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Joint Media Release: Pressure builds on Adani Ports investors as new report reveals Adani Ports paid tens of millions to Myanmar military company. Human rights groups call on Adani Ports' investors to divest

A new report by the Australian Centre for International Justice (ACIJ) and Justice For Myanmar (JFM) exposes shocking new links between Adani Ports, and the Myanmar military owned company Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC). Last week, the United States [imposed targeted financial sanctions](#) against MEC and another Myanmar military conglomerate, MEHL.

The report 'Port of Complicity: Adani Ports in Myanmar' publishes leaked documents establishing for the first time the amount paid by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited's (**Adani Ports**) Myanmar subsidiary, the Adani Yangon International Terminal Company Limited, which is constructing a container port in Yangon on military owned land. The Adani Ports subsidiary paid a minimum of US\$30 million in land lease fees to MEC and a further US\$22 million in land clearance fees.

The report publishes explosive photos of Adani CEO Karan Adani exchanging gifts with the Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar military, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, in a tour of Mundra Port in India in July 2019. At the time of his visit, the Senior General was [barred from visiting the United States](#) because of the military's atrocities against the Rohingya ethnic minority. Further targeted sanctions, including financial sanctions, against the Senior General were imposed by the USA, Canada, the UK and the EU for his role in the military's serious human rights abuses, and the recent military coup. The photos contradict Adani Ports' February 2021 statement that deny engagement with military leadership.

The damning revelations exposing Adani Ports' financial transactions with the MEC have prompted calls for major investors like HSBC, Norges Bank, BlackRock, PGGP and TIAA among others, to immediately sever ties with Adani Ports.

Building on the legal analysis of the UN Human Rights Council's International Independent Fact-Finding Mission Report in 2019, the report warns that investments in companies who partner with the MEC can help finance the activities of the Myanmar military. These activities include systematic and widespread human rights abuses, some of which amount to atrocity crimes and are the subject of investigations by international tribunals.

Foreign investments also facilitate endemic corruption which has allowed the military to channel crucial funds away from the public purse. The military led a violent coup on 1 February toppling the democratically elected civilian government, which has resulted in mass repression and the killings of over 250 peaceful demonstrators, and the arbitrary detention of thousands. The report also finds that contrary to claims made by Adani Ports, the Yangon port operation is connected to its Australia operation through shared management. In Australia, Adani Ports' direct ties to the controversial Carmichael coal project were [recently exposed](#). Adani Ports owns the Bowen Rail Company which will operate the coal haulage from Adani's Carmichael mine to its port on the Great Barrier Reef.

The groups warn that investors in Adani Ports are not only supporting Adani's business dealings with the MEC and the Myanmar military but could also be supporting the funding of critical elements of Adani's controversial Carmichael coal project.

Pressure is building on Adani Ports investors with [major bondholder PIMCO cutting ties with Adani Ports](#) this week over its links to Adani's controversial Carmichael coal project. The release of the damning new report also comes as the Adani Ports inclusion on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index is [being reviewed](#) after [campaigners raised concerns](#) over its links with the Myanmar military and the Carmichael coal project.

Yadanar Maung, spokesperson for Justice For Myanmar says:

"Adani Ports has continued its business in Myanmar, despite an illegal military coup and the military's ongoing crimes against humanity. Adani Ports' business partner in Myanmar, now sanctioned by the US, is committing crimes against humanity as they deliberately kill peaceful protesters, torture detainees and steal public assets. Adani Ports' stands complicit in the military's atrocities and corruption through their direct payments to a military conglomerate. Despite repeated calls, Adani Ports has failed to take action by cutting ties with the criminal Myanmar military. We therefore call on Adani Ports' shareholders and creditors to uphold their human rights responsibilities by cutting ties with Adani Ports for its continued business with the criminal junta. Stand with the people of Myanmar."

Ahsan UI-Haque from the Burmese Rohingya Community in Australia says:

"The images of Adani Ports hosting the Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in Mundra, India less than two years after the General led a campaign of ethnic cleansing against my people shows that Adani Ports is willing to disregard human rights in pursuit of business profits. Businesses who continue to indirectly support the military through making deals with their companies assist in shielding the military from accountability. It's time to hold such businesses accountable in the same light. We call on investors to immediately divest from Adani Ports."

Former Member of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, and Member of the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, Chris Sidoti said:

"The report establishes the links between the Myanmar military and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited, which is intimately involved in the Carmichael coal project in Queensland. The question for Australia and Australians is whether we want to be hosting a company that is contributing to the enrichment of the Myanmar military. The question for investors in Adani is whether they want to fund the operations of the Myanmar military, because that is what they are doing indirectly by investing in Adani. This is a question also for sovereign wealth funds and pension funds that should have a highly ethical basis for their investment decisions."

