



DESTINATION REPORT

MYANMAR

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Myanmar was a British colony until 1948, when the country became independent. However, widespread conflict and internal struggle in the years that followed led to a coup d'etat in 1962, putting the country under the rule of a military junta with socialist economic policies. Another coup occurred in 1988. Although Myanmar held democratic multi-party elections in 1990, the military refused to hand over power and ruled Myanmar until 2011, when a nominally civilian government took power. Since then, a gradual reform process has been underway. General elections held in late 2015 ushered in the first democratically elected government and the first civilian President after decades of military rule. Though the country is expected to continue its liberalization process further, the military retains considerable power in both the government and parliament.

In 1989, the military government changed the official name of the country from "The Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma" to "The Republic of the Union of Myanmar." Although the new name was adopted by the United Nations (UN), a number of foreign governments, including those of the United States and the United Kingdom, have refused to recognize the authority of the unelected military authorities to change the name of the country.

The Karen ethnic minority revolted against the central government in 1949, and more than a dozen other ethnic groups have since taken up arms. Burmese government forces regularly use landmines in disputed areas, and the rebel groups respond with their own improvised explosive devices. Most violence occurs near the borders with China, India, Laos, and Thailand in the states of Chin, Sagaing, Kachin, Shan, Mon, Kayah (Karreni), and Karen. In October 2015, the government signed a ceasefire agreement with eight (roughly half) of the armed groups. Other groups have bilateral ceasefire deals with the government. Nevertheless, fighting has persisted in some areas.

Myanmar has a tropical monsoon climate, which varies in the highlands according to elevation. The central lowlands experience a three-month annual monsoon between June and September. Flooding displaces thousands of people annually.

Most of the population is ethnically Burmese, but there also Rakhine, Chinese, Indian, Karen, and Mon minorities. These minority populations are generally concentrated in ethnically homogenous pockets near the country's borders. Nearly 90 percent of the population is Buddhist, with small Christian, Muslim and Animist communities. Burmese is the official language, though different ethnic groups generally speak their own languages.



SECURITY ASSESSMENT

Security Risk Rating

Moderate

Security Risk Overview

Myanmar's security outlook has improved now that it is under the rule of a democratically elected government. However, the military retains considerable influence in politics, and some restrictions on civil rights and liberties remain. Protests require prior authorization, and security forces may respond harshly to these events. Crime rates are generally low, though expatriates and travelers have been the victims of various crimes in the past.

Myanmar has suffered from a number of long-running civil conflicts. Most violence between the government and ethnic separatists occurs near the borders with China, India, and Thailand. Both sides are known for their liberal use of landmines and other explosives, which has often affected the civilian population. Although the government has signed a ceasefire agreement with several armed groups, sporadic fighting continues to be reported.

Myanmar has a pervasive security apparatus. Security forces can and do interrogate any locals that they converse with, and travelers should assume that all conversations and electronic communications are being monitored. The government may take extremely harsh measures when dealing with foreigners suspected of engaging in political activity, including journalists.

There are increased risk in the following locations due to civil unrest: Maungdaw, Rathedaung, Ponnagyun, and Buthidaung townships in Rakhine State; Paletwa township in Chin State; Hpakan, Mansi, Momauk, Sumprabum, Tanai, and Waingmaw townships in Kachin State; Shadaw township in Kayah State; Hlaingbwe, Hpapun, and Thandaung townships in Kayin State; and Konkyan, Kutkai, Laukkaing, Matman, Mongmao, Namphan, Pangsang, and Pangwaun townships in Shan State.

Terrorism

There are no known international terrorist groups operating in Myanmar, and there have been no significant terrorist attacks in the country within the past five years.

Civil Unrest

The security outlook in Myanmar has improved since the 2015 general elections that brought the country's first democratically elected government into office after decades of military rule. Legislation recently passed by Parliament allows greater freedoms of assembly and movement, and the right to form trade unions. Nevertheless, the military retains considerable power and restrictions on political activities remain. Public protests require prior permission from Burmese authorities, though security forces may still react harshly to such events as they have limited experience in dealing with legal protests.

Fighting between armed insurgents and government troops still persists. Meanwhile, other parts of Shan have also experienced recent conflict involving ethnic armed groups. Kachin State has been the site of violence between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and government forces, often targeting civilians. China, Myanmar, and Thailand may close their borders during times of conflict.

In February, the government signed the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) with the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU). There are at least 10 rebel groups in the country that have yet to sign the NCA.

Sporadic fighting involving ethnic armed groups continues to be reported. Areas that are not under ceasefire include Kachin State, Shan State, and Kokang Self-Administered Zone.

