



Kachin Development Networking Group

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Statement on the jade mining landslide in Gwi Hka, Hpakant Township, Kachin State in 2/7/2020

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Firstly, Kachin Development Networking Group would like to express our deep sorrow to those families affected by the jade mining landslide on 2nd July 2020 in Gwi Hka, Hpakant Township, Kachin State which killed over 200 and injured another 50 people.

The jade prospectors killed were mostly students and youth. These deaths at the Hpakant jade mines happen every year but this was one of the largest loss of life ever and a huge loss of our nations' human resources.

Most people prospecting at the jade mines are poor and unemployed and seeking livelihoods to support themselves and their families and come from Kachin State and all across Myanmar.

The tragedy at the Hpakant mines is not due to natural disaster but is a human-made disaster. The core reason for these deaths is the central government's poor governance of natural resources and environmental mismanagement and flaws in the extreme centralised quasi-civilian 2008 constitution.

Recommendations

- The central government, jade mining companies and other related groups have to take full responsibility and be accountable for these tragedies, rather than calling them natural disasters or accidents.
- Immediately stop extraction of natural resources by using giant mining machines, by dynamite and bombs in any mines in Hpakant Township.
- To implement and apply federal democracy ownerships rights, devolved governance systems, local taxation and revenue sharing policies in a new constitution.
- If we do not solve on this problem quickly and continue to ignore these kinds of social, environmental and political challenges, conflicts in our country will only multiply.

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