



The

Shwe Gas

Bulletin

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Activists Demand Referendum On Gas Extraction

Gas Pipeline a Threat to National Security

February 28, 2005

At a round table meeting on the Shwe gas pipeline, participants determined that the project creates a security threat to Bangladesh, Burma and India.

Speakers at the Energy and National Security meeting on the tri-nation gas pipeline said a number of militant and separatist groups are active in the pipeline areas and the pipeline may become a target.

The round table was organized by the Student and Youth Movement against Plundering Oil and Gas. All Arakan Students and Youth Congress (AASYC), the Shwe Gas Movement and two Burmese students organizations also attended.



Photo-AASYC

Forced labour in the pipeline area, Ponnagyun Township, Arakan State, 2004

March 3, 2005

Activists from the Shwe Gas Movement have called for a referendum on gas extraction, to be held among affected people along the proposed pipeline route from Arakan State, Western Burma to India.

The output from the Shwe off shore fields would be worth an estimated between \$19 to 26 billion US. The gas will be exported to India, while the people of western Burma themselves currently have no access to electricity or gas grids.

A nationwide referendum on the sale of Shwe gas to India is essential, says the Shwe Gas Movement, because without public consent, the Shwe Gas Project will not turn out to be a positive development for Burma. It will only be a curse to Burma and its people, because the regime will be enabled to further consolidate its in power with the profits from this project.

A Shwe campaign spokesperson requested that “the project be postponed until the people of Burma are free to participate in the decision to sell their resources to other countries. For India to buy gas now is to give direct support to the brutal military regime in Burma.”

The Burmese military regime earns \$200 to 400 million US annually from the Yadana natural gas project. The regime bought 10 MIG-29 fighters from Russia with its first down payments from the pipeline, claims Burma Campaign UK.

The Shwe Gas Movement is made up of individuals and groups of people from Arakan State, in Western Burma, as well as regional and international friends who share their concerns.

The Shwe Gas Movement is launching its campaign with a website (www.shwe.org) and signature petition to the international community.

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Editorial

Every free man knows what should be compromised and what should not, according to the basic principles of human rights. As indigenous peoples of a nation that predates the nation-state of Burma, Arakanese have the right to self determination; likewise they have the right to direct access and control of national resources that they have protected, reserved, and cherished for centuries. Thus the rights of three million Arakanese to access natural gas for daily cooking and electricity should be the first priority to be addressed before any agreement or Memorandum is signed with Burma's junta by Bangladeshi, Indian, and Korean corporations.

Arakan State (formerly the Kingdom of Arakan) is located in the Western part of Burma on the Bay of Bengal. Arakan, one of poorest states, is currently under political and economic management by the Rangoon regime.

The junta-run newspaper, *The New Light of Myanmar*, on February 6, 2005 stated that 9.35% of the population can access electricity. It does not mention specifically whether its statistic is the result of a state-wide or citywide survey.

The Shwe Gas Campaign Committee operating in Bangladesh, India, and Thailand has demanded that a referendum be held to ensure direct access to gas for cooking and a minimum 12 hours of electricity in towns and villages for three million people.

This demand comes in light of the Korea-based Daewoo Corporation and the Burma junta's declaration of a gas discovery up to three trillion cubic feet in volume in the Bay of Bengal in early 2004. It is worth between 19 to 26 billion US dollars, but the Daewoo Corporation and the junta have not informed the people of the discovery.

While the recent tri-nation (Bangladesh, Burma, and India) meeting in Rangoon to discuss details such as gas price and a pipeline route to India from Burma via Bangladesh went ahead as planned, concern among local people is growing as to what the pipeline might mean in terms of environmental damages, sexual violence due to expanded military presence, human rights violations, forced relocations, and land confiscations. Their concern is real as they have learned lessons the hard way from the Yadana gas pipeline project. Ominously, with its first payments from Thailand the junta purchased 10 Russian made MIG-29 fighters. The junta spends 40% of its annual budget for military and just 0.04% for education and health.

The junta, under the name of State Peace and Development Council or SPDC, is an illegitimate regime and does not represent the 50 million people of Burma, as shown by the junta's gunning down of three thousand peaceful demonstrators during the popular pro-democracy uprising in 1988 and again in its refusal to hand over power to the elected representatives from the 1990 nationwide elections.