Though most armed violence in Myanmar is restricted to border areas, there have been bomb attacks in major cities such as Naypyidaw, Yangon, and Mandalay. The threat of politically motivated violence throughout the country also generally increases during festivals and public holidays, such as Armed Forces Day (27 March), the Water Festival and Myanmar New Year (mid-April), and Martyrs' Day (19 July). There is also a heightened security presence on dates marking significant events, including the anniversary of the 1988 uprising (8 August) and the anniversary of monks-led demonstrations demanding political reform (26 September) due to concerns of violence. Attackers have targeted phone booths, public restrooms, government offices, trains, and markets in the past. |

Violence triggered by ethnic or religious tensions is not uncommon in Myanmar. Outbreaks of violence between Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims have occurred in western areas of the country, particularly in the coastal state of Rakhine. Rakhine-home to the renowned tourist destination, Ngapali Beach-has experienced a series of incidents of violent unrest in recent years, leaving scores killed and thousands displaced. The country's second-largest city and cultural center, Mandalay, has also experienced religious violence. Although the majority of the ethnic conflict in the state has predominantly affected local residents, foreign nationals have also occasionally fallen victim to the unrest. The government often enforces a curfew and other restrictions during periods of unrest.

Personal Security

Violence against foreigners is rare, and crime in Myanmar is generally lower than in surrounding countries. There has been an increase in property crimes across Myanmar, including mugging, robbery, and petty theft. There is a low but present risk of kidnapping of foreigners, which is mainly related to disputed business operations.

There have been reports of robberies in unlicensed taxis. Do not board a taxi with strangers or allow the driver to pick up more passengers, and always sit behind the driver. Travel in trishaws and rickshaws is considered extremely risky and should be avoided.

Crimes of a sexual nature-including harassment and assault-are common and law enforcement authorities are generally ineffective at investigating and prosecuting these crimes.

Homosexual behavior is illegal in Myanmar. Although the law is rarely enforced, foreign nationals have been imprisoned for acts of homosexuality, though usually individuals are charged to obtain bribes. Police officers have been known to harass lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals.

Taking pictures of demonstrations, government buildings, bridges or other infrastructure, military bases, military checkpoints, military or police personnel, or any installation that may affect national security, is not recommended. There have been reports of foreigners being deported or arrested for criticizing the government in public. In addition, insulting religion is an offence under Burmese law, punishable by a prison sentence of up to two years. Avoid inappropriate display of religious imagery while in Myanmar, particularly in Rakhine state or other rural areas. Visits to religious areas or temples require conservative dress.

Landmines and explosives are common in areas close to the borders with Thailand, Laos, and China, especially in Shan, Karen, Mon, and Kachin states. Not all areas will be clearly marked. Consult with local authorities before traveling in such areas.

Security forces may put foreigners under surveillance, and hotels are legally obligated to report the identities and activities of their guests. Visitors should assume that their telephone calls and online activity are monitored. Security forces may have listening devices in public areas, including hotel rooms, and Burmese citizens may be forced to report details of their conversations with foreigners to the Burmese authorities. Be aware that residences and possessions can be searched without advanced notice or probable cause.

Telephone services in Yangon have continued to improve and some international roaming services have become available, particularly networks in Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Nevertheless, internet access in Myanmar is limited to major cities and connection is generally slow. During times of unrest, the government may cut off all internet access and other services.

Earthquakes and tremors of varying magnitude have occurred in Myanmar. Flooding is not uncommon during the monsoon season that lasts from June to September, partly due to poor drainage systems.

Law Enforcement

Burmese police departments are underfunded, poorly equipped, and often corrupt. As such, police forces are often unable to prevent, respond to, and investigate crime. Police response times are often delayed. Government forces have been known to arbitrarily arrest individuals and use excessive force. Police harassment is common and it has been reported that officials may expect, request, or demand illegitimate payments from foreigners for real or imaginary violations of local law or for providing otherwise-routine services. Exercise caution with such officials.

Prisons in Myanmar do not meet international standards. These facilities are affected by overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, a lack of potable water, disease, mistreatment of detainees, torture to obtain confessions, and sexual abuse. Defendants are not presumed innocent and often do not have access to an attorney, which hinders the justice system.

Travelers who are arrested in Myanmar should attempt to contact their embassy through all available channels. Foreigners suspected of engaging in political activity in Myanmar (which can be as simple as a political conversation with a Burmese resident) may be denied access to an attorney, denied court records, and denied contact with their family or their consulate. Most people tried for crimes in Myanmar receive the maximum sentence. Anyone can be deported for the political activism of friends or family in other countries.

