

Burma

Chinese Troops Gather on Myanmar's Border to 'Protect Pipelines'

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Several sources on the Chinese border reported that troops were gathering in Jiegao, opposite the Shan State border town of Muse.

Many Chinese soldiers and military trucks have arrived at the border in previous days.

Sources from ethnic armed groups said China was sending a warning signal to Myanmar.

TVBS News in Taiwan reported that Chinese troops are there to protect the natural gas pipeline without suggesting how.

In early March, the Chinese asked Myanmar's military regime to protect the oil and gas pipelines following the emergence of anti-Chinese sentiment and protesters threatening to blow up the pipelines.

The 800-km twin pipeline project runs from Kyaukphyu in Rakhine State on the Bay of Bengal through Magwe and Mandalay regions and northern Shan State to China.

China has repeatedly insisted that the armed forces' seizure of power from the democratically elected government is an internal affair, including at the United Nations Security Council and UN Human Rights Council.

In February, the Chinese Embassy in Yangon faced daily protests, demanding Beijing stops support for Myanmar's military. Moreover, anti-Chinese sentiment has emerged in Myanmar, including boycotts of Chinese products.

On Monday, the tripartite Brotherhood Alliance of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army and Arakan Army (AA) condemned the military junta after the civilian death toll rose to over 500.

The three groups warned the military that they would collaborate with other ethnic armed organizations and pro-democracy supporters to defend civilians from the regime's brutal crackdowns. All three armies are based along the Chinese border and the AA also has substantial forces in northern Rakhine State, bordering Bangladesh. They can all challenge Myanmar's military and have close relations with China.

The Irrawaddy

P.S.

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