The United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Article 26 clearly states that indigenous peoples have the right to own, develop, and control the total environment of their traditional territories, including making their own laws in accordance with their traditions, customs and lands and resource management systems. Therefore, the call of the campaign committee for referendum is legitimate. If this call is not answered, a peaceful opposition campaign by the Arakanese people and international community is only fair and just.

International Campaign Launched to Pressure Total

February 21, 2005

An international campaign, Total Pollutes Democracy, has been launched by 40 organisations in 18 countries opposed to Total, the French oil company with investment in Burma.

The campaign is led by the International Federation for Human Rights, Actions Birmanie of Belgium and the French collective, and is aimed at pressuring the French oil giant Total to pull out of Burma and remove their support for the military dictatorship.

Olivier De Schutter, secretary general of the International Federation for Human Rights, says that Total must pull out of Burma, for taking advantage of army-imposed forced labor for three years, between 1995 and 1998, for the construction of the Yadana gas pipeline. He added that Total's investment fills the pockets of a predatory regime.

Total had signed a 30 year contract to buy gas from the state-owned Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise in 1992. Total started the Yadana 1 billion US dollar gas project in 1998.

The European Union banned all new investment in Burma's oil and gas sectors in 2004. The United States also implemented a ban on investment in 1997 due to the Burmese regime's human rights abuses.

Burma Campaign UK revealed that Total is the largest European corporate funder of the regime. The Yadana gas project, in which it is a partner, is believed to earn the regime between 200m US dollars to 450m US dollars a year. Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize winner and leader of Burma's democracy movement, has said that Total has become the main supporter of the Burmese military regime.

Bangladesh Imposes Conditions for Gas Pipeline Transit

March 3, 2005

Bangladesh has rejected a proposal from India to allow a gas pipeline to pass through its territory unless certain conditions are met, Mosharraf Hossain, Bangladesh Minister for Energy, told reporters in Dhaka.

The conditions stipulate that India allow Bangladesh to export its goods to Nepal and Bhutan through Indian territory and allow the import of electricity from Nepal. The Minister also demanded measures to reduce Bangladesh's trade imbalance with India.

The \$1 billion US 290-kilometer gas pipeline will start from Arakan state, Burma, and enter the North East Indian states of Mizoram and Tripura before crossing Bangladesh and then reaching Kolkata (Cakutta), India.

If the project goes ahead, Bangladesh will earn an estimated \$125 million US annually in transit fees. It would also be the first international pipeline for India, which imports 70 percent of its crude oil need and has started importing liquefied natural gas. According to the Indian Petroleum Minister, Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, India's demand for gas could reach 400 million standard cubic meters per day by the year 2025, necessitating a constant search for energy sources. India, with a population of 1 billion has



Possible gas pipeline route from Burma to India

become the world's sixth largest consumer of oil. According to the Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, the three

countries drafted an agreement in Rangoon last month and will finalise officially in Dhaka in April.

Daewoo Drills Natural Gas In Shwe Again

March 4, 2005

Daewoo International Corporation, a major Korean trading firm, has successfully completed a second test drilling in the Shwe gas fields, Western



Burma where it found a 140-meter-thick gas deposit under the sea in early January 2005.

A spokesman for Daewoo told Korea Times that gas was extracted amounting to 96 million cubic feet a day from the reserve. Tests show the quality of the gas is very good and suitable commercial use.

In January 2004, Gas reserves were estimated at four to six trillion cubic feet, which is equivalent to 80-120 million tons of liquefied natural gas. Daewoo International say the gas field is the biggest success case in the

history of Korean energy development projects. Daewoo is expected to earn at least 100 to 150 billion in Korean currency annually, for 20 years from 2010 when production commences.

Daewoo is also exploring near the Shwe fields in Shwe Phyu and Ngwe. Daewoo officials said huge gas deposits may exist in these fields.

Daewoo has a 60% stake in Shwe, Korean Gas Corporation has 10%, India state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (Videsh Ltd) has a 20% stake and the Gas Authority of India Ltd has a 10% stake.

