

# Myanmar

**HIGH**



**Official name:** ..... Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
**Local official name:** ..... Pyidaunzu Thanmăda Myăma Nainngandaw  
**ISO:** ..... MM (MMR)  
**Currency:** ..... Kyat (MMK)  
**Capital:** ..... Pyinmana Naypyidaw (UTC +6:30)  
**National day:** ..... 04. January (Independence Day)  
**Phone prefix:** ..... +95  
**Emergency:** ..... 199

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## Risk overview

HIGH

- **Entry and Exit:** Please note the current regulations<sup>1</sup> of the Federal Foreign Office, as the situation may change at short notice.
- **Entry and Exit:** In order to curb the worldwide spread of COVID-19, travellers may face additional health screening (e.g. temperature checks, questionnaires) and quarantine measures as well as possible entry bans when entering the country. The regulations of individual countries may change at short notice.
- **Armed conflict / terrorism:** Predominantly ethnic rebel groups are fighting the central government, particularly in the areas inhabited by minorities bordering Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. In the course of these conflicts, terrorist attacks against uninvolved persons and violent unrest often occur. Areas in the following regions are affected by armed conflicts: Rakhine State, Chin State, Sagaing Region, Kachin State, Shan State (northern parts in particular, including the Kokang Self-Administered Zone), Kayah State, Kayin State (aka Karen State), and Mon State.
- **Armed conflict:** There is a high risk from unmarked minefields and unexploded ordnance in the conflict areas.
- **Armed conflict / transport:** Travel restrictions and checkpoints are in place for wide parts of the country. Generally, travellers need to obtain travel permits when travelling on highways outside of the regions Yangon (Rangoon), Mandalay, Bago and Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy).
- **Demonstration / unrest:** Protests, mass rallies and social unrest occasionally occur in Myanmar. Violent clashes occasionally occur particularly in Rakhine, but also in the states affected by armed conflicts.
- **Terrorism:** In the past, there have been several terrorist attacks in the restive conflict areas, but also in other parts of the country. Foreign travellers were also targeted by those attacks.
- **Natural hazards:** During the rainy season (May to October), heavy and often long-lasting floods regularly occur in Myanmar. Disruptions to traffic and infrastructure have to be anticipated following the floods.
- **Natural hazards:** There is a high risk from earthquakes and tropical storms.
- **Transport:** Travel within the country is restricted by the government. Special travel permits must be obtained for travelling to most of the border areas but also to other parts of the country.
- **Other special risks:** Prostitution and owning pornographic material are illegal. Drug possession is severely punished, even when only small amounts are involved.

## Entry and Exit

HIGH

- Please note the current regulations<sup>2</sup> of the Federal Foreign Office, as the situation may change at short notice.

Entry and exit requirements Myanmar (German Foreign Ministry - AA) – <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/myanmar-node/myanmarsicherheit/212100>

Entry and exit requirements Myanmar (Austrian Foreign Ministry - BMEIA) – <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/reise-aufenthalt/reiseinformation/land/myanmar/>

Entry and exit requirements Myanmar (UK Foreign Ministry - FCDO) – <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/burma/entry-requirements>

Entry and exit requirements Myanmar (U.S. Foreign Ministry - DOS) – <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Burma.html>

Myanmar (Swiss Foreign Ministry - EDA) – <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/representations-and-travel-advice/myanmar.html>

Customs regulations Myanmar (Trade association of airlines - IATA) – <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/MM-Myanmar-customs-currency-airport-tax-regulations-details.htm>

Myanmar Customs – <http://www.myanmarcustoms.gov.mm/>

List of potentially banned and controlled medicines – <https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/ISTM/062acfe6-1d82-461c-8965-9948543fc637/UploadedImages/ISTM%20database%20on%20International%20regulations%20%20explanation.pdf>

Passport Index – <https://www.passportindex.org/comparebyDestination.php?p1=mm&fl=&s=yes>

IATA CORONAVIRUS TRAVEL – UPDATES – <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/international-travel-document-news/1580226297.htm>

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/myanmar-node/myanmarsicherheit/212100#content\\_0](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/myanmar-node/myanmarsicherheit/212100#content_0)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/myanmar-node/myanmarsicherheit/212100#content\\_0](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/myanmar-node/myanmarsicherheit/212100#content_0)

- In order to curb the worldwide spread of COVID-19, travellers may face additional health screening (e.g. temperature checks, questionnaires) and quarantine measures as well as possible entry bans when entering the country. The regulations of individual countries may change at short notice.
- Foreign currencies may be imported and exported without restrictions but are to be declared if exceeding a converted value of 10,000 US dollars. Importing or exporting the local currency is prohibited.
- All baggage will be checked on arrival and departure.

## Entry

HIGH

- Currently applicable (e.g. customs and/or import) regulations may lead to heightened restrictions upon entry.
- Problems can arise when the passport used for entry has temporarily been reported as stolen/lost in the past.
- Travellers may need to obtain travel permits for travelling to remote parts of the country. It is advised for travellers to thoroughly inform themselves. Travellers without permits may face prison sentences.
- The importation of weapons, drugs, pornographic material, playing cards and objects depicting the flag of Myanmar and/or depicting Buddha or Burmese pagodas is prohibited.
- Importing and operating drones without having obtained prior permission by the Myanmar Post & Telecommunications Department is forbidden. Non-compliance may lead to confiscation and penalties/imprisonment.
- The import of certain types of medications, even prescribed ones, may be subject to restrictions and/or prohibited entirely. This particularly applies to opiates and painkillers. The embassy, consulate and/or the national customs office can provide reliable information on the rules and regulations that (currently) apply in the destination country.
- The occupational medical G35 examination is required due to health risks resulting from special climatic conditions and infection hazards. The scope of the examination depends on the duration and type of stay in Myanmar, and is carried out by tropical or occupational health professionals.
- Travellers are required to show proof of a yellow fever vaccination when arriving from countries (notably African and South American countries) with risk of yellow fever transmission.

