

## **The Asian Age**

### **1,500 youth turn up at Army's recruitment rally**

The Army said on Monday that inspite of the ongoing unrest in the Valley and threats issued by a militant outfit earlier, more than 1,500 youth from various parts of Jammu and Kashmir turned up at yet another recruitment rally organised in summer capital Srinagar on the weekend.

The two-day rally, it said, was held at the Army's regimental centre in Rangreth area of Srinagar for enrolling eligible youth as soldiers (general duty), tradesmen and clerks. "Over 1,500 youth participated in the rally with full enthusiasm," a statement issued by the Army here said. It added that the selected candidates who have cleared the physical screening will now be put through a detailed medical and common entrance examinations following which "a merit list will be drawn as per vacancies to shortlist the candidates who will join the Centre for training."

Last month, the Army had held a recruitment rally in south Kashmir which, according to them, attracted large number of youth from the districts of Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian and Budgam. The Army also said, "The enthusiasm, motivation and hunger for success among the Kashmiri youth could be seen during the rally which was a reflection of the fact that nothing can deter these young minds from appearing in the recruitment rally held by the Army."

As many as 12,000 online applications were received for the previous rallies which "clearly represented the desire for calm, peace and normalcy on the part of the candidates themselves, their family and friends and their villages and neighbourhood," the Army had said, adding, "This makes a significant constituency. In these times of unrest, it is an important statement being made by this constituency."

Earlier the state authorities had said that despite the ongoing unrest in the Valley, thousands of youth have opted for the job of special police officers (SPOs) in the J&K police.

The Centre had last month formally approved recruitment of additional 10,000 SPOs in the restive State, days after Home Minister, Rajnath Singh, announced in Srinagar special employment package for the youths in the J&K police as part of the government's effort to address the issues including unemployment which it believes is contributing to the

alienation of the Valley's youth and driving them to streets to join protests and indulge in stone-pelting pastime.