Out of Burma: Cross-Border Resource Extraction

*Edith Mirante**

(Presentation paper for Burma Conference, Delhi, October 2004)

Burma has unfortunately been the perfect bait for neocolonialism: a poor country rich in resources, with unempowered people subsisting under a military regime which strictly controls the economy. Burma possesses vast mineral deposits from gold to gems to copper to uranium, forests of valuable hardwoods, powerful rivers and reserves of petroleum. During Burma's first phase of military rule, under Gen. Ne Win's Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), from 1962 to 1988, extraction of these resources was constrained by a "hermit" self-isolationist economic policy designed to ensure military control of the economy. Mining and logging operations in frontier regions were small-scale and usually involved smuggling, with cooperation of armed ethnic rebel groups. In the BSPP-controlled central regions such as the Pegu Yoma, vast forest tracts were logged out, as the old "Burma Selective System" for sustainable teak harvesting was discarded. But much more forest was safely preserved in other areas, especially the ethnic-held frontier regions.

Immediately following the military regime's 1988 identity shift to the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) junta, a change in economic identification occurred. Burma would now operate under an "open" "free market" system. In reality, economic control remained with the military and its cronies. Concessions for foreign investment were granted for military purposes: to provide hard currency needed for a massive troop buildup and weaponry such as MiG fighter-bomber jets.

The first resource up for grabs was the forested land along Burma's Thai border. By late 1988, timber concessions were granted to 37 Thai companies and a "Teak War" was fought by Burma's army to seize access the forests from Karen, Karenni and other ethnic forces. Thailand had suffered disastrous floods from its own deforestation and was eager for a new wood supply. Burma went from 7th highest rate of deforestation in the world to 3rd highest, in just three years. Much of what had been mainland Asia's largest remaining intact tropical rainforest as well as the world's largest remaining deciduous teak forests, ended up as flooring, boat decks and furniture, at the hands of Thai companies.

This infusion of income strengthened the SLORC at a critical time. Later, China and India would also become

major extractors of Burma's timber. An even stronger financial lifeline for the junta appeared in 1989 when Burma granted nine transnational petroleum companies (including Shell, Amoco, Idemitsu and Petro-Canada) concessions for onshore petroleum exploration. In the three year period of those first contracts, most of the companies drilled dry and left Burma, often after boycotts, shareholder actions and other pressure.

Total, of France, and Unocal of the US, stayed on as partners in an offshore concession in Burma's Andaman Sea, which held large reserves of natural gas. Premier, of the UK, with Nippon, of Japan, developed another offshore natural gas concession. In spite of warnings about potential effects on a rainforest ethnic war zone, the companies hatched a scheme to build pipelines from their offshore sites and across about 65 kilometers of southern Burma's Tenasserim region to Thailand, in order to sell the gas to the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT.) Burma's military buildup to secure the pipeline route included severe human rights violations against indigenous Karen, Mon and Tavoyan people, which are currently the subject of litigation against Unocal and Total in the US and Europe.

Environmental protests on the Thai side of the border delayed completion of the Yadana pipeline, but it was completed in 1998, as was Premier's Yetagun pipeline in 2000. Premier sold its concession to Indonesia's Petronas in 2002. As it turned out, Thailand was experiencing a "gas glut" during this time, and the Burma pipeline gas was more costly than gas from huge reserves in Thailand's own Gulf of Siam. But Thailand was forced, through an unfavorable "take or pay" contract, to accept the gas from Burma.

Thai relations with Burma since 1988 have consistently appeared to put commerce above other concerns. Political refugees have been handed back to Burma while logging deals were negotiated. Mon refugees and guerrilla leaders were in effect held hostage until a ceasefire deal was made, to defuse the rebellion in the pipeline region. A persistent pattern of killings of Thai civilians, police and soldiers in Burmese troop incursions and shelling has been shrugged off by successive Thai administrations, with no compensation from Burma. Even during times when Thailand/Burma relations have deteriorated to a "war of words," continued purchasing of gas from Burma has not been questioned. In another controversial scheme, Thailand has become further entwined with the SPDC as it seeks to build dams on tributaries of Burma's wild Salween River, to provide Thailand with

electrical power or irrigation water. Also, Thai trawler fleets, among others, have steadily and severely depleted Burma's Andaman Sea fisheries since 1988.

Relations between other countries and Burma's regime have been compromised, if not corrupted, by their gas project involvement. The United States legislated a series of strong economic sanctions aimed at taking US investment dollars away from Burma's junta (now called the State Peace and Development Council, SPDC instead of SLORC) but the Achilles' heel has always been the continued presence of Unocal as one of Burma's biggest investors, as the company has managed to stay exempt from the sanctions. Similarly the presence of Total in its SPDC joint-venture makes the European Union's condemnations of the regime ring somewhat hollow. The compromising effect is seen again with Canada -- firmly anti-SPDC but allowing controversial Canadian mining firm Ivanhoe its lucrative investment in Burma's Monywa copper mine.

