

## THE PEOPLE'S MILITARY SERVICE LAW

- The junta government declared the enforcement of the “People’s Military Service Law”, which is commonly known as the conscription law, on February 10, 2024.
- Law requires all male citizens aged 18 to 35 (6.3 million) and all female citizens aged 18 to 27(7.7 million) to perform mandatory military service in the junta armed forces despite the absence of active warfare with other nations. Service term is 2-5 years depending upon your expertise. Evading the service is punishable by 3-5 years in prison and a fine.
- Law activated in the wake of the junta's biggest and most humiliating defeats since the coup began when an alliance of armed ethnic organizations captured a large swath of territory along the Chinese border. These victories by anti-junta militias inspired other resistance or pro-democracy forces in other parts of the country who have also experienced success.
- At its peak, the Myanmar military had a little over 200,000 forces. It is now estimated to have fewer than 100,000 troops. Starting in April 2024 after the Myanmar New Year Water Festival, the junta has aimed to enlist 5,000 new recruits monthly. The current desertion rate is 400 monthly.
- In certain areas, there are already reports of the military abducting people and forcibly recruiting them into service. Thousands line up daily at the Thailand Embassy to gain visas to leave the country while only 400 are processed. Thailand is the most popular destination among the neighboring countries.
- Since its independence from Great Britain in 1948, Myanmar has had no outside enemies. On the other hand, it has experienced several military coups within the country. It is important to understand that the current military service law is NOT about recruiting fighting soldiers. **This is a desperate act to recruit human shields in the battlefield, porters for carrying ammunition, and human landmine sweepers.** The junta knows that the vast majority of Myanmar citizens, and therefore the recruits, hate the junta. Therefore, the junta cannot risk arming them. This is why the eligible men and women are looking for ways out of the country or to serve in one of the many ethnic armed organizations.

**MYANMAR IS NOT A COUNTRY WITH AN ARMY, IT IS AN ARMY WITH A COUNTRY!**

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