

December 15, 2004

Honourable Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh of India  
Government of Republic of India  
Office of the Prime Minister, Room#152  
South Block  
New Delhi 110011  
India

**Subject: 1. An urgent plea to prevent deportation of Arakan Army (AA) and Karen National Union (KNU) personnel to Burma.**

**2. To help them achieve a settlement that would ensure their dignity after 220 years of conflict with the Myanmarese.**

Your Excellency Prime Minister,

Please accept my warm greetings from Columbia, Missouri, the United States of America.

Some members of the Arakan Army (AA), which is the military wing of the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), have been detained by the Indian authorities at Port Blair, Adamans Islands, since 1998. Detained along with them are also some members of the Karen National Union (KNU). At that time, I pleaded for justice to the then Indian Prime Minister with a letter, dated June 20, 1998. That letter should still be in the file in the office of Indian Prime Minister. A copy of my letter can be read at my web page <http://www.shwelumaung.org/PleaToIndianPM/PleaToIndianPM.pdf>. Now, we learn that they may be released and deported to Burma. **This is a plea to you and the people of India (1) not to deport them to Burma and (2) help them achieve a settlement that would ensure their dignity after years of conflict with the Myanmarese.** *In the absence of such a settlement, their deportation to Burma is the same as the death sentence handed down to them.* The Arakanese have been in conflict with the Myanmarese for 220 years.

Sir, I read the following in the Preamble of the Constitution of India.

### **Preamble**

**WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens:**

**JUSTICE, social, economic and political;**

**LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;**

**EQUALITY of status and of opportunity;**

**and to promote among them all**

**FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;**

**IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

"This information is downloaded from the web site of Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department)" [http://lawmin.nic.in/An\\_rep/contents.htm](http://lawmin.nic.in/An_rep/contents.htm).

Please allow me to emphasize that the people of Arakan are struggling for JUSTICE, LIBERTY, and EQUALITY, nothing more, nothing less. Here, I humbly implore you and the people of India for understanding and justice. Today, I read in a piece of BBC World News that says, "Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has promised to seek a settlement that would ensure dignity for Naga people after 50 years of conflict." Sir, this is great news.

In a similar fashion, the people of Arakan have been struggling for justice from the time their kingdom was colonized by the Myanmar Empire in 1784. This is a historical fact. You may please ask any of your Indian Professors of History in Kolkata University. The Arakanese and the Karens simply want "a settlement that would ensure dignity for Arakanese and Karen people after many years of conflict." Therefore, please help the Arakanese people achieve a settlement that would ensure their dignity after 220 years of conflict with the Myanmarese. The Karens have been in conflict with the Myanmarese for last 56 years. **Please do not deport Arakan Army (AA) and Karen National Union (KNU) personnel to Burma, without a settlement that will ensure dignity for them.**

Please also allow me to present to you the following piece of information that I collected from Lieut.-General Sir Arthur P. Phyre's book *History of Burma* (London, Trübner & Co., 1883), pp220-221. It reads as follow.

".....The conquest of Arakan had promised to bring quiet to that country. The people rejoiced at the prospect of relief from desolating civil war; but cruel oppression and severe exactions by the Burmese officers destroyed their hopes, and roused them to revolt. The fact of thousands of men being forced from their country to labour on the "work of merit" undertaken by Bodoahprâ, of whom none returned, is recorded with bitter resentment in the history of Arakan. The chiefs who headed the insurrection maintained for some years a guerrilla resistance. Thousands of the people abandoned their country, and took refuge in British territory, where they were permitted to settle on occupied land. Three chiefs after having bravely maintained the struggle for independence, were compelled to fly across the border. The arrogant aggressiveness of the Burmese officers, prompted by orders from the capital, produced collision with the British authorities of the district of Chittagaon. The river Nâf separates the territory of Arakan from that of Bengal. The Burmese general, Nandakyoazô, crossed that river near its mouth, at the head of five thousand men, to demand the three fugitives, who were charged with rebellion, robbery, and murder. He entrenched his force in British territory. A detachment of troops under major-general Erskine was sent from Calcutta to oppose this aggression. The two commanders met, and the Burmese officer consented to withdraw, on the assurance that inquiry would be made into the charges brought. The result was that the three chiefs were delivered up as the fugitive criminals, and two of

them were executed. Their real crime was, that they had led their fellow-countrymen in resistance to the Burmese conquerors, and in their wild war-fare had probably been as unscrupulous as their oppressors of the lives of their foes. Surrender of these patriots must be condemned as an act unworthy of a civilised power, having an armed force at command...”