The Burma-Thailand pipelines have been so troublesome and of such questionable value, that one would think they would serve as a "lessons learned" example of what not to do. However, a decade later, they may be cloned, in a project to develop large natural gas fields beneath Burma's western waters. Daewoo, the bankrupt yet still viable South Korean conglomerate struck enormous natural gas reserves -- from 4 to 6 trillion cubic feet -- off the coast of Burma's western Arakan State.

Partnership deals for the gas block were made with India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh (ONGC) and the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) plus South Korea's Kogas as partners in 2003. In October 2004 ONGC Videsh and GAIL also negotiated a 30% interest in an adjacent Daewoo gas block. The gas has been found and the question is what to do with it. As usual, using Burma's gas to supply electricity to towns and cities in Burma itself appears out of the question. The SPDC's priority is always hard currency for deadly weapons, not the enhancement of life. Therefore, the Arakan gas must be sold for hard currency -- estimated as an income for the regime of as much as US \$400 million a year. With India as Daewoo's partner, the end user has been obvious. Reportedly, the Burma gas could double sales of gas by Northeast India's Oil India Ltd., as part of a projected "gas grid" in the region. But how useful a huge new infrastructure investment in Burma gas would be is still questionable. In June 2004, an Indian petroleum ministry official stated that India was about to export diesel fuel to Burma from Assam in Northeast India, possibly by a new pipeline in the future. So petroleum pipelines could be running in both directions, Burma-India and India-Burma.

Petroleum pipelines are attractive to many financial interests. These are high-profile, high-cost projects which greatly benefit multinational construction and maintenance contractors such as Halliburton. Corporations will "move heaven and earth" to run a pipeline from point A to point B. As seen with the Burma-Thailand pipelines, where petroleum pipelines venture, controversy and conflict arise. Unocal's involvement with the Taliban to promote a pipeline through Afghanistan; corruption involving Central Asian regimes in other Caspian Sea pipeline routes; concerns about rainforests and social effects of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline in Africa; Texaco's notorious oil spills in Ecuador; the list is long and appalling.

Prospective pipeline routes for the Daewoo/India Arakan gas have included Bangladesh, Northeast India, and the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh, under Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government, has run hot and cold about a pipeline route which would stretch from the offshore blocks through Bangladesh to Northeast India's Tripura State.

Bangladesh's mistrust of India, the end-user, appeared to cause Khaleda Zia's government to initially reject approval for a Burma-Bangladesh-India pipeline. Nonetheless, in August 2004, a new pipeline proposal was set for Bangladesh government approval. At times when the pipeline's route through Bangladesh is a strong possibility, Bangladesh's relations with Burma appear to warm considerably, despite Burma being a source of refugees, armed border violations, and other problems for Bangladesh.

A strictly India-Burma land route would bypass Bangladesh, cutting through more of western Burma. It must be pointed out that any land route through Burma has daunting drawbacks: rough terrain; indigenous Buddhist, Moslem, Christian and Animist people (including Rakhines, Rohingyas, Mros, Chakmas, Chins) who are vulnerable to human rights abuse; and small but active rebel forces from some of these groups.

The Burma land-route challenges issues may pale in comparison to the turmoil in India's own Northeast. The Burma-Thailand pipelines went from a part of Burma where a weakened armed resistance was crushed by the SPDC, to Thailand, where the most stubborn barrier was the passive resistance of environmental demonstrators. This is not the case in Northeast India, a region with an astounding level of ongoing political violence, including terrorism and sabotage. Ethnic factions in Northeast India which agitate against any Indian government involvement in their region, especially the military presence, are hardly likely to tolerate the infrastructure intrusion and military security necessary for a new gas pipeline. If it is welcomed at all, it would probably be as a new target for extortion and sabotage.

Already, nonviolent opposition to a gas pipeline from Burma has already been voiced by North East Chapter of Human Rights Network of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples, a group from Mizoram State, citing environmental and land-rights risks. Less polite objections are sure to follow.