Transportation

Air: Myanmar has not been rated by the International Aviation Safety Assessment Program (IASA). However, international flights on foreign-owned and -operated carriers may be compliant with IASA standards and provide alternatives to services based in Myanmar.

In addition, safety records for Burmese domestic airlines are kept secret, which raises concerns about oversight and maintenance standards in Myanmar. Flight schedules can change without warning, and domestic carriers occasionally use each other's aircraft, including those of Myanmar Airways.

Bus: Buses are the most common means of transport in Myanmar, but these vehicles are generally

overcrowded and poorly maintained. Buses in major cities run on compressed natural gas, and there have been numerous reports of the gas cylinders exploding and causing casualties. It is advised to avoid travel on city buses. Intercity buses are generally more comfortable, but poor road conditions and maintenance standards make this form of transport risky.

Car: Driving without a local driver's license is not permitted in Myanmar. A Burmese driver's license can be applied for at the Department for Road Transport and Administration in Yangon. Though traffic moves on the right side of the road, the majority of cars in Myanmar are right-hand drive.

Road travel can be hazardous due to poor-quality road infrastructure and reckless local driving practices. Most roads in Yangon are paved, but poorly maintained, and have become increasingly congested in recent years. Most streets do not have lights and not all vehicles use headlights. Outside Yangon, roads are usually unpaved and unlit during night hours. Overland travel can be hazardous, especially between June and September, when monsoon rains wash out a number of roads.

Most traffic accidents are settled between parties at the scene of the accident, with the driver at fault paying for any damages. Under Burmese law, the driver of a vehicle involved in an accident with a pedestrian is always at fault. Military convoys and motorcades always have the right of way. Certain areas of the country are off limits to foreigners. Contact a hotel and embassy for updates on restricted areas before driving outside Yangon or Mandalay.

Taxi: Taxis are generally the most reliable method of travel in Burmese cities, but most vehicles are poorly maintained. Only use properly marked taxis, and book through a hotel if possible. Licensed taxis have red license plates. Negotiate a fare with the driver before getting in the taxi if the vehicle does not have a meter or it does not work.

Train: Myanmar's rail system is largely the same as it was when the country gained independence in 1948. Trains in Myanmar are often overcrowded and poorly maintained, causing them to be out of service on a regular basis. Railroads connect Yangon and most other large cities, including Pyay, Mawlamyine, Mandalay, and Bagan. Fatal crashes occur with some regularity, but generally go unreported. Delays are common.

A new train from Yangon to Bagan is the only modern rail line in Myanmar. Train tickets should be purchased with USD or foreign exchange certificates. Visitors must show their passport and visa at all train stations. Certain trains, including one connecting Mawlamyine and Ye, are off limits to foreigners. Most urban light rail is more than half a century old, and in poor condition. These systems should be avoided.

Scams, Fraud, Corruption, and Extortion

There are no scams specific to Myanmar. However, common scams against foreigners, irrespective of destination, include dating and marriage scams, false employment opportunities, and virtual kidnapping for ransom. Avoid giving out personal information at all costs, especially bank or credit card numbers.

Incidents of financial fraud and identity theft crimes are on the increase.

Corruption of government employees is widespread in Myanmar and it has been reported that officials may expect, request, or demand illegitimate payments from foreigners for real or imaginary violations of local law or for providing routine services. Exercise caution when dealing with such officials.

Security Advice

Be prepared. Make an effort to understand your destination environment before you travel: identify the possible threats and prevailing situation, understand your own vulnerabilities and take action to mitigate the risks.

Maintain a low profile and good situational awareness. Ensure you travel with reliable communications equipment, test your mobile (cellular) telephone upon arrival at your destination and keep it fully charged. Make note of emergency telephone numbers, including the police, fire department, ambulance, and embassy or consulate.

Avoid all protests and demonstrations to minimize the risk of exposure to incidental violence. Travelers should walk away or wait inside a shop or restaurant if it is not possible to leave the area. Plan alternate routes to circumvent potential protest locations. Seek the assistance of a local host, or travel with a local driver, where possible.

To minimize the risk of becoming a victim of petty theft, travelers should maintain caution and exercise situational awareness at all times. Avoid overt displays of wealth. If confronted by a criminal, do nothing to antagonize the situation. Carry a "dummy" wallet if possible, and carry a passport photocopy at all times.

Carry handbags on the opposite side from passing traffic to reduce the risk of thieves on motorcycles trying to snatch them.

