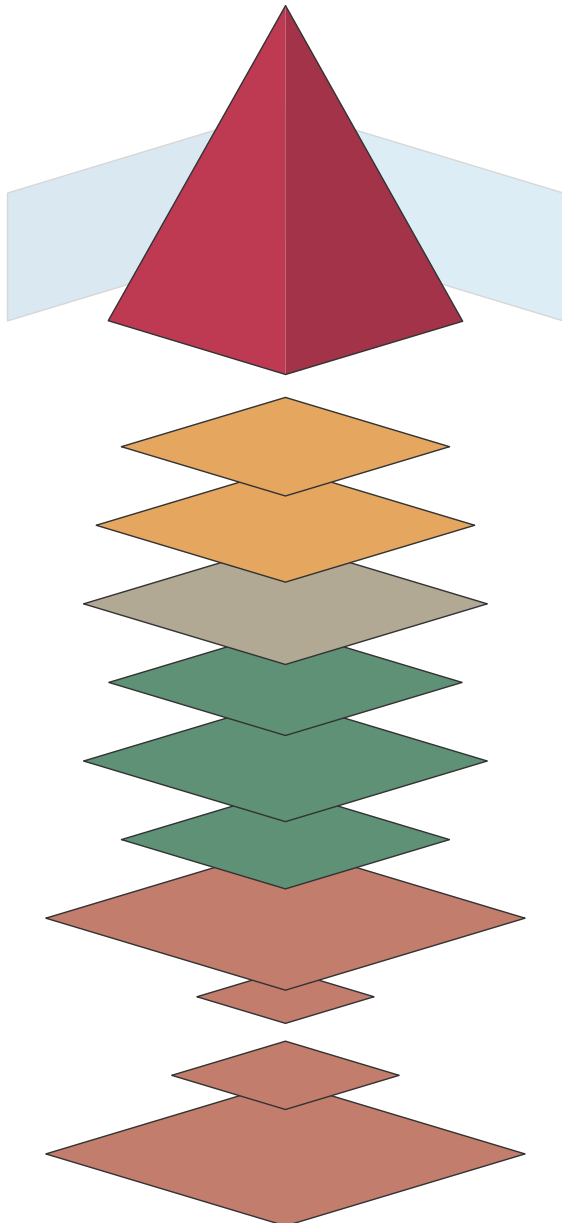




MYANMAR



7.59

CRIMINALITY SCORE

3rd of 193 countries

1st of 46 Asian countries

1st of 11 South-Eastern Asian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

7.05

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 6.50

HUMAN SMUGGLING 7.50

ARMS TRAFFICKING 8.00

FLORA CRIMES 7.00

FAUNA CRIMES 8.00

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 6.50

HEROIN TRADE 9.50

COCAINE TRADE 3.50

CANNABIS TRADE 4.50

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 9.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS

8.13

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 9.00

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 7.50

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 8.50

FOREIGN ACTORS 7.50



3.42

RESILIENCE SCORE

155th of 193 countries

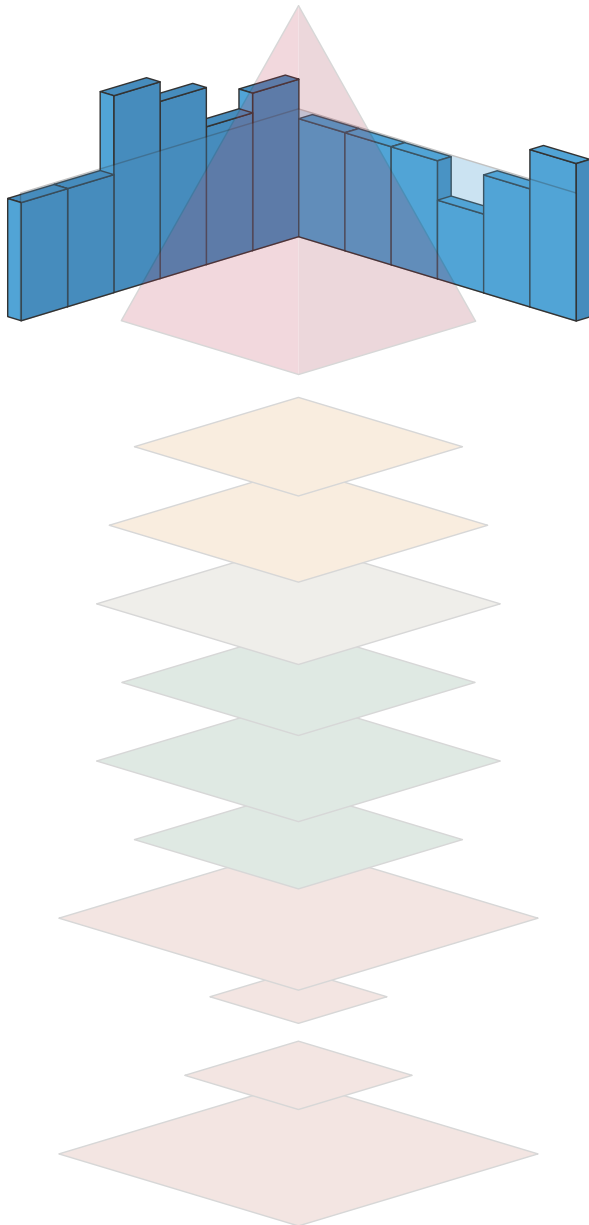
39th of 46 Asian countries

10th of 11 South-Eastern Asian countries





MYANMAR



3.42

RESILIENCE SCORE

155th of 193 countries

39th of 46 Asian countries

10th of 11 South-Eastern Asian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	3.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	3.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	3.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	2.00
PREVENTION	3.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00



