

**JFM responds to appointment of Sittwe Port operator
*Calls for immediate suspension of project until there is democracy***

July 5, 2021, Myanmar: Justice For Myanmar calls for an immediate suspension of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project in response to recent Indian announcements regarding the Sittwe Port. On July 4, 2021, *the Hindu Business Line* reported that the Indian government awarded Bharat Freight Group subsidiary A to Z EXIM Private Limited a contract to operate and develop the Sittwe Port. This follows a tender for the dredging of Sittwe port and the Kaladan River, in which publicly-listed company Knowledge Marine and Engineering Works Limited (KMEW) is the sole remaining bidder.

Justice For Myanmar spokesperson Yadanar Maung says: *"We condemn the Indian government for continuing business as usual following Myanmar's brutal and illegal attempted coup. India's Kaladan project has exacerbated conflict and threatens ethnic communities. Speeding ahead with the project now under the military junta is reckless and will put local lives at risk. We call for the project to be immediately suspended until there is democracy with the military fully under civilian control. We call on Indian companies, including Bharat Freight and KMEW, to immediately end their complicity with the Myanmar junta through their involvement in the Kaladan project."*

The Kaladan project was formalised in 2008 under the previous military dictatorship and is designed to provide an alternative maritime trade route for landlocked northeast Indian states. It involves a cross-border road, an inland water terminal in Paletwa and a seaport in Sittwe, areas where the Myanmar military has committed genocide, and continues to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity. A 2013 civil society report criticised the project for a lack of consultation, lack of transparency, land confiscation, environmental destruction and risks to cultural heritage.

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.

ENDS

JUSTICE FOR MYANMAR

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