Defence & Security · GS - III

Critically examine the proposed extension of Agniveers' service tenure under the Agnipath scheme in the context of military preparedness, personnel retention and the socio-economic security of young recruits.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 04/11/2026	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Military preparedness; retention of trained personnel; operational continuity; employment security; youth transition to civilian life; transparent selection; balanced defence manpower policy.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Agnipath scheme, introduced in 2022, recruits personnel into the Army, Navy and Air Force for four years. A proposed two-year extension, reportedly called the "Second Tour of Duty", may offer selected Agniveers a longer service period. As of 4 November 2026, it remains a proposal without formal government approval.

Potential Benefits

An extension could retain trained personnel, reduce repeated recruitment and training costs, and preserve technical expertise. It may improve operational continuity, particularly in specialised roles requiring longer training. For selected recruits, additional service would provide greater income security and professional experience.

Concerns and Challenges

Unclear eligibility criteria could create uncertainty among recruits. Unequal access to extensions may raise concerns about fairness and transparency. Longer service for some personnel would not automatically resolve the employment challenges faced by those released after four years. The armed forces must also balance experienced manpower with the objective of maintaining a youthful force.

Way Forward

The government should publish transparent selection criteria, clarify pay and benefits, and assess service-specific manpower requirements. Strong resettlement support, recognised skill certification and civilian employment opportunities must remain integral to the scheme.

Conclusion

A service extension could improve retention, but its success depends on transparent implementation, operational necessity and fair treatment of both retained and released Agniveers.

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