

Reviving Geoscience Innovation in Myanmar

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Abstract

Myanmar is only ASEAN country without marine geoscience training and research activities even it has considerable offshore exploration and production activities. After decades of delay, process of establishing new Marine Geoscience Institute is in progress and hence once inaccessible and last remaining offshore areas will soon be studied under government-academia-industry collaborated projects.

Myanmar possesses resources rich offshore along the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea with 2,382 kilometers coastline, and complex geology with various mineral resources onland. Among several areas indicating urgent need of reviving geoscience research and innovation, environmentally, Ayewaddy fan formed from large volume of sediments deposited from three large rivers has record of Asian monsoon and modern environmental issues; in geohazard, earthquake and tsunami from the tectonic activities along the famous Sagaing Fault, and more activities along the Andaman Trench from the Andaman Sea to the Bangladesh and Indian borders in the north; efficient exploration and managing vast natural resources are important economically, and maritime security, safety and transportation, all these geoscience areas needed systematic, focused and specialized studies as those play significant role of the development and the safety of the people livelihood.

Geoscience research in Myanmar initiated under the Geological Survey of India and British Geological Survey since its colonial periods and then progressed to the late 80s within its capacity in all accessible areas, both in survey and exploration. However, studies in the offshore areas and geohazard were very few and led by the foreign academia and industry exploration teams. Existing strong geological trainings under the two universities, and explorations from geological survey of Mines ministry and national oil corporation of Energy ministry were improved after setting up the Department of Applied Geology in the 70s under the UNDP supports.