- Travellers staying less than four weeks are also encouraged to be vaccinated against poliomyelitis.
- Travellers should not use a passport which has temporarily been reported as stolen/lost in the past.
- Travellers are advised to inform themselves about entry and customs requirements prior to their journey.

## Exit

HIGH

- Currently applicable (e.g. customs and/or export) regulations may lead to heightened restrictions upon departure.
- Antiquities may not be exported. Violations are punishable by arrest and imprisonment.
- Gemstones, jewellery and silver may only be exported when in possession of a purchase receipt of a state-approved vendor.

- Travellers should inform themselves about the export regulations ahead of their journey.

## Transport and infrastructure

HIGH

### Transport and traffic

HIGH

- Travellers should organise their trip in close coordination with colleagues familiar with the country and/or local business partners.

## Air traffic

INCREASED

- The most important cities have well developed international airports, which are connected with intercontinental route networks. International airlines are serving these airports, at least on a weekly basis. In some cases there are daily flight connections.
  - There are direct connections between the airport in the capital and airports in neighbouring countries on several days a week.
  - Domestic flight route networks are well developed.
  - There are scheduled flights between most major cities and regions often on a daily basis.
  - Local air carriers may only have poorly maintained or dated aircrafts.
  - Employees of the German Embassy in Rangoon avoid flying with “Myanma Airways” due to safety reasons. (Not identical to “Myanmar Airways International”).
- Travellers should use air connections for long-distance journeys within the country, if possible. Only buses from premium service providers are recommended, particularly for long distances.

## Public long distance transport

HIGH

- The public long-distance transport system is not well developed. Only larger cities are connected with each other.
  - Main means of transportation are long-distance/intercity buses and railways, which do not meet Western European standards concerning safety and comfort.
  - There is a high accident risk due to the bad state of the roads.
  - There is a high risk of theft in trains.
  - There is a heightened risk of scams when buying tickets for rides with buses, trains or boats.
- If possible, the public long-distance transport system should only be used during the day. Only long-distance/intercity buses from premium service providers (with a verified safety concept) are recommended, particularly for long distances.

## Local public transport

HIGH

- Myanmar only has a (very) limited local and regional public transport network. The means of transport often do not meet Western European standards concerning safety and comfort.
  - Numerous public and private companies offer bus services in Yangon. Buses regularly are overcrowded.
  - There is a high accident risk due to the bad state of the roads.
- Foreign travellers and business travellers should generally refrain from using all means of public transport.
- Instead, travellers should arrange the transport with radio taxis or hire a(n all-terrain) car with a driver (who is reliable, trained and familiar with the area) in advance.

## Taxis

HIGH

- Licensed taxis are available only on a (very) limited basis. In most cases, the only taxis available are privately run, unofficial (shared) taxis.
- There are taxis in Rangoon, but they often do not have a taximeter. Fares are subject to negotiation. Many taxis are old and in a poor technical condition. Most taxis are not air-conditioned and do not have safety belts.
- There are special airport taxis which are more comfortable (and also accept US dollars). They can be booked at the hotel.
- There is an especially high risk of accidents using rickshaw-taxis.
- Taxi drivers often do not speak any foreign languages.

- Before using the taxi, travellers should make it plain to the driver that nobody else should use the taxi besides the traveller himself (for an additional charge).
- Shared taxis should not be used by foreign travellers.
- Prices should be negotiated beforehand.
- It is recommended to write down the address of the destination (in the local language, respectively characters) or to carry along a business card with the address of the hotel or destination (company).

### Private transport / rental car

VERY HIGH

- The road and highway network is largely in a bad state. Poor road conditions are to be expected on many routes (unpaved roads, dirt roads, potholes, unpaved shoulders, etc.).
- Most roads are paved in city areas, but poorly maintained. Street lighting and road signs are often poor or not available at all.
- Many roads are either in bad state or completely impassable during the rainy season.
- Travellers need to anticipate poor street lighting and unclear road signs, which might be hard to understand for travellers unfamiliar with the country.
- It is possible to travel individually by car/rental car, but only with significant restrictions.
- The road risk is generally very high. Many traffic accidents are caused by reckless driving, poor road conditions or the generally poor technical conditions of the vehicles.
- Rental cars are available only at few locations. In most cases they can only be hired with a driver.

- Travellers driving on their own should inform themselves about the country-specific traffic rules ahead of their journey (need of an International Driving Permit, legal alcohol limit etc.).
- Travellers should not drive on their own due to security reasons.
- Travellers should avoid overland travel, if possible. Overland journeys should be strictly avoided after dark.
- Since the basic terms for hiring a car (e.g., minimum age, driver's license, deposit, insurance etc.) can always change on short notice, travellers should have those terms confirmed and explained by the chosen rental car company ahead of the journey.

### Other means of transport

HIGH

- Ferries and boats are one of the most important means of transportation in Myanmar. There is a high risk of accidents due to overcrowding and the poor technical condition of the boats, which also often do not meet even low level safety standards.
- Using overcrowded and overloaded ferries should be strictly avoided.
- Ferry trips should be avoided in case of (forecast) severe weather.

### Strike

LOW

- There is a low risk of private or public sector strikes affecting travel in Myanmar.
- Strikes and protests are occasionally affecting traffic and public life.
- Travellers should inquire about announced strikes and the current flight status ahead of their journey (A3M, tour operator, local media).

