



This group of individuals, except in exceptional cases such as being a university student after reaching the age of 18, have a six-month deadline to introduce themselves to Iran's Public Conscription Organization and, depending on their service status and location, serve 18 months (non-native individuals) or 21 months (native individuals) of military service. Otherwise, in accordance with Article 58 of the law, those who fail to determine their service status within the specified deadline will be considered absent.

Absent individuals, according to the law, face deprivation of various rights, including the inability to receive bank facilities, obtain a business permit, or get employed officially. They are also barred from running for elections in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and other legal councils and associations, and cannot receive their high school diploma or higher education certificates from the relevant ministry, among other things.

It's worth noting that Iran's Military Service Act is also in place in many countries other than Iran, and in some countries, including Cuba, North Korea, Georgia, and others, the law of compulsory military service applies to women as well. Some countries, however, have opted to make military service voluntary and optional, instead relying on a fully professional army. Unlike Iran, their armed forces are composed solely of employed personnel, with no distinction between permanent staff and conscripts. That being said, some of these countries have not entirely dismissed the possibility of reinstating conscription, and instead, have reserved it for times of war or crisis.

In Iran, the law of universal military service was approved by the National Consultative Assembly in June 1925. This law has continued to be enforced since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, with some changes and adjustments to the duration of military service based on the country's circumstances.

It's natural that Islamic law, which considers defending the Islamic territory a duty for all Muslims, men and women alike, does not oppose this law. However, over the past 40 years, efforts have been made to facilitate the process of military service for young people by introducing new regulations and plans, such as the possibility of buying military service, exemptions, increased military salaries, and new proposals.

All these plans and actions, including the proposal to buy military service, have had both opponents and supporters. The Islamic Consultative Assembly is one of the institutions that, in cooperation with the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, follows up on proposals related to military service and has approved many bills and proposals in this regard over the years.

Regarding the issues related to universal military service, including the proposal to increase military salaries and the proposal to buy military service, Iran Daily reporter conducted exclusive interviews with parliamentarians, which will be presented in the following:

### Military service purchase plan discriminatory

Mohammad Amir, a lawmaker representing Ahvaz, and a member of the Article 90 Commission of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, is one of the opponents of the military service purchase plan, which he believes is discriminatory.

According to him, the plan creates a divide between the haves and have-nots, as well as those who have a good financial situation and those who do not. This is because individuals who do not have a good financial situation are forced to serve in the military, while wealthy individuals can buy their way out of service by paying a fee.

He added, this is a form of discrimination, and I believe such a plan should not exist. Instead, exceptions could be made for individuals who have specialized skills or are considered to be among the country's elite, and who could be more productive in other areas, contributing to the economy and the country's benefit. However, the idea that someone can simply pay a fee to receive an exemption card and have the money deposited into the treasury, and think that this creates economic benefits, is a mistake. Instead, the individual's presence in other areas should have economic justification, and their abilities should contribute to the economy and other sectors.

# To serve or to pay: Debate over Iran's Military Service Act

By Sadeq Dehqan  
 Staff writer

## INTERVIEW

*The term "military service" or "compulsory military service" refers to the mandatory military period for men in Iran, which has always been one of the most significant challenges and concerns for every Iranian man at the beginning of his youth.*

*According to Iran's Military Service Act, and in accordance with Article 2 of this law, every male Iranian individual, upon reaching the age of 18, becomes subject to the regulations of universal military service.*



Abdolkarim Hashemi Nakhle Ebrahimi



Mohammad Amir

### Military expertise for economic growth

Regarding the increase in military salaries, Amir believes that if we compare the current salaries of soldiers to those of a few years ago, we will see positive developments. Since the increase in military salaries, there has been an increase in voluntary enlistment for military service, whereas previously, there was less enthusiasm for going to military service, and many individuals avoided it. This is because there are individuals who are struggling to make ends meet and provide for their families, and military service puts them in a worse situation. He emphasized the need to utilize the abilities of soldiers optimally, saying, "Of course, it's essential to use the labor force of soldiers in a logical and rational way in the economy and various sectors of the country. Simply having a large number of soldiers in barracks, with the significant economic costs that come with it, is not beneficial, and the costs should be offset in other ways. There are many skilled, semi-skilled, and specialist laborers among soldiers, and these capacities can be utilized during military service to generate income and economic benefits for the country."

He suggested, "Soldiers can be used in areas other than purely military matters, such as in industry and production, so that they can prepare for the job market in the future and generate income for the country."

Regarding military salaries, he believes, "In my opinion, the current salaries of soldiers are suitable considering the country's economic situation, as soldiers make up a significant portion of the population, and paying higher salaries would require a large budget. However, if the abilities of soldiers are utilized in the country's economic sectors, the government will certainly have a better economic capacity to increase military salaries."



### Military service purchase plan not a bad idea

Abdolkarim Hashemi Nakhle Ebrahimi, a lawmaker representing Hormozgan province and a member of the Plan and Budget Committee, is one of the supporters of the military service purchase plan.

According to him, the plan has both supporters and opponents, but overall, he believes that the plan is not a bad idea. He thinks that some individuals may not be able to perform their military service for various reasons and may be willing to pay the cost of exemption. In this way, instead of evading military service and leaving the country through illegal means, they would pay the cost to the country. Of course, the issue of buying military service is related to peacetime, and in the event of war, military service would be mandatory for everyone.

### Soldiers' pay should exceed average wage

Regarding the increase in military salaries, he said, the salaries of our soldiers should be such that it motivates them, so that they consider their military service as part of their career and can count on their salary. We should be careful not to create conditions in the military that make individuals think that serving in the military is a waste of time and that they should not expect any income or benefits from it. Hashemi emphasized, "In my opinion, the salary of soldiers should be higher than the average monthly income of other individuals in the country, and a soldier should at least receive a salary equivalent to that of a government employee. Of course, soldiers can receive even higher salaries, considering the tough nature of their job which is 24 hours and the fact that the government can transfer them to any location and utilize their force in various areas."

Therefore, the salary and income of soldiers should be sufficient to ensure that they do not face economic difficulties, given that they are married or have family responsibilities."