

The Hindu

Language barrier too big to surmount for Army candidates

Nearly 40 to 50 per cent candidates with class X and class XII qualifications, who cleared the arduous physical fitness tests (PFT) and medical test, failed to get into Indian Army as Soldiers (General) and (Technical) and Clerks, as they found it difficult to clear the written test conducted in Hindi and English, according to sources in Indian Army Recruiting Office.

“We lose some of the best candidates and sports talents as they failed in the written test conducted for 100 marks, covering General Knowledge, Maths and Science,” the sources said, suggesting that Tamil Nadu government could take up the issue with the Ministry of Defence or Army Headquarters.

As the footfall was large, the army was able to find enough number of candidates to fill up the 500-odd vacancies whenever it conducted a recruitment rally, but some of the best candidates in terms of physical fitness and talents in sports were missed out as they found the written examination tough in the absence of regional language option.

These candidates could probably clear the test had it been conducted in Tamil, the sources said. Brig. Sangram Dalvi, Deputy Director General Recruiting (States), had taken up the issue with the State Chief Secretary and suggested that the State government could write to the MoD in this regard.

Though the Army Headquarters, which set the question paper in Hindi and English, could not afford to make available question papers in all the 60-odd regional languages, it could consider setting up the question papers in Tamil if it received specific request from the State, the sources said.

As most of the candidates came from rural areas, they found it difficult to understand the questions.

As many risked getting negative marks for wrong answers, they found it difficult to get the minimum 32 marks for pass, the sources added.

The questions were based on class X (CBSE) syllabus and the candidates had mostly studied in the State Board, the sources added.