## Infrastructure

HIGH

### Money

INCREASED

Mastercard global ATM locator – [https://network.americanexpress.com/globalnetwork/atm\\_locator/en/](https://network.americanexpress.com/globalnetwork/atm_locator/en/)  
VISA global ATM locator – <https://www.visa.com/atmlocator/>

- Cash withdrawal from ATMs with bank cards (with the “Cirrus” and / or “Maestro” logo) or major credit cards (and PIN) cannot be guaranteed countrywide.
  - Credit cards are only accepted at some places countrywide (e.g. banks, exchange offices, airlines, rental car services, hotels, international shops etc.).
  - Myanmar remains a largely cash-based society.
  - Travellers need to reckon that the technology (ATMs, credit card terminals, etc.) does not always work.
  - There is an increased risk of becoming a victim of fraud (credit card fraud, skimming, counterfeit money).
  - Many services still have to be paid for in cash. US dollars from before 1996 are not accepted; neither are 100-dollar-bills starting with the serial number CB. Soiled, torn, folded, and damaged bills will also be rejected.
  - Traveller’s cheques are not accepted in Myanmar.
  - Local currency: 1 Burmese kyat (MMK) = 100 pyas.
- Travellers should inform themselves about the exchange regulations and the methods of payment (acceptance of credit cards, possibilities of cash withdrawal and associated fees, import and export regulations concerning foreign currencies etc.) at their financial or credit institution ahead of their journey.
  - Travellers should choose local currency when withdrawing money abroad at ATMs to avoid the possibility of hidden costs. It is also recommended to always pay in local currency when using a credit card.
  - Travellers are advised to abstain from using remote or secluded ATMs - particularly after dark and when unaccompanied. When entering the pin and pocketing money, it must be ensured that nobody is watching.
  - Travellers should make sure that they have enough cash for the duration of their stay, either in euros or US dollars. It is recommended to only exchange currency at authorised, official offices (banks, exchange offices, hotels, etc.).
  - It is recommended to only carry absolutely new, undamaged and unbent dollar bills.
  - Money should be carried in small notes.

### Telephone / cellphone

INCREASED

- Landline and/or mobile telephone services are not always available outside of urban areas.
  - The domestic phone network is often limited, overloaded or malfunctioning.
  - Prior to importing and using a satellite phone, travellers need to obtain a permit from the Post & Telecommunications Department of Myanmar.
  - SIM cards brought into the country may not work. Local SIM cards can be purchased on site, e.g. at Rangoon airport.
  - The mobile network coverage cannot be guaranteed outside major cities and off the major roads between cities. For more information on the GSM network coverage, see “GSM Association” ([maps.mobileworldlive.com](http://maps.mobileworldlive.com)<sup>3</sup>).
  - Due to the unreliable (unstable) power supply, there may be limitations to the use of telecommunication facilities and devices.
  - Telecommunications surveillance by the domestic security authorities cannot be ruled out.
- Travellers should consider the information of the category “Economic security”.

<sup>3</sup><http://maps.mobileworldlive.com>

## Internet

HIGH

- Freedom of the press and freedom of expression is severely restricted. This could also affect the use of news apps on private mobile phones.
  - Internet and email services are sometimes limited, even in urban areas.
  - More and more Internet cafés and hotels, especially in Yangon (Rangoon), Mandalay and Bagan offer access to the Internet for their guests. Some restaurants and hotels also offer WLAN access for a cover charge. The connections usually are (very) slow and are prone to connection time-outs.
  - Telecommunications surveillance by the domestic security authorities cannot be ruled out.
- Travellers should consider the information of the category “Economic security”.
  - Travellers should check whether the use of mobile apps (e.g. the Global Monitoring app) is permitted by local authorities.

## Electricity

HIGH

- A current overview of the common plug and power adapter types can be found at the following website: “International Electrotechnical Commission” ([www.iec.ch](http://www.iec.ch)<sup>4</sup>).
  - There is only an insufficient, inefficient and limited electrical power supply infrastructure.
  - The power supply is unreliable in the cities (voltage fluctuations, power blackouts caused by technical malfunctions); (sufficient) power supply often cannot be guaranteed in remote areas.
  - Many hotels have emergency backup generators.
  - Power blackouts temporarily lead to poor street lighting, inadequate cooling in restaurants and supermarkets, non-functioning gas pumps at gas stations, food and water shortages.
- It is recommended to have a universal adapter (travel plug, travel adapter, universal/multi-adapter) in order to use private electrical devices.
  - Due to the unreliable power supply, travellers should never use laptops or other sensitive electronic devices run from the mains, as they can be damaged from voltage spikes during power cuts. It is advised to use a spike buster/surge protector.
  - It is advised to keep candles, torches, accumulators and the like ready since power outages are quite common.

## Health

HIGH

### Vaccinations

INCREASED

#### Mandatory vaccinations

VERY HIGH

- Yellow fever (if arriving from countries/areas with risk of yellow fever transmission)

#### Recommended vaccinations

LOW

- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Pertussis
- Polio
- Measles
- Mumps

<sup>4</sup><http://www.iec.ch/worldplugs/map.htm>

- Rubella
- Influenza
- Anti-pneumococcal
- Herpes zoster (shingles)
- Hepatitis A

### Vaccinations for special conditions

INCREASED

- Hepatitis B
- Rabies
- Typhoid fever
- Japanese encephalitis
- Yellow fever
- Malaria prophylaxis

### Infection risks

HIGH

#### Mosquito-borne diseases

- Occuring in tropical and subtropical climate
- Infection risk particularly high around standing or slow-moving water
- Low infection risk in high altitudes with very low temperatures and in dry areas
- Increase in cases often during seasonal rain

- Protective measures against mosquito bites should also be observed during the day.
- Protective measures include repellents, pale clothings covering the whole body and mosquito nets.
- The risk of mosquito bites is significantly reduced when using air conditioning systems.
- Travellers are advised to see a doctor after observing symptoms of the disease, mentioning their visit to a malaria-endemic area prior to developing symptoms of the disease.
- Preventive measures (including vaccination, prophylaxis or standby emergency treatment) may be considered after contacting a doctor.

