finance,

arrangements are being made to provide loans at reasonable rates to Agniveers, who wish to start self-employment or any business after service. Agniveers will not only become Surakshaveers, but also Samriddhiveers,” he said. Shri Rajnath Singh exuded confidence that all the Agniveers will be greatly inspired and guided by the vision & meaningful thoughts of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister’s address was telecast live on all Agniveer Training Centres and was attended by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Pande and other senior officers of Ministry of Defence.

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