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The World Factbook



Burma



Introduction **Burma**

Background: Britain conquered Burma over a period of 62 years (1824-1886) and incorporated it into its Indian Empire. Burma was administered as a province of India until 1937 when it became a separate, self-governing

colony; independence outside of the Commonwealth was attained in 1948. Gen. NE WIN dominated the government from 1962 to 1988, first as military ruler, then as president, and later as political kingmaker. Despite multiparty elections in 1990 that resulted in the main opposition party winning a decisive victory, the ruling military junta refused to hand over power. Key opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize recipient AUNG SAN SUU KYI, under house arrest from 1989 to 1995, was again placed under house detention from September 2000 to May 2002 and again in May 2003; her supporters are routinely harassed or jailed.

Geography **Burma**

Location: Southeastern Asia, bordering the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal, between Bangladesh and Thailand

Geographic coordinates: 22 00 N, 98 00 E

Map references: Southeast Asia

Area: *total:* 678,500 sq km
land: 657,740 sq km
water: 20,760 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly smaller than Texas

Land boundaries: *total:* 5,876 km
border countries: Bangladesh 193 km, China 2,185 km, India 1,463 km, Laos 235 km, Thailand 1,800 km

Coastline: 1,930 km

Maritime claims: *contiguous zone:* 24 NM
territorial sea: 12 NM
continental shelf: 200 NM or to the edge of the continental margin
exclusive economic zone: 200 NM

Climate: tropical monsoon; cloudy, rainy, hot, humid summers (southwest monsoon, June to September); less cloudy, scant rainfall, mild temperatures, lower humidity during winter (northeast monsoon, December to April)

Terrain: central lowlands ringed by steep, rugged highlands

Elevation extremes: *lowest point:* Andaman Sea 0 m
highest point: Hkakabo Razi 5,881 m

Natural resources: petroleum, timber, tin, antimony, zinc, copper, tungsten, lead, coal, some marble, limestone, precious stones, natural gas, hydropower

Land use: *arable land:* 14.53%
permanent crops: 0.9%
other: 84.57% (1998 est.)

Irrigated land: 15,920 sq km (1998 est.)

Natural hazards: destructive earthquakes and cyclones; flooding and landslides common during rainy season (June to September); periodic droughts

Environment - current issues: deforestation; industrial pollution of air, soil, and water; inadequate sanitation and water treatment contribute to disease

Environment - international agreements: *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note: strategic location near major Indian Ocean shipping lanes

People **Burma**

Population: 42,510,537

note: estimates for this country take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2003 est.)

Age structure: *0-14 years:* 28.1% (male 6,091,220; female 5,840,968)
15-64 years: 67% (male 14,162,190; female 14,347,751)
65 years and over: 4.9% (male 916,702; female 1,151,706) (2003 est.)

Median age: *total:* 25.3 years
male: 24.8 years
female: 25.9 years (2002)

Population growth rate: 0.52% (2003 est.)

Birth rate: 19.15 births/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Death rate: 12.17 deaths/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Net migration rate: -1.81 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Sex ratio: *at birth:* 1.06 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 0.99 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.8 male(s)/female
total population: 0.99 male(s)/female (2003 est.)

Infant mortality rate: *total:* 70.35 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 63.84 deaths/1,000 live births (2003 est.)
male: 76.48 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth: *total population:* 55.79 years
male: 54.12 years
female: 57.56 years (2003 est.)

Total fertility 2.15 children born/woman (2003 est.)

rate:

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: 1.99% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 530,000 (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths: 65,000 (2001 est.)

Nationality: *noun:* Burmese (singular and plural)
adjective: Burmese

Ethnic groups: Burman 68%, Shan 9%, Karen 7%, Rakhine 4%, Chinese 3%, Indian 2%, Mon 2%, other 5%

Religions: Buddhist 89%, Christian 4% (Baptist 3%, Roman Catholic 1%), Muslim 4%, animist 1%, other 2%

Languages: Burmese, minority ethnic groups have their own languages

Literacy: *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 83.1%
male: 88.7%
female: 77.7% (1995 est.)
note: these are official statistics; estimates of functional literacy are likely closer to 30% (1999 est.)

Government Burma

Country name: *conventional long form:* Union of Burma
conventional short form: Burma
local short form: Myanmar Naingngandaw
local long form: Pyidaungzu Myanmar Naingngandaw (translated by the US Government as Union of Myanmar and by the Burmese as Union of Myanmar)
former: Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma
note: since 1989 the military authorities in Burma have promoted the name Myanmar as a conventional name for their state; this decision was not approved by any sitting legislature in Burma, and the US Government did not adopt the name, which is a derivative of the Burmese short-form name Myanmar Naingngandaw

Government type: military regime

Capital: Rangoon (regime refers to the capital as Yangon)