Sir, these are the words of Sir Arthur Phyre who described an event of 1792, after the Burmese occupation of Arakan in 1784. Unfortunately, things have not changed yet. Although the founding parents of the Arakanese, the Karens, and the Burmese agreed to form *a modern nation state*, based upon the Justice, Liberty and Equality, the Burmese are still acting as the conquerors and oppressing the Arakanese and the Karens. That is why the rebellion is there. I once was also an Arakanese guerrilla (1966-67) with the goal of attainment of Justice, Liberty, and Equality. We would not like to see the history repeated by India handing over our patriots to the Burmese authorities, just to get executed. India is not a colonialist.

Sir, the Naga people and other North Eastern people of India have been used as pawns by the Burmese authorities to put pressure on you and India. I know this fact very well. In a similar pattern, India tried to use the Arakanese against the Burmese regime in the days of the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Atalji). His Defense Minister George Fernandes was behind this episode. You know this very well. Otherwise the AA and its allies KNU would not have dared to entered Indian territory. Please read my letter to the former Primer Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Atalji), at your office file or at <http://www.shwelumaung.org/PleaToIndianPM/PleaToIndianPM.pdf>.

Finally, Sir, please allow me to present myself to you. My name is Shwe Lu Maung *alias* Shahnawaz Khan, a biological scientist by profession, and I earn my living as a research scientist. I have 44 scientific publications, covering endocrinology of reproduction, diabetes mellitus and genetic markers, and 14 socio-political publications including a book - *Burma: Nationalism and Ideology*, University Press Ltd, Dhaka, 1989. A short version of my curriculum vitae is available at <http://www.shwelumaung.org/cv>. At present, I am at the point of finishing my second book *The Price of Silence*, featuring Muslim-Buddhist war and Bangladesh-Burma conflict over Arakan. I am a US citizen now. At the same time, I am also a descendant of Rakkhapura Kingdom, and one of the most educated son of Arakan. As such, I remain obliged for the wellbeing of the people of Arakan, which is the popular name for Rakkhapura. My ancestors were part of the *Brahmaputra* civilization; please visit <http://www.shwelumaung.org/RakhaingNation> for more information. Besides, I do have one good connection to India in recent days. My wife Dr. Shaima Khan's grandfather, Dr. Qudrat-E- Khuda, was from Kolkata; he was a former President of the prestigious *Presidency College*. My wife and my children can be classified as *the Indian Diaspora*. This is a form of *globalization with a human face*.

*Sir, please do not deport the Arakan Army (AA) and Karen National Union (KNU) personnel to Burma. Their deportation to Burma is the same as handing down death sentence to them. Please help them to get “a settlement that would ensure dignity for them today and tomorrow.”* The people of Arakan and Karen Land are struggling for Justice, Liberty, and Equality, which is guaranteed by the Constitution of India. In this regard, we have demanded for “Decolonization of Burma”, which was presented, in 2001, to the United Nations with 1044 signatures of the Arakan Democratic Forces. Please read it at <http://www.shwelumaung.org/ADFdemands>.

Thank you very much for your kindness and patience to read this plea.

Yours sincerely,  
Shahnawaz Khan, Ph.D.  
(*alias* Shwe Lu maung)  
A fellow-citizen of planet Earth,

PS. I support your view of *globalization with a human face*. But, Sir, please do not let exploitation of Arakan Gas make the people of Arakan remain oppressed.

Cc: To the people of India.