Avoid walking unless you are confident of the security situation. Do not walk by yourself at night in secluded or troublesome areas of the city. Do not take shortcuts away from main roads.

National holidays and public festivals tend to attract large crowds in some countries. Such public gatherings, despite a typically enhanced security presence, create a potential venue for disorder or violence. In addition, large crowds may well impede local transportation systems.

Do not buy counterfeit or any goods in violation of copyright laws. Doing so may be a violation of local laws and can carry hefty fines or even prison time.

Reduce risk of injury from car crashes by always wearing a seatbelt. Some countries have heavy fines for not wearing a seatbelt. Avoid drinking and driving. Be sure to travel with all appropriate documentation, including passport and visa photocopies. Individuals who intend on driving should be in possession of their International Driving Permit (IDP), vehicle registration, and proof of insurance at all times.

Travelers are subject to the laws of Myanmar, even if they are not a citizen of Myanmar. Travelers can also be prosecuted for violating their home country's laws while in a foreign country. Travelers should be aware of the laws and customs of the country they are traveling to in order to avoid prosecution.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Health Risk Rating

Extreme

Travel Health Advice

A comprehensive pre-travel health consultation with a travel health care provider is recommended for all travelers, to optimize their health while traveling and to individualize their disease prevention strategies to best mitigate the health risks of any destination.

Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.

Protect against insect bites and insect-borne diseases, such as tick-borne encephalitis or malaria, by using insect repellent and wearing long pants, long-sleeved shirts, boots, and hats if possible.

Prevent foodborne illnesses by avoiding unpasteurized dairy products and washing hands, especially before eating.

A comprehensive pre-travel health consultation with a travel health care provider is recommended for all travelers in order to optimize their health while traveling and to individualize their disease prevention strategies to best mitigate the health risks of any destination.

Immunizations - Required for Entry

Immunization	Notes
Yellow Fever	Yellow fever (YF) is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Travelers over one year of age must have proof of this vaccine if they are coming from a country with a risk of YF transmission. This includes transit stops in airports of 12 hours or more in countries with a risk of YF transmission.. YF vaccine is not recommended for any traveler unless required for entry as above. The yellow fever vaccine must be administered at least 10 days before travel. Certificates of yellow fever vaccination are valid for life, starting 10 days after vaccination.

Immunizations - General

The following immunizations are recommended for travel to all destinations.

Immunization	Recommendations
Routine	Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.

Hepatitis B	Hepatitis B is spread through contact with blood, sexual relations, and contact with contaminated needles. There are several pre-exposure vaccination options available: PEDIARIX (pediatric formulation containing DTaP, HepA/B, and polio vaccines), TWINRIX (three-dose HepA/HepB combination series), ENGERIX-B, and RECOMBIVAX HB require 3 doses; Heplisav-B requires 2 doses. The full course of injections is recommended prior to travel.
Influenza	Influenza is transmitted between humans in droplets spread by sneezing and coughing, and by touching objects contaminated with the virus. Vaccination is recommended for all travelers during transmission season, which is typically November through April. There are two types of pre-exposure vaccine available: Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (IIV) and Live Intranasal Influenza Vaccine (LAIV). IIV is injected into the upper arm or thigh, and LAIV is administered as a nasal spray.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Specific to Myanmar

The following are vaccine-preventable diseases that are prevalent in Myanmar.

Immunization	Notes
Hepatitis A	Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended for all travelers to Myanmar. The Hepatitis A virus is primarily transmitted through contaminated water and food such as shellfish and uncooked vegetables or fruit prepared by infected food handlers; it is also transmitted through person to person contact via fecal-oral exposure. It can also be spread through sexual relations, blood transfusions, and needles. Several pre-exposure vaccination options are available: HAVRIX, VAQTA, TWINRIX (three-dose HepA/HepB combination series), and AVAXIM. The vaccine requires 2 doses, separated by a minimum of six months. Ideally, the traveler should complete both doses ≥ 2 weeks prior to travel. However, if there is insufficient lead time to travel, the first injection should be administered before departure and a booster after six months. Once both doses are completed, immunity is considered lifelong.
Japanese Encephalitis (JEV)	JEV is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito, but cannot be transmitted between humans. Risk of transmission is present throughout Myanmar; those visiting or working in rural areas, farms, rice fields and irrigation areas are most at risk. JEV has also been reported in peri-urban areas around the city of Yangon. Transmission occurs from July through October. JEV vaccine is recommended for persons traveling extensively in rural areas, all long-term travelers, and expatriates. All travelers should observe insect precautions from dusk to dawn.
Rabies	Rabies is spread through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. Significant risk from dogs exists throughout Myanmar. Vaccination against rabies does not make a person immune to rabies. Those who have been potentially exposed should still seek treatment. Left untreated, rabies can be fatal. A three-dose pre-exposure rabies vaccine is recommended for long-term travelers and expatriates visiting remote areas. It is also recommended for travelers involved in adventure or outdoor activities in remote areas potentially exposed to bats, dogs and other mammals, and those who would be in direct contact with animals. Children are at higher risk, and have a lower threshold for pre-exposure vaccination. The first dose of the vaccine should be administered at least 21 days before travel.

