



Investing in Myanmar (Burma):

A Comprehensive Report



INTRODUCTION

Myanmar, also known as Burma, is a rapidly emerging economy in Southeast Asia, offering immense opportunities for investors across a wide range of sectors. With a population of approximately 55 million (2023 estimate) and a GDP of over \$80 billion, Myanmar is strategically located between two of the world's largest economies—China and India—making it a vital gateway to the dynamic Southeast Asian market.

Myanmar boasts abundant natural resources, a young workforce, and a growing consumer base, making it an attractive destination for foreign direct investment (FDI). The country's government has implemented policies to enhance its business climate, focusing on infrastructure, energy, agriculture, and technology. Additionally, Myanmar's membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) provides access to a market of over 600 million consumers.

With its unique geographic location, pro-business reforms, and untapped potential, Myanmar is a promising investment destination for businesses seeking growth and long-term profitability.

BACKGROUND

Myanmar, the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia, shares borders with China, India, Thailand, Laos, and Bangladesh. Its strategic location, extensive coastline, and deep-sea ports make it a critical hub for regional and international trade. The capital city, Naypyidaw, serves as the political center, while Yangon remains the commercial and economic hub of the country.

Historically an agrarian economy, Myanmar has diversified significantly in recent years, with key sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, energy, infrastructure, and tourism. The country is rich in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, gems, timber, and hydropower potential, while its fertile lands make it one of the leading agricultural producers in the region.

Myanmar's government has prioritized economic liberalization and development through various initiatives, including the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), aimed at fostering inclusive economic growth, improving infrastructure, and creating a favorable investment climate.

BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN MYANMAR

Strategic Geographic Location

Myanmar's position as a land bridge between China, India, and Southeast Asia makes it a key player in regional trade and logistics. Its deep-sea ports and proximity to major markets provide unmatched connectivity.

Abundant Natural Resources

Myanmar is richly endowed with natural resources, including oil, natural gas, precious gems, timber, and minerals, offering lucrative opportunities in resource-based industries.

Young and Growing Workforce

Over 55% of Myanmar's population is under 30 years old, providing a young, dynamic, and cost-competitive labor force for industries like manufacturing, technology, and services.

Expanding Consumer Market

With a growing middle class and rising disposable incomes, Myanmar's consumer market is expanding rapidly, creating opportunities in retail, e-commerce, and real estate.

Pro-Business Reforms

The government has introduced reforms to simplify business registration, reduce bureaucracy, and improve the ease of doing business, attracting significant foreign investment.

Infrastructure Development

Myanmar is investing heavily in infrastructure, including roads, railways, ports, and energy projects, creating opportunities for public-private partnerships (PPPs).

Membership in ASEAN

As a member of ASEAN, Myanmar provides investors with access to a market of over 600 million people, with preferential trade agreements and reduced tariffs.

Agricultural Potential

With vast arable land and favorable climatic conditions, Myanmar is a key producer of rice, pulses, and other crops, offering opportunities in agribusiness and food processing.

Renewable Energy Potential

Myanmar's abundant hydropower resources, along with solar and wind energy potential, make it a prime destination for green energy investments.

Tourism Opportunities

Myanmar's rich cultural heritage, historic sites, and scenic landscapes attract tourists from around the world, creating opportunities in hospitality, eco-tourism, and adventure tourism.

RELEVANT AGENCIES

Several government institutions and organizations facilitate investment and economic development in Myanmar:

Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC):

The primary agency overseeing foreign investment, offering guidance, incentives, and support for investors.

Ministry of Planning and Finance (MOPF):

Oversees economic policies, fiscal management, and investment planning.

Ministry of Commerce (MOC):

Facilitates trade, export promotion, and the establishment of businesses in Myanmar.

Myanmar Economic Zones Management Committee:

Manages Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and provides incentives for investors operating in these zones.

Central Bank of Myanmar:

Regulates the financial sector and promotes investments in banking, fintech, and financial services.

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation (MOALI):

Supports investment in agriculture, fisheries, and agro-industries.

Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MOHT):

Facilitates investments in tourism, hospitality, and eco-tourism projects.

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI):

Provides networking opportunities, advocacy, and support for businesses operating in Myanmar.

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INCENTIVES FOR INVESTORS

Myanmar offers a wide range of incentives to attract foreign and domestic investment:

Tax Benefits

Income Tax Exemptions: Businesses in priority sectors or operating in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) enjoy corporate income tax holidays of up to 7 years.

Accelerated Depreciation: Investors can benefit from accelerated depreciation on capital investments.

Customs Duty Exemptions

Exemptions on imported machinery, equipment, and raw materials for businesses in SEZs or priority industries.

Land Use Rights

Foreign investors can lease land for up to 50 years, with the option to extend for an additional 20 years.

Investment Protection

Legal guarantees under the Myanmar Investment Law (MIL) ensure profit repatriation, protection against expropriation, and access to international arbitration.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs):

SEZs such as Thilawa, Kyaukphyu, and Dawei offer tax holidays, streamlined regulations, and world-class infrastructure.

Export Incentives

Duty-free access to regional and global markets through Myanmar's trade agreements and membership in ASEAN.

Renewable Energy Subsidies

Government grants and feed-in tariffs for renewable energy projects under the National Energy Policy.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

Opportunities to collaborate with the government on large-scale infrastructure, energy, and transportation projects.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTORS

Energy and Natural Resources

Myanmar's abundant natural gas, oil, and hydropower resources create opportunities in exploration, production, and energy infrastructure development.

Agribusiness

With vast arable land and a strong agricultural base, investors can explore opportunities in commercial farming, food processing, and agro-technology.

Infrastructure Development

Ongoing infrastructure projects in transport, ports, and urban development offer opportunities for private-sector participation and PPPs.

Manufacturing and Industry

Myanmar's low labor costs and proximity to regional markets make it ideal for investments in textiles, electronics, and light manufacturing.

Tourism and Hospitality

With iconic destinations like Bagan, Inle Lake, and pristine beaches, Myanmar offers opportunities in luxury resorts, eco-tourism, and cultural tourism projects.

Technology and Innovation

Myanmar's growing telecom and IT sectors present opportunities in mobile services, e-commerce, fintech, and digital transformation.

Real Estate Development

Rising urbanization creates demand for residential, commercial, and industrial properties, particularly in Yangon and Mandalay.

Healthcare and Education

There is growing demand for private clinics, hospitals, and international schools, driven by an expanding middle class.

CONCLUSION

Myanmar is a land of immense potential, offering investors a unique combination of natural resources, strategic location, and a pro-business environment. From its thriving energy and agribusiness sectors to its growing infrastructure and tourism industries, Myanmar provides diverse opportunities for long-term growth and profitability.

The government's commitment to economic reform, infrastructure development, and sustainability ensures a stable and favorable investment climate. With competitive incentives, access to regional markets, and a young, dynamic workforce, Myanmar is poised to become one of Southeast Asia's most attractive investment destinations.

Investing in Myanmar is not just a business decision—it is an opportunity to be part of a transformative journey in one of Asia's fastest-growing economies.

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