

**UK-funded Myantrade portal removes Myanmar military-owned companies  
*Justice For Myanmar commends swift action, reiterates calls for targeted sanctions***

*Nov. 30, 2020, Yangon, Myanmar.* Myantrade, a Myanmar government trade promotion website funded by UK aid has removed Myanmar military-owned business listings. The de-listed companies initially included in the portal were Myawaddy Trading Limited, Ngwe Pinlae Livestock Breeding & Fisheries Co. Ltd. and Adipati Agricultural Produce Trading Ltd, all subsidiaries of military conglomerate Myanma Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL).

Once approached about the presence of military companies on Myantrade, the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) took immediate action to ensure the military companies were removed from the website.

FCDO gave Justice For Myanmar the following statement: *"Economic development in Myanmar has lifted 11 million people out of poverty since 2010. We remain concerned by the role of the military, which has vast interests across Myanmar's economy. The UK is committed to supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and responsible investment in Myanmar which will continue to create jobs, reduce poverty and open up Myanmar's economy to international standards and practices. We work closely with NGOs and businesses on economic growth and will continue to respond actively to legitimate concerns of stakeholders. This is demonstrated by our swift response to the inadvertent publication of military businesses on a UK funded web page."*

The new Myantrade website was launched on Oct. 21, 2020, as part of the \$5 million UK aid funded Myanmar Trade and Investment Project. It is implemented by the International Trade Centre, a joint agency of the United Nations and World Trade Organisation, in conjunction with the Myanmar government.

Justice For Myanmar spokesperson Yadanar Maung says: *"Military cartel business like those listed on Myantrade provide revenue that is distributed throughout the military, including military units that commit genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UK government's swift action prevents the military from financially benefiting from UK aid and denies them legitimacy. With small steps like this, the military cartel will be dismantled. We hope the UK government will take further steps in the right direction."*

The actions FCDO took on Myanmar come after the British government told recipients of UK aid not to spend funds on goods or services from military companies. No other government has made a similar public commitment to stop aid money reaching military companies. The British Embassy in Myanmar also has a policy of not sourcing good or services from military companies.

However, the British government has so far failed to implement the UN Fact-Finding Mission recommendations to impose targeted sanctions on Myanmar military companies and their owners, which is crucial for accountability and for the removal of the military from the economy. The military must be placed under civilian democratic control for Myanmar to achieve a federal democracy and sustainable peace.

# JUSTICE FOR MYANMAR

Yadanar Maung adds: *“It is urgent that donors and agencies working in Myanmar exercise heightened human rights due diligence and put in place strict policies and actions to ensure that they do not benefit the Myanmar military and its business interests in any way.”*

## **Note to editors**

Justice For Myanmar, a group of covert activists campaigning for justice and accountability for the people of Myanmar, is calling for an end to military business and for federal democracy and a sustainable peace.

For details on how MEHL dividends are distributed throughout the Myanmar military, see Amnesty International report “Military LTD”, which used MEHL data shared by Justice For Myanmar. See the source data on the Justice For Myanmar website here.

See the Burma Campaign UK list of Burmese military products and brands here:  
[https://burmacampaign.org.uk/burma\\_briefing/the-boycott-list/](https://burmacampaign.org.uk/burma_briefing/the-boycott-list/)

See the FCDO development tracker on the project here:  
<https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/XM-DAC-45001-B494>

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