Typhoid

Typhoid is spread through the ingestion of contaminated food or water. Typhoid vaccination is recommended for all travelers to Myanmar, especially those traveling extensively in the interior of the country or remote areas, or visiting relatives for extended periods. Vaccination should be completed one to two weeks before travel, depending on the form of the vaccine given. Two forms of the vaccine are available: an inactivated shot (one dose), and a live oral vaccine (4 capsules given over 8 days). Booster doses of vaccine are needed for ongoing protection; the interval will vary depending on the form of the vaccine and the traveler's country of vaccination.

Health Risks in Myanmar

Health Risks	Details	Recommendations
Air Pollution	High levels of particulate matter contributing to poor air quality have been reported in Mawlamyine, Nay Pyi Taw, Nyaung-U, and Yangon. Air quality may be variable throughout the year.	Travelers with breathing or other health problems, such as eye irritation, bronchial, sinus, or asthma conditions, should consult a doctor before traveling to air pollution-affected areas in Myanmar.
Cholera	Risk exists throughout the country, including Yangon and refugee camps.	Vaccination against cholera is available, but is only recommended for refugee and aid workers. All travelers should observe strict food and beverage precautions and hand-hygiene measures.
Chikungunya	Chikungunya is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Risk exists throughout the country, especially in the northern half.	The Aedes mosquito is day biting, with particular activity 2-3 hours after dawn, and from mid-to-late afternoon. There is no vaccine to prevent chikungunya, but taking precautions against mosquito and insect bites, such as by applying insect repellent, and wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants or skirts, may help to prevent transmission.
Dengue Fever	Dengue fever is spread through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito. Risk of transmission is heightened during the monsoon season from June to September. Recent cases have been reported in Yangon and Mandalay. Symptoms include headache, sudden-onset fever, rash, and joint pain.	There is no vaccine to prevent dengue fever. Protect against bites by using insect repellent (with 30-50% DEET, or 7-15% Picaridin) and wearing long pants, long-sleeved shirts, boots, and hats. Stay indoors in areas with screens and air conditioning, if possible. The Aedes mosquito, which carries dengue fever, typically lives indoors in dark, cool places such as closets, under beds, in bathrooms, and behind curtains, and prefers to lay its eggs on standing water. Aedes are daytime biters, with highest activity 2-3 hours after dawn and mid-to-late afternoon.

<p>Helminths (parasitic worms)</p>	<p>Soil-transmitted helminths are presumed to be widely distributed in both urban and rural areas, although in general there is low risk to travelers. Those with prolonged stays or expatriates are more likely to acquire these infections.</p>	<p>Travelers should avoid walking barefoot and avoid prolonged exposure of exposed skin to soil. It is also recommended to follow strict food and beverage precautions.</p>
<p>Hepatitis E</p>	<p>Hepatitis E is highly endemic in Myanmar. It is typically contracted through exposure to raw or uncooked shellfish, or contaminated drinking water.</p>	<p>There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis E. The disease can be avoided through overall care in sanitation, particularly regarding drinking water. Follow recommended food and water precautions and observe good hand washing and body hygiene practices.</p>
<p>Leptospirosis</p>	<p>Leptospirosis is caused by a spirochete organism acquired through contact with contaminated freshwater, soil, or tissues of infected animals. It can be a serious illness and potentially fatal. Travelers engaging in water sports in freshwater bodies in endemic areas are at high risk, as well as those hiking, biking and camping.</p>	<p>Preventive measures include avoidance of potentially contaminated soil, mud, and water, as well as animal tissues or urine. Travelers with unavoidable contact with contaminated water or soil may benefit from preexposure prophylaxis with doxycycline. This is currently recommended for outdoor adventure travelers engaging in high risk activities, as well as for persons in areas of recent flooding.</p>
<p>Lymphatic Filariasis</p>	<p>Lymphatic filariasis is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito or blackfly. The infection targets the lymphatic system, causing the extreme swelling of the limbs, known as elephantiasis.</p>	<p>There is no vaccine to prevent lymphatic filariasis. Protect against bites by using insect repellent (with 30-50% DEET, or 7-15% Picaridin) and wearing long pants, long-sleeved shirts, boots, and hats. Stay indoors in areas with screens and air conditioning, if possible. The risk of being bitten by a mosquito is highest in hours between dusk and dawn. Most treatments against filariasis are successful at killing microfilariae, though partially effective to ineffective at killing adult worms.</p>