### Malaria

HIGH

- Endemic areas: countrywide, medium risk particularly in the south-east (Kayin State, Kayah State, Tenasserim/-Tanintharyi region, eastern parts of Shan State), in the border area with Thailand and in the west of the country (south-west of Chin State including border regions with Bangladesh and India); low risk in other parts of the country.
- Areas without malaria: Rangoon and Mandalay, altitudes above 1000 meters
- Seasonal increase: throughout the year, seasonal icnrease during the rainy season (March to December)
- Symptoms: fever, headaches, pain in the limbs, chills, hyperhidrosis
- The severe variant Malaria tropica can cause life-threatening coma, kidney failure and shock.
- Incubation period: at least 7 days (Malaria tropica); the less severe variants Malaria tertiana and quartana have longer incubation periods.



## Zika fever

INCREASED

- Symptoms: fever, rash, conjunctivitis, muscle pain, joint pain, and headache
- Severe courses of the disease can result in a neurological disorder (Guillain-Barre syndrome) and in birth defects (microcephaly)
- Incubation period: unknown, according to the WHO, probably several days
- Preventive measures: In addition to basic measures against diseases transferred by mosquitoes (see below), using condoms following a possible exposure is recommended by medical authorities because sexual transmission is possible. This particularly applies during pregnancy.
- The German Federal Foreign Office advises pregnant women and those planning a pregnancy to avoid non-essential travel to Myanmar.

## Dengue fever

HIGH

- Endemic areas: countrywide, especially in urban areas
- Seasonal increase: throughout the year, seasonal increase during the rainy season
- Symptoms: high fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, severe headache, joint pain
- Incubation period: 2–10 days

## Chikungunya

INCREASED

- Symptoms: sudden fever, joint pain, muscle pain, headache, nausea, fatigue, rashes
- Incubation period: 2–12 days

## Japanese encephalitis

INCREASED

- Particularly in rural areas and near rice cultivation and pig farming. Low infection risk in cities.
- Symptoms: sudden fever, chills, headache, muscle pain, in most cases subsiding after six days
- A severe progression of the disease, which could lead to death or irreversible damage, is rare.
- Severe cases result in encephalitis with neck stiffness, emaciation, signs of paralysis, seizures and fever.
- Incubation period: 5–15 days

## Diseases with faecal-oral transmission

- Occurring particularly in areas without developed and separately operating drinking water and sewage systems or when faeces are being disposed in bodies of water.

- Travellers should consider the suggested measures in the category "hygiene / environment".
- In case of diarrhoea, it is advised to drink large amounts of (boiled) water or tea mixed with salt and sugar.
- A doctor must be consulted in case of persistent or recurring diarrhoea or when developing symptoms such as fever or bloody diarrhoea.

## Cholera

INCREASED

- Bacterial disease generally transmitted by food or drinking water contaminated with faeces.
- Mainly occurs in areas without developed and separately operating drinking water and sewage systems or when faeces are being disposed in bodies of water.
- Increase in cases during seasonal rain.
- Symptoms: diarrhoea and severe vomiting, rapid dehydration of the body possible
- Short incubation period: from a few hours to several days

## Diarrhoea

LOW

- Disease caused by infections or by consuming contaminated food or drinking water.
- Symptoms: diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, lack of appetite and abdominal cramps, vertigo and circulation problems possible due to water loss
- Diarrhoeal diseases may take different courses depending on the type of pathogen.
- Short incubation period: from a few hours to several days

## Other diseases

### COVID-19

HIGH

- Human-to-human transmission of the viral disease primarily occurs through droplets and aerosols, but COVID-19 may also spread by touching contaminated surfaces.
- The course of the disease can vary greatly; symptoms commonly include rhinorrhea, sore throat, coughing, fever, headaches, dizziness, nausea, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, and loss of smell, taste or appetite. COVID-19 may also cause severe breathing problems and pneumonia as well as cardiovascular and organ dysfunction. Infections may also progress entirely asymptomatic, leaving people unaware they have contracted the virus.
- The incubation period ranges from 1-14 days, with an average period of 5-6 days.
- Authorities recommend to wear protective face masks, to avoid contact with infected people and to generally adhere to social distancing and hygiene measures in place (e.g. thorough and frequent hand-washing, avoid face-touching).

## AIDS

LOW

- Disease of the immune system transmitted by contact with bodily fluids (e.g. by unprotected intercourse, contaminated blood transfusions, needlestick injuries).

## Schistosomiasis

INCREASED

- The parasitic disease is transmitted by contact with contaminated water populated with larvae of the flatworm schistosoma. The larvae penetrate the skin and travel through the blood and lymph vessels to the liver. The lung, the urinary bladder, the intestines, the spleen, and (more rarely) the brain can also be affected by the worm infestation.
- After the infection, itching may occur at the spot where the larvae had entered the skin. Symptoms of the disease can occur after a few weeks. Allergic reactions and inflammations occur in the affected organs, which can cause cough, fever, urination problems, and bloody urine.

## Poliomyelitis

INCREASED

- The virus disease is transmitted by direct or indirect contact with bodily fluids of infected humans. The affected people are usually between 3 and 8 years old. Adults, however, can also contract the virus.
- An infection mostly proceeds without symptoms. Symptoms of the disease can include fever, sore throat, fatigue, diarrhoea and vomiting. Severe courses of the disease can include inflammation of the cerebral membranes, high fever, headache, neck stiffness, paralysis, impaired ability to swallow as well as respiratory and circulatory dysregulation. These complications can lead to death.
- The incubation period usually lasts between 7 and 14 days.

