

Burmese Army Forcibly Recruiting Rohingya by Threatening To Cut Food Ration

London, UK - The Burmese Army is pressuring Rohingya men in Sittwe to join the fighting with offers of improved rations, national ID cards, and, in some cases, threatening to withhold their rations if they don't join, Sittwe residents tell BHRN. The move to pressure Rohingya into joining the Burmese army comes as the junta grows desperate and launches a campaign of forced conscription around the country, aimed at drafting 5,000 civilians into service a month.

On February 18th, 300 Rohingya from Sittwe, Baw Du Pha IDP camp were taken for a three-day military training course assembled at Military Battalion 354 stationed in Sittwe. Those who will be recruited were given 50,000 Kyat (about \$24) and a bag of rice. Those who completed the training were given better rations and some military privileges. A Sittwe resident working with BHRN said, "Despite the Rohingya not wanting to join that training, the SAC (State Administrative Council) proxies and Camp Management Committees threatened the IDPs that if they do not join for training, their ration card will be declined. Another side of the SAC is persuading by [offering] money, rice, and a National ID card."

BHRN's Executive Director, Kyaw Win, said, "**The Rohingya in Sittwe have been confined to these camps for over a decade without a foreseeable way out. Now, the junta is exploiting the desperate situation they created and intimidating the Rohingya to join their failing war effort. It is unconscionable and cruel. The Burmese military is violating the provisional measures set by the International Court of Justice each day the war in Arakan rages, and they must be held accountable.**"

Burma Human Rights Network calls on the international community to monitor, sanction, and prosecute all individuals involved in the coerced and forced recruitment of Rohingya by the Burmese army. The Burmese junta should be held accountable for their multiple violations of the [provisional measures](#) set by the International Court of Justice, including abstaining from any acts that violate the [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#). The Junta violates Articles 2(b) and (c) of the convention by withholding food rations to

inflict harm on the Rohingya and creating conditions that could destroy the group in whole or in part. Further, the Rohingya have been denied citizenship and cannot be forced into military service, especially as the Burmese army is a belligerent force against them responsible for genocide. Further, the Burmese military is an illegitimate government that has no authority to force the service of any civilians in the country. Forced and coerced conscription of the Rohingya should be considered forms of forced labor and in violation of the [Forced Labour Convention](#) that prohibits “all forced or compulsory labour, which is defined as ‘all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.’” [The Fourth Geneva Convention](#) also prohibits any “pressure or propaganda that aims at securing voluntary enlistment.”

Background on the Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN)

Burma Human Rights Network (BHRN) is based in London and operates across Burma/Myanmar works for human rights, minority rights and religious freedom in Burma. BHRN has played a crucial role advocating for human rights and religious freedom with politicians and world leaders.

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