Administrative divisions: 7 divisions* (taing-myar, singular - taing) and 7 states (pyi ne-myar, singular - pyi ne); Chin State, Ayeyarwady*, Bago*, Kachin State, Kayin State, Kayah State, Magway*, Mandalay*, Mon State, Rakhine State, Sagaing*, Shan State, Tanintharyi*, Yangon*

Independence: 4 January 1948 (from UK)

- National holiday:** Independence Day, 4 January (1948)
- Constitution:** 3 January 1974 (suspended since 18 September 1988); national convention started on 9 January 1993 to draft a new constitution; progress has since been stalled
- Legal system:** has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction
- Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal
- Executive branch:** *chief of state:* Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Sr. Gen. THAN SHWE (since 23 April 1992)
head of government: Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Sr. Gen. THAN SHWE (since 23 April 1992); note - the appointed Prime Minister, Gen. KNIN NYUNT (since 25 August 2003), is not the head of government
cabinet: State Peace and Development Council (SPDC); military junta, so named 15 November 1997, which initially assumed power 18 September 1988 under the name State Law and Order Restoration Council; the SPDC oversees the cabinet
elections: none
- Legislative branch:** unicameral People's Assembly or Pyithu Hluttaw (485 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms)
elections: last held 27 May 1990, but Assembly never convened
election results: percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - NLD 392, SNLD 23, NUP 10, other 60
- Judicial branch:** remnants of the British-era legal system are in place, but there is no guarantee of a fair public trial; the judiciary is not independent of the executive
- Political parties and leaders:** National League for Democracy or NLD [AUNG SHWE, chairman, AUNG SAN SUU KYI, general secretary]; National Unity Party or NUP (proregime) [THA KYAW]; Shan Nationalities League for Democracy or SNLD [KHUN TUN OO]; Union Solidarity and Development Association or USDA (proregime, a social and political organization) [THAN AUNG, general secretary]; and other smaller parties
- Political pressure groups and leaders:** All Burma Student Democratic Front or ABSDF; Kachin Independence Army or KIA; Karen National Union or KNU; National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma or NCGUB [Dr. SEIN WIN] consists of individuals legitimately elected to the People's Assembly but not recognized by the military regime (the group fled to a border area and joined with insurgents in December 1990 to form a parallel government); several Shan factions; United Wa State Army or UWSA
- International organization participation:** ARF, AsDB, ASEAN, CP, ESCAP, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, ITU, NAM, OPCW (signatory), UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTrO
- Diplomatic** *chief of mission:* Ambassador LINN MYAING

representation in the US: *consulate(s) general:* New York
FAX: [1] (202) 332-9046
telephone: [1] (202) 332-9044
chancery: 2300 S Street NW, Washington, DC 20008

Diplomatic representation from the US: *chief of mission:* Permanent Charge d'Affaires Carmen M. MARTINEZ
embassy: 581 Merchant Street, Rangoon (GPO 521)
mailing address: Box B, APO AP 96546
telephone: [95] (1) 379 880, 379 881
FAX: [95] (1) 256 018

Flag description: red with a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner bearing, all in white, 14 five-pointed stars encircling a cogwheel containing a stalk of rice; the 14 stars represent the 14 administrative divisions

Economy **Burma**

Economy - overview: Burma is a resource-rich country that suffers from abject rural poverty. The military regime took steps in the early 1990s to liberalize the economy after decades of failure under the "Burmese Way to Socialism", but those efforts have since stalled. Burma has been unable to achieve monetary or fiscal stability, resulting in an economy that suffers from serious macroeconomic imbalances - including a steep inflation rate and an official exchange rate that overvalues the Burmese kyat by more than 100 times the market rate. In addition, most overseas development assistance ceased after the junta suppressed the democracy movement in 1988 and subsequently ignored the results of the 1990 election. Burma is data poor, and official statistics are often dated and inaccurate. Published estimates of Burma's foreign trade are greatly understated because of the size of the black market and border trade - often estimated to be one to two times the official economy.

GDP: purchasing power parity - \$73.69 billion (2002 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 5.3% (2002 est.)

GDP - per capita: purchasing power parity - \$1,700 (2002 est.)

GDP - composition by sector: *agriculture:* 60%
industry: 9%
services: 31% (2002 est.)

Population below poverty line: 25% (2000 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share: *lowest 10%:* 2.8%
highest 10%: 32.4% (1998)

Inflation rate 53.7% (2002 est.)

