



LOVE FOR MYANMAR

MYANMAR (BURMA) COUNTRY PROFILE



Location: Southeast Asia sharing borders with India, Bangladesh, China, Laos, Thailand

Population: 30th in the world at an estimated 51.3 million categorized within seven major ethnic groups- Burman 68%, Shan 9%, Karen 7%, Rakhine 4%, Chinese 3%, Indian 2%, Mon 2%, other (Chin, etc.) 5%, and totaling 135 government-recognized ethnicities. 31.5 million people or 57% live below the international poverty line of \$2.15 per day.

Religions: Buddhism is the "de facto" (not officially designated by law but it is by practice) national religion. In 2015, several laws were passed which regulate conversion, marriage, and births restricting religious freedoms of non-Buddhists. The major religions are: Buddhism 88%, Christianity 6%, Muslim 4%, other 2% (animist, Hindu).

Government: Parliamentary Republic with a House of Nationalities (224: 168 directly elected by the people, 56 appointed by the military) and a House of Representatives (440: 330 directly elected by the people, 110 appointed by the military). The President is the official head of the government; however, Aung San Suu Kyi as the State Counselor (similar to prime minister) was recognized as directing the affairs of the country prior to the February 1, 2021 military coup.

World standing: *World Health Organization* ranks Myanmar's health care system 190 out of 191 participating countries; only Sierra Leone is worse. Myanmar ranks among the countries with the lowest education expenditures investing only 2.2% of their budget. It is estimated that 75% of Burmese children drop out of school before the 5th grade. *Transparency International* ranks Myanmar in the bottom 10% of its annual corruption index. In the World Press Freedom Index maintained by *Reporters Without Borders*, Myanmar ranks 171 out of 180 participating countries as it continues to detain 58 journalists. The *U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom* has designated Myanmar among the worst violators every year since its inception in 1998. Myanmar is rated the most violent country in the world by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project which is the highest quality and most widely used real-time data and analysis source on political violence and protest around the world.

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