## Rabies

LOW

- Disease of the meninges transmitted by animal bites, scratches or direct contact with infected saliva.

## Tuberculosis

INCREASED

- The bacterial disease is transmitted by direct or indirect contact with bodily fluids of infected humans (mainly droplet infection) or animals (e.g. raw milk and meat).
- An infection mostly proceeds without symptoms. Depending on the course of the disease, different symptoms, however, can occur. If the outbreak of the disease is (temporarily) contained by the immune system, small, encapsulated areas of inflammatory tissue occur in the lung 3 to 6 weeks after the infection, which do not cause discomfort, remain in the body for several years and can be reactivated at any time. Following symptoms can occur if the infection is not contained: fatigue, loss of appetite, weight loss, swelling of the lymph nodes, slight fever, night sweats, occasionally painful cough with little sputum (green and yellow mucous), and hoarseness. Severe courses of the disease include bloody sputum, severe anemia, breathlessness, underweight, and nail clubbing. An inflammation of the cerebral membranes (irritability, personality change, headache, neck stiffness, hallucinations, consciousness disturbances, seizures, fever, and coma) or blood poisoning can occur if the bacteria spreads to other organs. These complications lead to death. Painful swellings of the joints and spine as well as skin alterations (small wounds, skin cracks, suppurative foci, ulcers) can also occur.

## Avian influenza (bird flu)

LOW

- Influenza-like disease transmitted by direct or indirect contact with infected birds.

## Hepatitis B

LOW

- Disease of the liver transmitted by direct or indirect contact with bodily fluids of an infected person (e.g. by unprotected intercourse, contaminated blood transfusions, needlestick injuries).

## Hepatitis C

LOW

- Disease of the liver transmitted by direct or indirect contact with bodily fluids of an infected person (e.g. by needlestick injuries, contaminated blood transfusions).

## Hygiene

HIGH

- The hygienic conditions in Myanmar do not correspond to western European standards. There is a high risk of contracting a disease from contaminated food or water.

## Drinking water

HIGH

- Travellers should only drink boiled or filtered and disinfected water or sparkling mineral water from properly sealed original bottles.
- Beverages with ice cubes should be avoided.
- Tap water should never be used, also not for rinsing the mouth or doing the dishes.

## Food

HIGH

- Travellers should only eat boiled, unopened, self-peeled or disinfected food.
- Travellers should avoid food from snack bars in the streets.
- It should be made sure that flies can not come in contact with food.
- Hands should be regularly washed and/or disinfected. Disposable towels should be used after washing hands.

## Healthcare infrastructure

HIGH

- Health care is insufficient throughout the country. Competent medical treatment/advice is only available in Mandalay and Yangon/Rangoon, if at all.

- The health infrastructure is usually suitable for minor procedures only. Complicated/serious cases need to be treated abroad.
- Patients are oftentimes required to pay (in cash) prior to receiving medical treatment.
- There is an increased risk of counterfeit medicinal products in Myanmar.

- For a list of English-speaking doctors, see: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>
- Travellers are advised to obtain a valid travel health insurance with repatriation cover.
- Travellers are advised to carry a personalised medical travel kit, (which should be kept in a cool place during high temperatures).
- Travellers should make sure they have enough funds to cover medical bills (or repatriation costs).

## Natural hazards

HIGH

### Natural hazards

HIGH

#### Earthquakes

HIGH

- There is a high earthquake risk in Myanmar.
- Very strong earthquakes occur in Myanmar, which may have the following effects: It will become difficult to drive. Minor damage to well constructed buildings, substantial damage to averagely constructed buildings including partial collapse; critical damage to poorly constructed buildings. (Factory) chimneys, pillars, monuments and walls may collapse. Heavy furniture may fall over. Tree branches may break off and fall down. Cracks may develop on wet ground on steep terrain.
- Stronger earthquakes, which lead to severe damage, have occurred in the the past and may also occur in the future.
- Significant disruptions to traffic and infrastructure have to be anticipated following earthquakes.

- **When indoors:** Travellers should only leave the building if they are near an exit on the ground floor. Otherwise, it is advised to take shelter under a solid table, doorframe or at a weight-bearing interior wall, away from external walls. Doors should be opened, so that emergency escape routes are not blocked.
- **When outdoors:** Travellers should immediately move to the open keeping enough distance to buildings, power lines and telephone lines, overpasses, underpasses and loose slopes. Drivers should immediately stop at a safe distance from these areas and remain in their vehicles. Driving across potentially damaged bridges or through underpasses should be avoided after earthquakes. Travellers should not carry on with their journey after a strong earthquake.
- Travellers should strictly follow the instructions of authorities after an earthquake. Aftershocks, which could further damage buildings and infrastructure, are to be expected. Following destructive earthquakes travellers should gather at official meeting points and contact each other (for example other European citizens) to coordinate further actions.

#### Tsunami

INCREASED

- There is an elevated risk of tsunamis in Myanmar. There have been few destructive tsunamis in the past.
  - **Caution:** A potential tsunami can hit the coast multiple times, even hours after an earthquake.
  - **Tsunami Warning Signs:** Noticeable earthquakes, unusual and sudden rise or fall in sea level, local media warnings (sirens, light signals, radio, TV, text messages).
- Travellers should inform themselves about emergency escape routes after arriving at coastal areas.
  - If a tsunami warning has been issued, travellers should immediately leave the coastline.

- Travellers should move inland and/or to higher ground (e.g. hills or mountains).
- River mouths should be avoided.
- It is advised to always follow warnings and instructions of the local authorities.
- Higher ground should only be left after an official all-clear signal.