Malaria	Malaria is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Malaria is prevalent in rural areas of Myanmar at an altitude of less than 1,000 meters (3,280 feet). There is little risk of malaria in Mandalay or Yangon.	There is no vaccine to prevent malaria, but taking a prescription anti-malarial drug and precautions against mosquito bites may help to prevent transmission. Malaria prophylaxis is recommended if travelling to endemic areas below 1,000 meters. Evening and nighttime insect precautions are recommended for all travelers to risk areas up to 1,300 meters.
Marine Hazards	Exposure to marine hazards such as jellyfish, sea urchins, coral, and stonefish is possible in travelers engaging in aquatic activities such as swimming, wading, launching boats and fishing. Potentially deadly Australian box jellyfish are present throughout the year, but highest risk of exposure is during the rainy season.	Travelers should seek out and heed posted warnings and refrain from bathing or other aquatic activities at unmarked, unpatrolled beaches.
Melioidosis	Melioidosis is spread through direct contact with sources, usually water and soil, contaminated with the bacterium <i>Burkholderia pseudomallei</i> . Melioidosis is endemic in Myanmar, although low risk to travelers.	There is no vaccine to prevent melioidosis. Avoid contact with pools of standing water. Wear long pants, boots, and gloves if in contact with soil or an area of standing water.
Plague	Plague is typically spread through the bite of infected rodent fleas. It is sometimes contracted through the inhalation of infected animal secretions, or by handling infected animal tissue. Cases have been reported in Mandalay, Sagaing, and Magway in the past.	There is no vaccine to prevent plague. Measures should be taken to prevent contact with rodents and other potentially infected animals. Those who may have had contact with an infected person, rodent, or other animal should receive antibiotic prophylactic treatment. Infected persons need immediate treatment due to high risk of death.

Schistosomiasis	Schistosomiasis is a parasitic infection spread via larvae that swim in fresh water, and through sexual contact with infected individuals. Symptoms include a rash, weakness, fever, bloody urine and diarrhea. Infected individuals may not exhibit symptoms for four to six weeks after contracting schistosomiasis. This disease is found in Bago Region and the states of Rahkine and Shan (including Inle Lake), and is widespread in the Ayeyarwady Delta.	There is no vaccine to prevent schistosomiasis. Do not swim in bodies of freshwater. Schistosomiasis cannot be contracted in chlorinated swimming pools or in bodies of salt water. The use of insect repellent may be effective, but is unreliable. Travelers who come in contact with bodies of fresh water should wear protective footwear and clothing, and clean their skin with rubbing alcohol and a clean, dry towel.
Snakebites	Myanmar is home to species of venomous snakes. Risk of snakebite exists in areas with dense vegetation or rock formations. Snakes are more active in warm weather.	Travelers should wear boots and long pants when in high risk areas. Do not disturb or handle snakes. Seek medical attention after any snakebite.
Traveler's Diarrhea	High risk of traveler's diarrhea exists throughout the country, including in deluxe accommodations.	Following food and beverage precautions may reduce the likelihood of illness (see below). Travelers should carry loperamide for self-treatment of diarrhea and azithromycin to add if diarrhea is severe.

<p>Tuberculosis (TB)</p>	<p>TB is contracted through contact with the respiratory secretions of an infected person. Myanmar is a high-burden multidrug-resistant TB country, but risk is generally low for most tourist travelers. Those at higher risk include hospital, prison or shelter workers, or those with prolonged stays.</p>	<p>The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine has historically been used at birth in most developing countries to prevent TB. The effectiveness of the vaccine in adults has between 0 and 80 percent. The BCG vaccine also reportedly interferes with TB testing in some cases. Travelers should avoid close contact or prolonged time with TB patients in closed environments, and also avoid crowded public places and public transportation if possible. Individuals who anticipate prolonged exposure to TB-infected populations should undergo the tuberculin skin test (TST) or interferon-γ release assay (IGRA) before travel and eight to 10 weeks after returning from travel.</p>
<p>Typhus</p>	<p>Scrub typhus and murine typhus are caused by infection with different species of Rickettsia bacteria. Scrub typhus exists in brush areas throughout the country and is transmitted by mites. Murine typhus is presumed to have widespread distribution; it is acquired through the bite of an infected rodent flea.</p>	<p>In addition to using standard insect precautions to prevent exposure, additional strategies include avoiding direct contact with dogs and cats, avoiding overcrowded or unsanitary environments, and steering clear of rodents and their habitats.</p>