(consumer prices):	
Labor force:	23.7 million (1999 est.)
Labor force - by occupation:	agriculture 70%, industry 7%, services 23% (2001 est.)
Unemployment rate:	5.1% (2001 est.)
Budget:	<i>revenues:</i> \$7.9 billion <i>expenditures:</i> \$12.2 billion, including capital expenditures of \$5.7 billion (FY96/97)
Industries:	agricultural processing; knit and woven apparel; wood and wood products; copper, tin, tungsten, iron; construction materials; pharmaceuticals; fertilizer
Industrial production growth rate:	NA%
Electricity - production:	6.139 billion kWh (2001)
Electricity - production by source:	<i>fossil fuel:</i> 44.4% <i>hydro:</i> 55.6% <i>other:</i> 0% (2001) <i>nuclear:</i> 0%
Electricity - consumption:	5.709 billion kWh (2001)
Electricity - exports:	0 kWh (2001)
Electricity - imports:	0 kWh (2001)
Oil - production:	14,170 bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - consumption:	38,000 bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - exports:	NA (2001)
Oil - imports:	NA (2001)
Oil - proved reserves:	142.5 million bbl (37257)
Natural gas - production:	7.35 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - consumption:	2.15 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - exports:	5.2 billion cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - imports: 0 cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - proved reserves: 314.4 billion cu m (37257)

Agriculture - products: rice, pulses, beans, sesame, groundnuts, sugarcane; hardwood; fish and fish products

Exports: \$2.7 billion f.o.b. (2002)

Exports - commodities: gas, wood products, pulses, beans, fish, rice

Exports - partners: Thailand 31.4%, US 13%, India 7.4%, China 4.7% (2002)

Imports: \$2.5 billion f.o.b. (2002)

Imports - commodities: machinery, transport equipment, construction materials, crude oil; food products

Imports - partners: China 27%, Singapore 19.5%, Thailand 12%, Malaysia 9.1%, Taiwan 6.3%, South Korea 5.3%, Japan 4.3% (2002)

Debt - external: \$6.1 billion (2002 est.)

Economic aid - recipient: \$99 million (FY98/99)

Currency: kyat (MMK)

Currency code: MMK

Exchange rates: kyats per US dollar - 6.64 (2002), 6.75 (2001), 6.52 (2000), 6.29 (1999), 6.34 (1998)

Fiscal year: 1 April - 31 March

Communications Burma

Telephones - main lines in use: 250,000 (2000)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 8,492 (1997)

Telephone system: *general assessment:* meets minimum requirements for local and intercity service for business and government; international service is good
domestic: NA
international: satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Indian Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 2, FM 3, shortwave 3 (1998)

Radios: 4.2 million (1997)

Television broadcast stations: 2 (1998)

Televisions: 320,000 (2000)

Internet country code: .mm

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 1
note: as of September 2000, Internet connections were legal only for the government, tourist offices, and a few large businesses (2000)

Internet users: 10,000 (2002)

Transportation Burma

Railways: *total:* 3,955 km
narrow gauge: 3,955 km 1.000-m gauge (2002)

Highways: *total:* 28,200 km
paved: 3,440 km
unpaved: 24,760 km (1996 est.)

Waterways: 12,800 km
note: 3,200 km navigable by large commercial vessels

Pipelines: gas 2,056 km; oil 558 km (2003)

Ports and harbors: Bassein, Bhamo, Chauk, Mandalay, Moulmein, Myitkyina, Rangoon, Akyab (Sittwe), Tavoy

Merchant marine: *total:* 33 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 352,765 GRT/536,396 DWT
note: includes some foreign-owned ships registered here as a flag of convenience: Germany 5, Japan 4 (2002 est.)
ships by type: bulk 7, cargo 21, container 1, passenger/cargo 3, petroleum tanker 1

Airports: 80 (2002)

Airports - with paved runways: *total:* 8
over 3,047 m: 2
2,438 to 3,047 m: 2
1,524 to 2,437 m: 4 (2002)

Airports - with unpaved runways: *total:* 72
under 914 m: 34 (2002)
914 to 1,523 m: 20
over 3,047 m: 2
1,524 to 2,437 m: 16

Heliports: 1 (2002)

Military Burma

Military Army, Navy, Air Force

branches:

Military manpower - military age: 18 years of age (2003 est.)

Military manpower - availability: *males age 15-49:* 12,349,921
note: both sexes liable for military service (2003 est.)
females age 15-49: 12,358,507

Military manpower - fit for military service: *males age 15-49:* 6,566,122
females age 15-49: 6,553,458 (2003 est.)

Military manpower - reaching military age annually: *males:* 453,420
females: 455,422 (2003 est.)

Military expenditures - dollar figure: \$39 million (FY97)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP: 2.1% (FY97)

Transnational Issues **Burma**

Disputes - international: despite continuing border committee talks, significant differences remain with Thailand over boundary alignment and the handling of ethnic rebels, refugees, and illegal cross-border activities

Illicit drugs: world's second largest producer of illicit opium (potential production in 2002 - 630 metric tons, down 27% due to drought and, to a lesser extent, eradication; cultivation in 2002 - 77,000 hectares, a 27% decline from 2001); surrender of drug warlord KHUN SA's Mong Tai Army in January 1996 was hailed by Rangoon as a major counternarcotics success, but lack of government will and ability to take on major narco-trafficking groups and lack of serious commitment against money laundering continues to hinder the overall antidrug effort; major source of methamphetamine and heroin for regional consumption

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