## Tropical storms

HIGH

- There is a high risk of tropical storms in Myanmar.
- The North Indian Ocean cyclone season occurs from April until December (however, cyclones can occur throughout the year). The coastline and also the interior of the country can be affected by tropical storms.
- Tropical storms can cause heavy damage to buildings and to the infrastructure. The water level rises for several metres. All people in the affected areas are in immediate danger and should get to safety in any case.
- Power outages, water shortages, floods, landslides and traffic disruptions have to be anticipated in the entire affected regions.

- Travellers should inform themselves about possibly active cyclones ahead of their trip (Joint Typhoon Warning Center: <https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html>).
- Travellers should strictly follow warnings and instructions of local authorities.

## Rainy season & monsoon

INCREASED

- Severe storms and heavy rainfall regularly occur in Myanmar from May to October, which can lead to flash floods, heavy floods, landslides and hence to disruptions to infrastructure. Significant disruptions to traffic and in rural areas have to be anticipated during the rainy season.
- During the rainy / cyclone season, travellers should exercise high caution, particularly along rivers and mountain slopes.
- Travellers should seek information on forecast storms or possible storm damage ahead of their journey.

## Flood

HIGH

- During the rainy / cyclone season, heavy and often long-lasting floods regularly occur in Myanmar. Disruptions to traffic and infrastructure have to be anticipated following the floods. Traffic routes are often blocked off for weeks following floods, landslides or damages.
- Travellers should seek information on forecast storms as well as on possible storm damage and floods ahead of their journey.
- In case of storms or long-lasting rainfall at the travel destination, travellers should exercise high caution along rivers and mountain slopes.

## Environment

INCREASED

### Air quality

INCREASED

- Elevated air pollution levels, which may be hazardous to health, are often being reached in Myanmar's major urban areas.
- Travellers are advised to follow instructions by officials.

# Security

INCREASED

## Crime

LOW

- Myanmar has a relatively low crime rate. Street crime (scams, pickpocketing, muggings) occurs in urban areas and tourist centres.
  - Occasionally, there are burglaries from hotel rooms and guesthouses.
- After dark, travellers should only travel in company and stay on brightly lit and populated streets in the city centre.
  - Remote areas (particularly after dark) should be avoided.
  - Expensive jewellery and watches etc. should not be openly displayed and travellers should not carry large amounts of cash with them.
  - Valuable items and identity papers should be carried on the body. Copies of the passport should be stored in the hotel safe.
  - Travellers are advised to abstain from using remote or secluded ATMs - particularly after dark and when unaccompanied. When entering the pin and pocketing the money, it must be ensured that nobody is watching.
  - Travellers should not resist an attempted robbery. Perpetrators may be armed and willing to resort to violence. Eye contact should be avoided in any case. Valuable items, cash or the vehicle should be handed over immediately.
  - Car doors and windows should remain closed in traffic. Valuable items should be left out of sight in the car, even while driving.
  - Travellers should be particularly vigilant and take care of their valuables in crowded places, in public transport, at railway stations and at airports.

## Demonstration / unrest

HIGH

- In Myanmar, there is a high risk that the trip will be affected by demonstrations and/or civil unrest.
- Demonstrations sometimes may last for several days and often result in violent clashes.
- Protests, demonstrations and social unrest occasionally occur in Myanmar. Violent clashes occasionally occur particularly in Rakhine (except in the tourist areas of Ngpali as well as in Kyaukpyu, Ramree, Manaung, Taungup, Thandwe, and Gwa), but also in the states affected by armed conflicts (see category "armed conflict").
- There may be nightly curfews in parts of Rakhine State following ethnic unrest.
- Demonstrations can erupt nationwide at any time without prior notice. The demonstrations often take place at main squares and streets of the respective city and near governmental facilities.
- Demonstrations in Yangon often take place near the Shwedagon and Sule Pagodas.
- Demonstrations are often accompanied by violent clashes and street fights between different social and ethnic groups and/or protesters and security forces.
- Security forces often do not differentiate between violent and peaceful protesters. Radical groups amongst the protesters are willing to use violence against security forces.
- Demonstrations are often accompanied by vandalism and attacks against public and private facilities (governmental facilities, religious institutions, neighbourhoods of ethnic minorities etc.).
- Due to road closures and roadblocks by security forces and protesters, traffic disruptions have to be anticipated during the demonstrations.
- In most cases, travellers are not targeted by protesters. However, there is a general risk of being caught in the middle of clashes or being attacked by protesters.

- All travel to the northern parts of Rakhine State is advised against.
- Following measures should be considered if travelling to the northern parts of Rakhine State cannot be avoided:
- All journeys should be strictly limited to the purpose of the trip. It is strongly advised for travellers to abstain from tourist activity and sightseeing respectively.
- The trip (transport, accommodation) should be planned in close coordination with the business partners.
- All journeys should be organised with a professional driving service familiar with the area. Public transport or taxis should not be used.
- The current security situation should be assessed ahead of each journey. If necessary, the travel route should be readjusted. The business partner should be informed about the planned route ahead of the journey.
- The hotel should not be left unescorted and not on foot. Driving services should even be used for short distances.
- Travellers should closely follow the instructions of security forces.
- Travellers should avoid demonstrations and large gatherings in whole Myanmar, particularly near trouble spots and around events of symbolic importance (e.g. public holidays and anniversaries).
- Trouble spots which are particularly at risk are main squares, buildings belonging to foreign and domestic media companies, religious institutions, governmental institutions as well as neighbourhoods of ethnic minorities.
- Travellers are advised to inform themselves about announced demonstrations and civil unrest ahead of their journey.
- Generally, travellers should not take pictures of demonstrations and security forces, as well as of security- or governmental institutions. This includes airports, bridges, military facilities, official residences and embassies.
- In case of ongoing demonstrations or if demonstrations have been announced, driving or strolling in areas prone to demonstrations should be avoided.