<p>Zika Fever</p>	<p>Zika fever is an acute viral illness within the genus <i>Flavivirus</i> that is spread through the bite of an infected <i>Aedes</i> mosquito. Symptoms-including sudden-onset fever and rash, joint and body pain, headache, and conjunctivitis-are usually mild and last from several days to a week. Babies born to women infected with the Zika virus while pregnant, or who become pregnant while infected, are at an increased risk of birth defects, including microcephaly.</p>	<p>There is no vaccine to prevent or specific medication available to treat Zika virus infection. Prevention is primarily accomplished by avoiding bites of infected <i>Aedes</i> mosquitos. Protect against bites by using insect repellent (with 30-50% DEET, 7-15% Picaridin, or IR3535) and wearing long pants, long-sleeved shirts, boots, and hats. Stay indoors in areas with screens and air conditioning, if possible. The risk of being bitten by a mosquito is highest in the early morning, several hours after daybreak, and in the mid-to-late afternoon before sunset. The <i>Aedes</i> mosquito, which carries the Zika virus, typically lives indoors in dark, cool places as well as around standing water. Travelers who are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, or sexual partners of those who may become pregnant, should consult their health care provider and determine the level of risk for microcephaly or other birth defects before traveling to areas with confirmed Zika virus activity, and after their return.</p>
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Food and Water Safety

There are no potable local water sources in Myanmar, and many restaurants have poor or non-existent sanitation standards. Only drink or brush your teeth with bottled or boiled water, and avoid ice cubes.

When traveling outside major cities, it is important to have adequate water supplies before setting out, as bottled or purified water can be scarce.

Ensure that all food is fully cooked, all fruits and vegetables are washed and peeled, and that all dairy products are pasteurized. Avoid eating food purchased from street vendors.

Insect Precautions

- Use insect repellent: DEET 20 - 30% or Picaridin 20%. Re-apply per manufacturer's directions.
- Wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks
- Treat outer clothing with permethrin
- Avoid insect exposure using various methods depending on the insect:
 - For nighttime flying insects, sleep under bed nets, preferably insecticide impregnated
 - For ticks, hike in the middle of the trail and avoid tall grasses and shrubs, use a tarp when sitting on grass, perform regular tick checks on your body and clothing
 - For other insect vectors, avoid direct contact with animals, and avoid overcrowded, unsanitary conditions to reduce risk of exposure to body lice, mites, fleas, and rodents.

Medical Facilities and Services

Hospitals and clinics in Myanmar do not meet international standards. Travelers with serious health concerns are advised against travel to the country, and visits to local hospitals are not recommended unless absolutely necessary. Medical personnel are under-trained, and there have been reports of the misdiagnosis, improper treatment, and the administration of improper drugs. Emergency care is virtually non-existent. Most available foreign medications are illegal, adulterated, or counterfeit; travelers should thus bring an adequate amount of necessary medication for the intended stay. Doctors require cash payment prior to providing treatment. They may turn away persons with infectious diseases or injuries that are difficult to treat. A serious illness or injury may require medical evacuation to Thailand or Singapore. If possible, decline injections or intrusive examinations (including dental work) due to poor hygiene standards and elevated risk of hepatitis or HIV infection.

DESTINATION DETAILS

Time Zones

From 1 January to 31 December, Myanmar Time (MMT): GMT +6:30 hours
Myanmar does not observe Daylight Saving Time.

Currency

Myanmar kyat (MMK)

NOTE: US dollars (USD) are accepted (notes must be without marks, folds, or tears)

Credit Cards

Myanmar has a largely cash-based economy. However, an increasing number of business establishments and hotels catering to tourists in Yangon and Mandalay now accept credit cards. Travelers should always notify their bank of their travel plans to avoid having their account frozen.

ATMs

ATMs are widely available in downtown Yangon. In other large cities and popular tourist destinations, such as Bagan, Mandalay, Pyinmana, and Taungoo, the machines have become increasingly available in recent years, though are not very common. Many of the existing machines have recently been installed and occasionally malfunction. Travelers should check with their bank before their trip regarding about any fees associated with ATM use.

Banking Hours

From Monday to Friday 10:00-14:00.
Hours may vary with bank and location.