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CRIMINAL MARKETS

7.05



CRIMINAL ACTORS

8.13



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Myanmar is a source country for human trafficking, where victims are moved primarily into Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Victims are usually poor and from marginalized ethnic minorities, such as the Rohingya diaspora. While men are usually trafficked to work in fishing or construction sectors, women are often trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Family-based criminal networks have a particularly strong role in the market, alongside fake recruitment agencies and criminal gangs. Many victims are sold to traffickers by community members or relatives, and the ruling military junta and other government bodies actively participate in and facilitate the market.

Myanmar is also a major source country for human smuggling operations in South-eastern Asia. Myanmar's migrant workers are increasingly employing irregular channels to move abroad. Corruption and bribery run rampant throughout the market, particularly among border officials in Myawaddy. For many families, sending a family member to work abroad is necessary to generate sufficient household income, which increases their dependency on brokers and elevates the risk of exploitation and extortion.

TRADE

Myanmar is a source and destination country for arms trafficking, with a high domestic demand for weapons stemming from the armed conflicts in the country, with many groups seeking access to weapons. Groups from Thailand, India and China smuggle weapons into Myanmar to arm anti-government insurgents and Myanmar is becoming a source country for Indian insurgents seeking arms. The number of guns held by civilians has increased in recent years and the market remains closely tied to drug trafficking.

ENVIRONMENT

Myanmar has a significant flora crimes market, with high-value timber species creating a considerable illicit logging industry, which has led to large-scale deforestation. Much of Myanmar's illegal timber is smuggled into China by criminal syndicates such as the Kachin Independence Army, the Myanmar military and Chinese criminal groups. There is global demand for Myanmar's timber, from China and India to Europe and the US. Myanmar is also home to a significant illegal wildlife market, acting as a source and transit country for illegal wildlife products. Fauna crimes are particularly concentrated at the borders with Thailand and China, where demand is high for endangered wildlife

species, and is aided by the country's porous borders. Myanmar also has its own large domestic market, and traffickers are increasingly using social media sites to sell animal products illegally. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is also widespread in Myanmar, and corrupt government and law enforcement officials are very active participants in the market.

Finally, Myanmar is a significant source country for metallic minerals such as gold and copper, as well as precious stones such as jade and diamonds, with a large demand for these commodities coming from China. Corruption is rampant, allowing illicit mining activities to flourish, especially in conflict-affected territories where groups such as the Kachin Independence Organization and regional army commanders are the beneficiaries. This market has created severe environmental issues in the form of deforestation, a threatened biodiverse ecosystem and river erosion where gold has been mined.

DRUGS

Myanmar is the world's second-largest opium producer. Opium production is believed to be controlled by corrupt officials in the military, as well as by armed ethnic groups in the Shan and Kachin states. Opiates are a significant financial contributor to armed non-state groups and government and military entities alike. Demand comes both internationally and domestically. Heroin use accounts for the majority of drug treatment admissions in Myanmar.

Myanmar also hosts one of the largest synthetic drug markets in the world, particularly for methamphetamine, where it receives abundant precursor chemicals from China. Meth is trafficked to all of its neighbouring states and this market alone generates several billion dollars a year. Key actors in Myanmar's synthetic drug trade include local armed groups, transnational criminal organizations and corrupt state officials, meaning that market profits feed directly into the political and security infrastructure of the country.

While Myanmar does not have a considerable cocaine trade, it is increasingly being utilized as a transit country by international syndicates taking advantage of the ongoing conflicts. While most cocaine is smuggled in small packages on international flights leaving the Middle East, there are also concerns around seaports such as Shwepyithar Industrial Zone. Myanmar has a limited domestic cannabis market and only cultivates small amounts of the herb within its borders.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Myanmar has many armed groups throughout the country, operating with hierarchy and leadership structures, with the largest group, the United Wa State Army, operating along the borders with Thailand and China. These groups are heavily involved in the drug trade, arms trade and the illicit jade market. Although there does not appear to be widespread criminal network structures, there are loose criminal groups particularly concentrated in the drug and non-renewable resources markets. These networks are often connected to government officials and there is growing evidence of Chinese crime networks partnering with Burmese armed groups to control the flow of illicit commodities across the borders. However, there appears

to only be a low level of violence from these groups in relation to organized crime activities.