## Terrorism

INCREASED

- In general, there is an elevated risk of terrorist attacks in Myanmar.
- In the past, there have been several terrorist attacks against governmental facilities, public transport, festivals and events as well as hotels, restaurants and cinemas in the restive conflict areas (see categories “armed conflict” and “demonstration/riot”), but also in other parts of the country. Foreign travellers were also targeted by those attacks. Previous bomb attacks have also resulted in casualties and fatalities.
- Due to the latent terrorist threat, places at risk for terrorist attacks should be avoided when travelling to the restive conflict areas. This particularly applies to the time around events of symbolic importance (e.g. public holidays and anniversaries).
- Travellers should exercise caution nationwide, particularly near places at risk for terrorist attacks and around events of symbolic importance (e.g. public holidays and anniversaries).
- Places at risk for terrorist attacks are: Governmental institutions, facilities of the police and military, ministries, traffic infrastructure (airports, train stations, bus stations, public transport), buildings belonging to foreign and domestic media companies, religious institutions, shopping centres and other markets, popular tourist spots, main squares and events as well as other facilities which have been targets for terrorist attacks in the past such as hotels, restaurants, bars and cinemas.

## Armed conflict

HIGH

- Areas in the following regions are affected by armed conflicts: Rakhine State, Chin State, Sagaing Region, Kachin State, Shan State (northern parts in particular, including the Kokang Self-Administered Zone), Kayah State, Kayin State (aka Karen State), and Mon State.
- Predominantly ethnic rebel groups are fighting the central government, particularly in the areas inhabited by minorities bordering Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. In the course of these conflicts, terrorist attacks against uninvolved persons and violent unrest often occur.

- Armed clashes between ethno nationalist rebels and government forces are occasionally erupting in Rakhine State. Most affected are northern parts of Rakhine State, including the townships of Buthidaung, Kyauktaw, Rathedaung, and Ponnagyun as well as areas surrounding the city of Mrauk U. Violent incidents also occur in central parts of Rakhine State, including the city of Sittwe as well as surrounding areas. The Ngapali area is not affected so far. Rebels are mainly targeting government forces and military infrastructure, though travellers have been repeatedly targeted for kidnappings, also on highways and ferries.
  - In Kachin State, the capital Myitkyina as well as the towns of Bhamo and Putao are considered to be relatively safe. Travelling between Myitkyina and Bhamo is only possible by air, due to travel restrictions.
  - In mid-August, rebel groups conducted coordinated attacks in Pyin Oo Lwin (Mandalay Region) and Nawngkhio (northern Shan State). Attacks are targeting government forces, facilities of security forces (military headquarters, police stations), and the traffic infrastructure (toll gates, petrol stations, bridges, railway lines, airports). There were casualties also among the civilian population and significant damage to the infrastructure. Mines were placed in the affected areas. Further attacks are possible in the northern parts of Shan State.
  - Fighting occasionally occurs in the townships of Myawaddy (Kayin State), Kawkareik (Kayin State), and Kyaikmaraw (Mon State).
  - There is a high risk from unmarked minefields and unexploded ordnance in conflict and border areas.
  - Travel restrictions and checkpoints are in place for wide parts of the country. The conflict- and border regions are mostly affected, however, there are restrictions also in other parts of the country. Generally, travellers need to obtain travel permits when travelling on highways outside of the regions Yangon (Rangoon), Mandalay, Bago and Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy). This does not necessarily apply to journeys by train or air.
  - There are a limited number of border crossings, which may also be closed on short notice (e.g. the border crossings with China due to the armed conflict in Kachin and Shan States).
- All travel to parts of Kachin State (particularly areas outside the cities of Myitkyina, Bhamo, and Putao) and to parts of Shan State (all northern parts including the cities of Lashio and Hsipaw as well as the route between Pyin Oo Lwin, Nawngkhio (Naung Cho) and Hsipaw) is advised against.
  - Travelling to the border areas of Chin State, Sagaing Region, Kayah State, Kayin State, and Mon State as well as travelling to the northern parts of Rakhine State (except for the city of Sittwe) is also advised against.
  - All non-essential travel to the southern parts of Rakhine State (except for the townships of Kyaukpyu, Thandwe (including Ngapali Beach) and Gwa) as well as non-essential travel to Paletwa Township (Chin State) is advised against.
  - Travellers in Taunggyi (Shan State) are advised to remain vigilant.

Following measures must be considered if travelling to the conflict regions cannot be avoided:

- If travelling to Kachin cannot be avoided, travellers should use air connections for travelling to/between the towns of Myitkyina, Bhamo and Putao.
- All journeys should be strictly limited to the purpose of the trip. It is strongly advised for travellers to abstain from tourist activity and sightseeing respectively.
- The trip (transport, accommodation) should be planned in close coordination with the business partner.
- All journeys should be organised with a professional driving service familiar with the area; if necessary, accompanied by an armed security service provider. Public transport or taxis should not be used.
- The current security situation should be assessed ahead of each journey. If necessary, the travel route should be readjusted. The business partner should be informed about the planned route ahead of the journey.
- The hotel should not be left unescorted and not on foot. Driving services should even be used for short distances.
- Travellers should closely follow the instructions of security forces.
- Travellers should inform themselves at the Tourism Ministry about travel restrictions ahead of their journey (see <http://www.myanmar-tourism.org/><sup>a</sup>)
- The FCDO provides a list of the border crossings, which are open for foreign travellers (see “FCDO Burma” [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)<sup>b</sup>, section “Local Travel”).



## Business security

HIGH

### Corruption

HIGH

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) – <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>

Business Anti-Corruption Portal (BACP) – <https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/>  
Corruption, arbitrariness and nepotism are common in Myanmar.

- Networking among political and economic elites results in bribery and legal uncertainty which significantly affect business activities.
- Corruption occurs at all levels. For this reason travellers can also be affected.
- Travellers are affected by corruption and arbitrariness most frequently during roadside checks or when dealing with authorities (customs officer, immigration officer etc.).