A long undersea pipeline across the Bay of Bengal would avoid many political and environmental problems that come with the land routes, but would be particularly expensive and would still provide major income to the SPDC. A non-pipeline option is to build an elaborate Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) processing facility right on the coast of Burma and ship the gas from Arakan's seaport. While this option may leave the smallest environmental and political footprint, an LNG project would still be a massive investment providing an infusion of cash to the SPDC and putting India and South Korea more "in bed" with Burma's junta than ever before. Also, LNG production and shipping could still be vulnerable to sabotage and even terrorist hijacking in an unstable region.

India's efforts toward commercial involvement with Burma are often excused as a way to counterbalance China's close relationship with the SPDC. China is certainly a major player in most aspects of Burma's economy. Resource extraction by China includes mining -- particularly river-polluting gold dredging in Burma's northern Kachin State and rapacious logging of Kachin State's precious old-growth temperate forests.

As in Thailand, China imposed a logging ban following flooding, and turned to stepped up cross-border logging in Burma. With an "industrial" scale of logging by Chinese companies in northern Burma since 1998, now it is Burma experiencing catastrophic floods due to deforestation. Yunnan Province of China, which borders Kachin State -- has been viewing Burma as "China's new frontier" to be exploited. In June 2004, 31 international scientists, conservationists and attorneys and 13 international environmental groups sent a letter China's Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and the Governor of Yunnan Province, calling for the Chinese government to "take immediate action to halt all logging in the N'Mai Hku area [of Kachin State], implement stricter cross-border trade regulations, and more effectively apply the existing laws to prevent corruption."

There is considerable talk of reviving the World War II Stilwell/Ledo Roads through Burma, to enable commerce between Northeast India and Yunnan. Under other circumstances this might be an excellent concept. But the way things are now in Burma, one can predict the transnational road project increasing forced labor, brutal militarization, environmental damage and the spread of HIV/AIDS to more indigenous communities in northern Burma.

One more twist in regional relations is a plan floated by Chinese academics for shipment of African and Middle East oil to China via Burma by river, railway, and even an oil pipeline to be built from a Burmese seaport, all the way through Burma, to China. Such a pipeline, despite Burma's record of armed rebellion and other instability, is presented as potentially safer than the Straits of Malacca shipping lanes. The arrogant notion of downtrodden Burma being turned into a convenient funnel or conduit for China would be laughable if other grandiose and horrible schemes had not already achieved reality and done so much damage in Burma.

In most nations' relations with Burma, extraction of resources overwhelms other concerns. The regional security benefit of a stable, free and peaceful Burma -- which would not export refugees and narcotics -- is sacrificed for corporate profit. Principles such as human rights, indigenous land rights and environmental protection are abandoned in favor of maintaining the flow of resource extraction. In the case of petroleum pipelines, tempting targets for conflict and sabotage may be run from Burma right into neighboring countries. The projects themselves become a lightning rod for regional insecurity. The true beneficiaries of resource extraction are Burma's generals, who receive kickbacks for themselves and money for their MiGs, AK47s, surveillance equipment and landmines. The long-suffering people of Burma receive more suffering and longer suffering.

It is crucial for concerned people in the resource-extracting countries in the region and beyond to intensify their pressure campaigns regarding Burma. A small band of Thai environmental protesters delayed and nearly stopped the Yadana pipeline. Grassroots and shareholder activists and members of governments elsewhere have stopped other Burma schemes from going forward, or at least slowed them down significantly. Many tactics are needed to show the corporations and governments involved with Burma's junta that the downside of resource extraction under present conditions -- violence, human rights abuse, environmental degradation -- outweighs the short term profits to be made. While immense damage has certainly already been done, Burma's remaining resources need to be preserved for Burma's own use, as a precious heritage not intended for plunder by callous neighbors or piratical multinationals.

**Edith Mirante is head of Project Maje and author of two books: *Burmese Looking Glass* and *Down the Rat Hole: Adventures Underground on Burma's Frontiers*. www.projectmaje.org*