Major Holidays

Services and transportation may be affected on/around the following holidays:

Date	Holiday
4 January 2018	Independence Day
12 February 2018	Union Day
1 March 2018	Full Moon Day of Tabaung
3 March 2018	Peasants' Day
27 March 2018	Armed Forces Day
13-16 April 2018	Maha Thingyan (Water Festival)
29 April 2018	Full Moon Day of Kasong
1 May 2018	Labor Day
19 July 2018	Martyrs' Day

24 October 2018	Full Moon Day of Thadingyut
2 December 2018	National Day
25 December 2018	Christmas Day

NOTE: There are no further elections scheduled to take place in 2018.

Voltage Information

220 - 230 V, 50Hz - Plug Type C, D, F, G

International Airports

Airport Name	AirportCode	Airport Location
Mandalay International Airport	MDL	Mandalay
Naypyidaw International Airport	NYT	Naypyidaw
Yangon International Airport	RGN	Yangon

ENTRY & EXIT REQUIREMENTS

The following information is for citizens of the United States. If you are a citizen of a country other than the United States, contact an embassy or consulate for up-to-date requirements. For additional questions regarding entry/exit requirements, contact Global Rescue at (+1) (617) 459-4200.

Travelers to Myanmar must have a passport that is valid for at least six months. Visas must be obtained prior to arrival, either online (<http://evisa.moip.gov.mm/>) or from an embassy or consulate. Tourist visas allow single-entry stays of up to 28 days and are not extendable. As of September 2016, travelers with eVisas can enter Myanmar through all of the three international airports, as well as the Myanmar-Thailand land border checkpoints in Tachileik, Myawaddy, and Kawthaung. Entry via seaports is not permitted to eVisa holders. Visas on arrival are only available for travelers who have a formal invitation from a business registered with the Burmese Ministry of Commerce. Those arriving from yellow fever-affected areas are required to show proof of yellow fever vaccination. Individuals traveling with children should either have proof of their relationship or proof of permission from the child's parent or legal guardian. Journalists and those in other "sensitive" fields that are allowed into Myanmar may have their film, memory cards, or notes confiscated or deleted when departing the country.

IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

The following items are permitted:

- 400 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco;
- two liters of alcoholic liquor;
- 150 milliliters of perfume;
- one set of portable amateur camera and its relevant accessories;
- reasonable amount of prescription drugs for personal use; and
- electronic goods worth USD 500.

The following restrictions apply:

- animals and animal products require inspection;
- travelers must declare amounts in excess of USD 10,000 and
- travelers must declare all electronic devices. Individuals may have trouble importing electrical equipment.

The following items may be prohibited:

- firearms and ammunition;
- religious materials;
- antiquities or culturally valuable artifacts;
- business equipment (especially scientific equipment);
- Burmese currency;
- goods bearing the imprint or reproduction of the flag of Myanmar, the emblem of Buddha, and pagoda in Myanmar;
- playing cards;
- precious or semi-precious gems;
- ivory;
- pornographic material;

- plants and plant products;
- literature critical of the regime or supportive of the opposition;
- medication or medical supplies may be prohibited even with a valid prescription; and
- persons who wish to bring medication into Myanmar should contact the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar to their home country.

EXPORT RESTRICTIONS

The following restrictions apply:

- gems, jewelry, silverware, and handcraft require a receipt or special cash memo issued by authorized dealers; and
- amounts in excess of USD 10,000 must be declared.

The following items may be prohibited:

- firearms and ammunition;
- religious materials;
- antiquities or culturally valuable artifacts;
- Burmese currency;
- pornographic material;
- literature critical of the regime or supportive of the opposition;
- Plants and plant products; and
- Journalists and others may have notes, film, and photographs confiscated.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Intl. Country Code	(+95)
Fire	191
Police	199
Ambulance	192

Contact Information for Select Embassies

US Embassy in Yangon

110 University Avenue
Kamayut Township, Yangon
Telephone: (+95) 1-536-509 or 1-535-756

British Embassy in Yangon

80 Strand Road, Yangon
Telephone: (+95) 1-370-865 or 1-370-867

Australian Embassy in Yangon

88 Strand Road, Yangon
Telephone: (+95) 1-251-810

NOTE: Foreign diplomatic personnel cannot travel freely in some parts of Myanmar, including remote and/or conflict-affected areas, without permission from the Burmese government. Thus, the ability of embassies to deliver consular assistance to their citizens, including in an emergency, may be limited.

For other embassies, contact Global Rescue at (+1) (617) 459-4200.