High-level government officials and military leaders are heavily involved in transnational organized crime, especially in the drug trafficking market, where some are directly involved in poppy cultivation in Shan state. Political involvement in criminal markets is pervasive, as evidenced by high-profile cases of former and current leaders' involvement in the illicit jade trade and timber trafficking. Chinese criminal groups are intimately involved in almost all of Myanmar's most prominent criminal markets, and they have also been important for supplying weapons to armed groups in the country. The notable transnational drug syndicate, Sam Gor, also controls much of the production and shipments of synthetic drugs in Myanmar's Shan state.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Despite an official transition to democracy with partially free elections in 2012, Myanmar retains many characteristics of a military regime. The military holds significant power over the illegal drug trade and many other criminal markets, and the government struggles to control military actions. Corruption is widespread throughout all areas of the state and public trust is extremely low. Moreover, Myanmar suffers from several ongoing internal conflicts, meaning that Myanmar is a highly fragile state. Myanmar's state infrastructure is highly corrupt, especially in areas of regulatory quality, the rule of law and government effectiveness. Despite the government's efforts, through its anti-corruption commission, to investigate and prosecute acts of corruption, the military regime sabotages any attempt to curb corruption in the country. However, despite the fact that the commission cannot investigate members of the military, it has increased its investigations of other state actors in recent years.

There appears to be a willingness to cooperate with international counterparts through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the UN, and there are regional and bilateral anti-drug trafficking mechanisms in place in Myanmar. Importantly, agreements have recently been reached with China to allow for greater cross-border intelligence sharing with neighbouring Chinese provinces and capacity-building efforts for Kachin-based law enforcement. Myanmar also cooperates with the EU to increase effectiveness and accountability within its police force. The country is party to several international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, including UNTOC. However, despite having a significant problem with the illicit arms trade, Myanmar has not signed the Arms Trade Treaty.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judiciary is not independent in Myanmar and there is considerable political interference in the legal process. The legal framework allows for uncharged and pre-trial individuals to be held without legal counsel for five years if determined to be a threat to state security. Many human rights abuses are perpetrated by government troops who are immune to judicial punishment, and while there have been calls for greater judicial independence, the judicial framework is currently centralized and under executive control. The prison system is drastically overcrowded, and inmates are subject to human rights abuses and harsh conditions.

Myanmar's porous borders create an ideal environment for cross-border criminal trafficking operations due to its highly difficult terrain, ongoing conflicts in border regions and endemic corruption among its border officials. There is much cross-border movement by armed ethnic groups, and the lack of border security infrastructure such as roads and communication links have rendered some states safe havens for criminal groups. The border regions of Kachin and Shan in particular are run by armed ethnic groups and significantly lack law enforcement capabilities. The number of officers employed by the Myanmar police force falls short of international standards, and in addition to being under-resourced financially, they are widely distrusted by local communities due to their reputation for brutality and corruption. However, officers have recently been distributed more evenly around the country and are moving into the more remote and conflict-affected areas, though the many armed ethnic groups that reside there often resist police authority. The police force has created specific units to

tackle many forms of transnational crime and has expanded the number of women within the force.

This summary was funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of State. The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of State.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Despite Myanmar's implementation of measures to curb money laundering in collaboration with international partners, the country is still highly vulnerable. Myanmar's economy and financial sector are underdeveloped, and the majority of their currency is held outside of the formal banking system. Despite a willingness to restrict money laundering, the institutions lack the knowledge and resources to be effective. The influence of military regimes in various illicit markets makes fighting money laundering more difficult, and Myanmar remains one of the highest-risk countries for money laundering and terrorist financing in the world.

The government of Myanmar has instituted various reforms to attempt to strengthen the economy by establishing clear, transparent and consistent regulations alongside promoting agricultural productivity and attempting to modernize the financial sector. However, the economic environment still lacks clarity, and the enforcement of regulations has been inconsistent due to the leading role that the military plays in the economy. Myanmar is a very poor country and one of the hardest places to do business in the world, and the informal economy in the country is extremely large.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Myanmar lacks the legislation needed to protect victims and witnesses of organized crime, and the government's approach is overtly punitive, especially in relation to sex trafficking victims and drug users. The country does however have constructive memorandums in place with Thailand to combat human trafficking and to launch procedures for repatriation. Myanmar was one of the slowest countries in South-eastern Asia to implement its national crime prevention strategy, finally doing so in 2019. The plan focuses on community-based crime prevention and rehabilitation programming as prevention strategies. Myanmar cooperates closely with the UNODC to improve both short- and medium-term access to food and income in rural villages, as well as to promote legal crop production as an alternative to opium cultivation.

International NGOs are increasingly active in Myanmar, working on humanitarian responses in a multitude of sectors, and while most civil society groups focus on religion, poverty and health, some are moving in to take over the duties of the state where it is absent. Myanmar has a highly censored media environment and the government response is particularly aggressive when journalists cover the handling of the Rohingya Muslim crisis. Journalists have been killed when reporting on the illicit logging industry and the media is deeply polarized along political lines.