

## **The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project**

The Kaladan project is a bilateral project between the Governments of Myanmar and India merely to develop a transport facility / corridor through a region that has very poor or negligible transport infrastructure. Such transport connectivity is recognized as the fundamental requirement for any region or community to prosper in any sphere be it social, educational, industrial, trade or any other areas. The need for the project and the fact that the project will bring about only positive changes to the region are the basic facts accepted while commencing the project. The people of the project area and the local government are certainly competent and knowledgeable to discuss any aspect of the project and cooperate for speedy implementation of the project for the benefit of people who urgently need proper transport connectivity.

2. The implementation of the project is being made with the involvement and information of Government of Myanmar and its authorized representatives like (i) The Working Committee for the Kaladan Project (ii) The Nodal Officer who is also the Port Officer at Sittwe as well as (iii) the local Government of the Rakhine State. The suggestion to provide more information on the project to the local people merits consideration and further action in the matter can be taken in consultation with the Working Committee.

3. The project (Port & Waterway components) do not involve (a) land acquisition involving displacement of people (b) clearing of forest (c) infringement on the habitat of any wild life (d) large scale dredging (e) setting up or operation of any plant / machinery generating pollutants (f) submergence of any land area or (g) displacing any one from their traditional vocations / livelihood. Therefore, it is not considered necessary for a third party to examine the environmental aspects afresh, midway through the implementation of the project that is progressing with close interaction between Govts of Myanmar and India at every stage.

4. As regards capital works between Sittwe and Paletwa are concerned, the main works are (i) construction of additional port facility next to the existing port at Sittwe to enhance the capacity of the existing facility at Sittwe (ii) deepening the approach channel from the sea to the port by dredging (iii) Improving the depth in the river wherever the depth is less than 2.0 mtrs. (iv) Construction of an Inland Water Terminal at Paletwa. It can be said that nearly 90% of the works from Sittwe to Paletwa is concentrated at Sittwe.

5. As regards the proposed road from Paletwa to Indo-Myanmar border, the details are not yet finalised in all respect and as and when same is finalised and work arranged, necessary considerations from environmental point of view will also be in place. The waterway was originally proposed for development up to Kaletwa. Subsequently the plan has been changed and the waterway development is to be undertaken up to Paletwa only. As no work has commenced so far at Paletwa, the information regarding Paletwa is not correct. Also, no damage has been caused to any fishing activity or cultivated area near Sittwe due to the construction activity of Port & Waterway components.

6. Communities have a right to know details of projects implemented in their region. So far, the Works related to the Kaladan Project is happening only at Sittwe, which is already an operational port. The Works at Sittwe cannot be termed as a new project, but essentially increasing the capacity of existing facilities there. There already is a Working Committee of Government of Myanmar for this project. It may be possible that this Working Committee may from time to time disseminate more information related to the project to the people of the project area through the local government / concerned departments while the Works are undertaken along the river up to Paletwa.

7. The Kaladan project and improved connectivity & transportation facility provided by it is expected to act as a catalyst to the overall development of the region. It is a fact that the Rakhine and Chin states have very poor transport and communication infrastructure. This is one of the fundamental reasons due to which the people of these states are finding it difficult to develop agriculture, trade and commerce to their full potential. The Kaladan project will open up a unique multimodal transport system in the region and same is therefore very important for the people. The project will also generate many opportunities for trade between India and Myanmar for the benefit of the region.

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