News Diary



1. U.S.A based Unocal on March 16, 2005 sued Lexington Insurance and New Hampshire Insurance and other insurers, Switzerland-based Coverium and Germany-based Gerling-Konzern in ignoring the clear potential of covered liability. Unocal believes that the insurance companies are believed to be liable in a settlement of law suit against Unocal by villagers who were subject to forced labour, murder, rape, torture, battery, forced relocation and detention by Burmese military personnel due to the Unocal pipeline project. (March 17; The International Herald Tribunal)
2. The International Labour Organization (ILO) on 23rd February demanded the Burmese junta to publicise edict 1/99 within the army which forbids forced labour, to appoint a high level official to jointly investigate reports of forced labour practice perpetrated by the army, to give local ILO officials more freedom to move around the country and to release all those detained for reporting to the ILO. (Feb. 24. AP)
3. The six North Korean nationals who entered Burma from China, presumably to seek asylum at the South Korean embassy in Rangoon, were detained in Keng Tung prison, in northeast Burma, and were sentenced to five-year imprisonment and hard labour on 23 February. The South Korean embassy's secretary requested that the six prisoners be transferred to the embassy (Feb 24, DVB)
4. Bangladesh and Burma agreed to set up a joint commission to strengthen trade and economic ties between the two countries after a meeting between visiting Burmese Foreign Minister Nyan Win and his Bangladesh counterpart in Dhaka on 24th February.(Feb 25,Mizzima News). They would discuss possible international consortium to finance the proposed gas pipeline, examine the international rules and regulations related to the management of the trans-national gas pipeline and the possible route of the proposed gas pipeline.(Feb24, News From Bangladesh)
5. In 2004, Bangladesh imported goods like rice, fish and timber worth US\$26.5 million (€19.9 million) from Myanmar, while exporting to myanmar goods including medicines and textiles valued at US\$3.5 million. (Feb24, AP)
6. Bangladesh and Burma said on 24th February that they would push ahead with the planned construction of a road linking the two countries, which would boost cross-border trade and travel. (Feb24, AP)
7. State-owned refiner Indian Oil Corp (IOC) - Oil India Ltd (OIL) combine who may also be joined by state-owned gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd, are planning to bid for on show Blocks RS-5 and RS-9, west of the Irrawaddy River. (Feb 24, Hindustan Times)
8. KNU and SPDC have been holding provisional ceasefire since January 2004 but there have been sporadic minor clashes between the two sides. (Feb 23, DVB)
9. Saboteurs blew up an oil pipeline in northern Iraq. The pipeline connects oil fields Dibis with Kirkuk, 35 kilometers to the south east. The pipeline is run by state-own Noth Oil Company. A spokesman said it would take at least four days to repair the pipeline.

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Contributions of pictures, articles, news, or research papers are welcome. Any suggestions or advice to improve the quality of news and information sharing from you are most valuable to us.

Activists in Dhaka Protest Against Gas Pipeline



Photo-AASYC

Shwe gas campaigners in Bangladesh protest against pipeline projects

Youth and Student Movement against Plundering Oil and Gas, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), the National People Resistance movement (NPRM), the Bangladesh Farmers and Workers League (BFWL), the National Awami Party (NAP), the Bangladesh Youth Union (BYU), the World Literature Center (WLC), the World Peace Organization (WPO) and individuals joined in the demonstrations, according to the AASYC.

The two special guests named as Mr. Mamood Adash, the economist and Dr. Bodural Immar, the professor of Dhaka University and the specialist in Oil and Gas also joined in the demonstrations.

February 20, 2005

On Jan 11 and Feb 19 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, activists from Burma and Bangladesh held demonstrations in hope of preventing environmental destruction with the implementation of gas pipeline, and to encourage participation in the gas campaign.

Some participants demonstrated by holding black flags and shouting slogans against the Burmese military regime and its Shwe gas project in Arakan State.

The black flags commemorated the death of three workers in an explosion

on January 8, 2005 at Tengrattila gas well, North East Bangladesh.

The demonstrators also called for the release of Aung San Su Kyi, Burmese democratic leader and all political prisoners who are being detained in Burmese Jails. Participants took part in the demonstration peacefully, as police looked on.

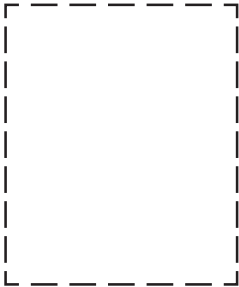
Participants from the Arakan League for Democracy, the All Arakan Student Youth Congress (AASYC), the Bangladesh Workers' Organization, Bangladesh Agricultural Farm Labor Federation (BAFLF), the

Please sign the petition on the www.shwe.org website.

The Shwe Gas Movement demand that the project be postponed until the people of Burma are free to participate in the decision to sell their resources to other countries. For India to buy gas now is to give direct support to the brutal military regime in Burma.

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Monthly Bulletin



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