Rawan Arraf, Executive Director at the Australian Centre for International Justice said:

"We've studied several statements from Adani Ports since May 2019 regarding its deal in Myanmar involving the MEC and we have no confidence it will uphold its obligations to respect human rights and disengage from Myanmar. It has been put on notice publicly by the UN on several occasions. At each turn it has denied or obfuscated its commercial operations in Myanmar."

"Adani Ports has had plenty of time to consider and review its operations in Myanmar. While other major multinational corporations are moving to suspend their operations in Myanmar,

Adani Ports appears to have dug in its heels. And that's appalling. If doing business with those accused of genocide does not trigger a fundamental reevaluation of your business, one would have thought, that when your business partner stages a violent coup - that would be the final straw. From our point of view, Adani's actions or omissions show that it doesn't care about the human rights impacts of its deal in Myanmar. That's why we're calling on governments, investors and shareholders to act and divest from Adani Ports. By doing this, investors are showing that they support and stand with the people in Myanmar in their struggle to end the abuses and economic control of the military."

Pablo Brait, campaigner with Market Forces said:

"Investors and bond arrangers like Barclays and BlackRock should not be risking their reputations by supporting a company that is so mired in controversy. Adani Ports' role in the Carmichael thermal coal project - a project that will fuel the climate crisis and the extreme weather it is causing - shows it is not a responsible or ethical company. When you add its reported links to the Myanmar military you get a picture of a company with a very concerning environmental, social and governance risk profile."

[Footage of the Senior General of the Myanmar military meeting and exchanging gifts with Adani Ports CEO Karan Adani is available here.](#)

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Key Points from the 'Port of Complicity' report

Documents reveal Adani paid millions to military company for port lease (P. 14)

Leaked documents published in the report reveal for the first time the amount paid by Adani Ports' subsidiary in Myanmar to the Myanmar military owned company MEC. The Adani Ports subsidiary who is constructing the port, Adani Yangon International Terminal Company Limited, paid a minimum of US\$30 million in land lease fees to MEC. A further US\$22 million was paid in land clearance fees. The recipient of the land clearance fees are unclear, but it is likely that they may flow to MEC as the owner of the land.

Photos reveal Adani Ports CEO exchanged gifts with sanctioned Myanmar military general (P. 16)

In July 2019, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Adani Ports' headquarters in the port of Mundra, India. The Senior General, published photographs and videos of this extensive tour on his personal website and it was reported in Myanmar State news media. This special tour included the exchanging of gifts between Adani Ports' CEO, Karan Adani and accused war criminal and perpetrator of genocide, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

The photos contradict Adani Port's statements denying engagement with military leadership.

At the time of his visit, the Senior General was [barred from visiting the United States](#) because of the military's atrocities against the Rohingya ethnic minority. The Senior General was hit by further US targeted financial sanctions in December 2019, and the UK in July

2020, for his role in the crimes against the Rohingya. In February and March 2021, the US, the UK, Canada and the EU sanctioned Min Aung Hlaing for his role in the military coup.

This visit and tour given to the Senior General, occurred less than two years **after** the ethnic cleansing campaign known as ‘clearance operations’ that killed thousands of Rohingya in Arakan State and drove over 700,000 Rohingya to seek safety in Bangladesh. The atrocities of the military since August 2017 are now under investigation at the International Criminal Court, and the genocidal nature of the crimes are under investigation at the International Court of Justice.

Adani Ports’ agreement with MEC was entered into less than two years after ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya people (P. 12)

This agreement was entered into less than two years after the military’s ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya, and less than a year after the UN’s FFM warned foreign corporations from engaging with the Myanmar military’s owned and controlled businesses.

Adani Ports continues work in Myanmar while other foreign companies exit (P. 20)

While other foreign companies are severing ties with the Myanmar military companies in response to the current military coup crisis, Adani has shown a careless lack of awareness and ignorance in its engagement in Myanmar with the MEC and the military, and the real risk that it could be complicit in the military’s crimes.

In February 2021, in response to questions regarding Adani’s work in Myanmar, in the context of the military coup, Adani Ports CEO Karan Adani confirmed to investors that Adani’s work in Myanmar is *‘rock solid irrespective of what happens at the political level’*.

Adani Ports funding coal haulage for Adani’s controversial Carmichael coal mine in Australia (P. 23)

Adani Ports direct ties to the controversial Carmichael coal project were [recently exposed](#). Adani Ports owns the Bowen Rail Company which will operate the coal haulage from Adani’s Carmichael mine to its port on the Great Barrier Reef.

Investors in Adani Ports are not only supporting Adani’s business partnerships with the Myanmar military but could also be supporting the funding of critical elements of Adani’s controversial Carmichael coal project.

Adani Ports at risk of complicity in violations of international law (P. 28)

The report argues that Adani Ports’ ignorance of its responsibilities to respect human rights and mitigate risks means it could be complicit in crimes under international law, and if Adani Ports refuses to disengage from its ties to the MEC, it should be considered in any targeted sanction measures.