- Travellers should not act arrogant or show disapproval when affected by or witnessing corrupt behaviour.
- Officials do not have to fear prosecution. People who press charges may face reprisals.

## Industrial espionage

HIGH

There is a high risk of economic and industrial espionage in Myanmar.

- It can be assumed that business travellers are being (digitally) monitored or spied on by domestic governmental agencies or by the private sector (i.e. detectives, individuals or competing companies) which would exploit economic valuable information or data (e.g. patents, research results, trade secrets, business and negotiation strategies, other sensitive corporate data).
- Economic espionage by intelligence services is a declared objective by the political leadership. Intelligence information is made available to the domestic economy.
- Security authorities, which are equipped with extensive powers, monitor the own population and all foreigners living in the territory of Myanmar.
- Myanmar has a (powerful) surveillance apparatus and intelligence services. However, these bodies are mainly interested in political information rather than economically sensitive information.
- Myanmar is considered a failed state according to the Fragile States Index (2014). It cannot/does not provide basic state functions such as security or rule of law. There is a greater risk of corruption, blackmail, counterfeit piracy, organised or economic crime and proliferation than of planned industrial or economic espionage.

- During their stay in Myanmar, travellers should only use laptops or tablets containing data needed for the trip. Unnecessary or confidential company data should be permanently deleted from smartphones, tablets and from notebooks in particular ahead of the journey.
- There should be no files besides the system software on the own laptop. Furthermore, the laptop should be specifically configured for the purpose of the trip. Corporate data should only be stored on USB sticks, memory cards or DVDs and carried on the body. The data should neither be let out of the traveller's hands, nor should it be stored in the hotel safe.
- Travellers should use strong passwords and VPN clients, virus protection and encryption programmes. It is important to consider the country-specific regulations concerning the import of encryption software and components.
- Never leave luggage, corporate documents, mobile devices etc. unattended. This also applies to both hotel rooms and conference or office rooms. Hotel safes are not safe, either.
- Travellers should only use personal communication devices (the hotel's own computers, internet cafes etc. should be avoided).

- Personal communication devices should never be lent out.
- Other people's USB sticks etc. (including USB sticks given as presents) should never be used (they can have a trojan horse etc. stored on them).
- Documents, which are no longer required, should be destroyed.
- If forwarding sensible information cannot be avoided, safe communication channels should be used.
- Unused interfaces (Bluetooth, infrared etc.) should always be deactivated.
- Travellers should reduce their availability (mobile phone, smartphone) and keep their mobile phone in a tap-proof case during journeys and at the travel destination (this prevents data from being sent, wiretapping, stealth SMS and tracking).
- Travellers should change their passwords upon return and have their devices checked for malware consulting their company's IT department.

## Special risks

INCREASED

### Cultural characteristics

INCREASED

Please get in touch with our partner, ICU Business Consulting GmbH, if you look for an individual preparation of your specialists and executives for their international challenges or for intercultural consulting services when entering new markets abroad. – <https://www.icunet.group/>

- Foreign visitors are expected to respect the rules of conduct derived from the moral values of a predominantly Buddhist society, and to behave with due consideration.

- Revealing clothing in public is a taboo, despite the general tolerance of the Buddhist society. Choose appropriate clothing out of respect, the shoulders and knees should be covered.
- Showing a lack of respect towards religion is illegal. The ban is broadly interpreted and may include depictions of the Buddha or other religious representations perceived disrespectful.
- Travellers should inform themselves about the appropriate behaviour when entering temples: shoes must be taken off.
- Religious objects should be treated with respect (should not be touched, back should not be turned towards the object e.g. when taking a photograph).
- Women must not touch monks, and are also not allowed to give them anything directly.
- Travellers should avoid public display of affection.
- It is taboo to touch other people's heads.
- To point the soles of the feet towards someone is considered extremely impolite.
- The left hand is considered unclean. It should not be used to eat, hand over or to take anything.
- People should only be photographed with their consent.

## LGBTQ

HIGH

- Homosexual practices can get prosecuted in Myanmar, life sentences are possible.
- It is strongly advised not to openly display homosexuality.
- Partners should act discreetly so that they cannot be recognised as a couple.
- Travellers should strictly avoid public display of affection.
- Travellers should put "single" in their marital status when filling out forms.

- Travellers should mention children or a boyfriend/girlfriend at home when talking to locals (e.g. service employees).
- Couples should strictly ask for single rooms in hotels.
- Travellers should under no circumstances look for commercial sex contacts.

## Risks for female travellers

LOW

- There is a low risk for female travellers of becoming a victim of a sexual assault in Myanmar.
- However, it goes without saying for female travellers in Myanmar to exercise usual caution and to avoid potentially dangerous situations.

## Characteristics of the criminal law

HIGH

- Criticising the government or engaging in political activities may lead to deportation or long prison sentences. Travellers must expect to be monitored, even on social media.
- The possession of drugs is severely punished, even when only small amounts are involved.
- Prostitution is just as illegal as the possession of pornographic material.
- Drone flights are banned over military facilities, government agencies, religious as well as tourist sites. Non-compliance may result in criminal penalties (e.g. prison sentences).

- It is inadvisable to use drones for recreational purposes.

## Other special risks

INCREASED

- Travellers are obliged to be able to produce their identity papers at all times. Roadblocks of security forces are to be anticipated on national roads where travellers have to prove their identities. Hotels are obliged to provide their guest data to the police.
- Fast consular assistance outside of the tourist areas is not always possible due to travel restrictions for consular agents and due to the underdeveloped (communication) infrastructure.
- It is prohibited to take photographs of military facilities, members of the military as well as of important infrastructural installations.