

7 lakh apply for 7,416 posts of constable

Call it the lure of the khaki uniform or sheer scale of unemployment in the state that over 7 lakh youths have applied for 7,416 posts of constable — for men and women — in the Punjab Police.

“It is a phenomenal number of candidates. It shows how many youths aspire to don the khaki uniform and serve the state,” said ADGP-Administration Dinkar Gupta.

The number of applicants is quite high compared to about 20,800 women who had applied for the 1,134 posts of sub-inspector last year. Dr Pramod Kumar, Chairperson, Punjab Governance Reforms, said wearing a police uniform has been a status symbol in Punjab for long.

“It is a cultural issue, not unemployment. We don’t get many applicants for posts of researcher or steno or others. In the state, anyone who is in the police is a ‘thanedar’. He wields power and influence. And it is a government job which gives you more respect among the masses than better paid private jobs,” he said.

Though the basic qualification for eligibility is senior secondary (10+2), 1.5 lakh graduates and post-graduates have applied for the posts again, indicating the lack of employment avenues for them.

About 7,000 hold a Master’s degree while 1,684 MCA degree holders and 1,268 MBA degree holders have also applied. On an average, 95 candidates will vie for each post.

Those selected will get a salary of about Rs 15,000 instead of the full salary (about Rs 30,000) for the first three years of service. This has already been announced by the cash-strapped state government.

However, the government has become richer by about Rs 28 crore. Each candidate paid Rs 400 as application fee. The candidates will take the physical measurement and physical efficiency test on July 27. On the same day, they will also undergo the dope test, which would be conducted on the candidates for the first time in the state and probably the country.

This test holds more significance politically than for the recruitment process as the Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal has ordered the test to prove that not many Punjabi youths are hooked onto drugs.