

Myanmar



Where is Myanmar?

- **Location:** In Southeast Asia, sharing borders with India, China, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Laos
- **Capital:** Naypyidaw (pronounced "Nay-pee-daw")
- **Fun Fact:** Shaped like a kite, similar in size to Texas!
- **Distance:** A flight from London, Berlin, or New York to Myanmar takes 10-15 hours.



What is the weather like?

- **Climate:** Tropical with three main seasons
 - Cool: November - February
 - Hot: March - May (up to 40°C (104°F))
 - Rainy: June - October
- **Agriculture:**
 - 60-70% of Myanmar's population relies on agriculture as a livelihood
 - Farmers depend on monsoons for rice and crops



Main Occupations

- **Agriculture:** Largest Occupation
 - Rice is the main crop, and Myanmar is one of the top rice producers in Asia.
 - Other crops include beans, corn, sugarcane, and tobacco.
- **Fishing:** Common in coastal and river areas
 - Fish and seafood are vital to the diet and economy
- **Forestry:** Rich forests with valuable resources.
 - Valuable timber like teak and hardwoods and non timber plants like bamboo, rattan are exported as well as used for construction, crafts, etc.



Languages in Myanmar

- **Language:** Burmese (official language), spoken widely
- **Ethnic Diversity:** 135+ ethnic groups, each with unique languages or dialects
- **Major Ethnic Languages:** Shan, Karen, Kachin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine
- **Multilingual:** Many people speak 2-3 languages
- **Fun Fact:** Myanmar has over 100 languages, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries

Min ga la ba!
(Hello!)

Nei kaun la?
(How are you?)



Education in Myanmar

- **Low Literacy:** Some areas with rates as low as 35%
- **Teacher Shortage:** Over 33,000 teachers needed
- **Limited Access:** 1 in 3 rural children lack classrooms
- **Language Barriers:** 135+ languages create learning challenges
- **Under-Resourced:** Many schools are overcrowded and lack materials



Culture and Religion

- **Buddhism:** Around 90% of the population practices Theravada Buddhism.
- **Indigenous Beliefs:** Many ethnic groups follow animism (belief that spirits inhabit natural objects like trees, rivers, and animals) and traditional practices.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Traditional arts like lacquerware and puppet shows are important.
- **Buddhist Influence:** Monasteries, pagodas, and statues are key cultural symbols.



Major Festivals

Thingyan (Burmese New Year): Celebrated in April, it's a joyous occasion marked by water splashing, parades, and cultural performances.



Tazaungdaing Festival: Held in November, this festival is a celebration of light, featuring illuminated pagodas and colorful decorations.

Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda Festival: Thousands of pilgrims gather to worship the sacred Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, celebrated during the Burmese lunar month of Thadingyut, usually in September/October



Myanmar's Political History

- **British Rule:** Myanmar was a British colony until 1948.
- **Democracy:** Brief democratic period post-independence.
- **Military Coups:** 1962 coup led to decades of military rule.
- **Transition to Democracy:** Reforms and movement towards democracy began around 2011
- **2021 Coup:** February 2021 coup ended democracy, causing ongoing civil war





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