

SAFETY AND SECURITY

PERSONAL SECURITY

In all the areas that foreigners are allowed to visit, Myanmar is very safe in terms of personal security: incidents of crime against foreigners are extremely low and Yangon is considered to be one of Asia's safest large cities, with no areas that need to be avoided.

You may sometimes be approached by 'money changers' and people trying to sell things, but this will usually be done in a good-natured manner. In fact, you will often find that people approaching you simply want to take the opportunity to talk to a foreigner and maybe practise their English.

ISSUES TO BE AWARE OF

The vast majority of people in Myanmar are friendly and helpful, but there are various safety and security issues to be aware of:

- ✚ Roads, pavements and many types of transport are generally in a very bad state of repair. Cars are sometimes driven with little thought to road safety or discipline and vehicles are often driven at night without their lights on.
- ✚ When walking, particularly at night, you should be careful where you step. Pavements can have big holes in them and, because of bad lighting and frequent electricity black-outs, taking a torch is a good idea.
- ✚ Whilst the areas in which foreigners are permitted to travel are totally safe, other areas are not. Some parts of Myanmar, particularly border areas, are held by independent national groups that have been at war with the government for many years (although most have now signed ceasefire agreements). Travel to these areas is highly restricted.
- ✚ It is advisable to avoid large public gatherings and demonstrations, as there is always the outside possibility of clashes and violent incidents.
- ✚ In major cities, we recommend travelling by taxi if you are out at night. Make sure you negotiate and agree to a price before you get in. It is always a good idea to carry a hotel address card with you to show your driver.
- ✚ While on holiday, always keep a photocopy of your essential documents i.e. passport, airline tickets, credit cards and traveller's cheques, separate from the originals in a safe place. Most hotels have room-safes or deposit boxes at reception where you can store valuables.