

Disposition of Remains Report - Rangoon

REF: [7 FAM 260](#)

The following information is submitted in accordance with the referenced requirements. Various area mortuaries were surveyed in order to compile this data.

Part I. Name of Country

Burma

Part II. U.S. Embassy Information

Embassy of the United States of America
110 University Avenue
Kamayut Township 11041
Rangoon, Burma
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[Country Specific Information](#)
[State Department Travel Information](#)
[SMART Traveler Enrollment Program](#)

Part III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services Available to Visitors

Please consult the Burma Country Profile on the [State Department's website](#).

Burma is a country of approximately 54 million people. A multitude of ethnic groups populate the country, the majority being Burman (68%). Other major ethnicities include the Shan (9%), Karen (7%), Rakhine (4%), Chinese (3%), Mon (2%), and Indian (2%). Nearly 90% of Burmese are Buddhist. Christians (4% total - Baptist 3%, Roman Catholic 1%), Muslims (4%), and animists (1%) are in much smaller numbers.

Rangoon has Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Armenian, and Seventh-day Adventist churches, a non-working Jewish synagogue, and a Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall. English services are conducted regularly. There is an international Christian interfaith group that meets in the Sedona Hotel with an English service. There are also numerous Buddhist meditation centers (some of which are popular with foreigners and offer instruction in English), a Sikh temple, Muslim mosques, and Hindu temples.

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy in Rangoon assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians and other service providers.

SOS International Clinic

www.internationalsos.com

Tel: (95-1) 667 877

Dusit Inya Lake Resort

37 Kaba Aye Pagoda Road

Rangoon, Burma

24 hour service

Yayway Mortuary

North Okkalapa Township

Rangoon

Tel: (95-1) 701 123

Contact: U Tun Aung Kyaw/U Saw Myo Nyunt Thein

24 hour service

Yangon General Hospital Mortuary

No.262 Merchant Street

Rangoon

Tel: (95-1) 256 112 Ext. 875

Contact: Mortuary Duty Staff

Part V. Profile of Services Available in the Host Country Regarding Preparation and Shipment of Remains

(1) Maximum Period Before Burial of Remains

Burmese Law does not stipulate the maximum duration that the remains may be left unburied; local health and police officials make case-by-case determinations. Ordinarily, disposition of remains should be addressed as soon as possible; if necessary, however, disposition can be delayed up to 72 hours after death if the remains can be refrigerated. Embalming generally makes it possible to delay disposing of the remains until a week after death. If a significant time elapses before the remains are refrigerated, health and police officials usually press for early disposition. In Rangoon, Yayway Mortuary [Contact: U Tun Aung Kyaw/U Saw Myo Nyunt Thein, Tel: 701 123, 24 hour service] has a refrigeration unit with 80 stainless steel chambers. The chambers are German style (8' long), and cost 1,500 kyat (USD 2) per day. To use a chamber, if the death occurred at home, you must present a certification of death from the ward office in which the decedent lived and state the cause of death. If the death occurred at a hospital you must present the hospital death certificate. Yangon General Hospital Mortuary has a primitive

refrigeration room that can hold about 27 corpses on iron shelves and costs approximately \$10.00 per day.

For a medical investigation as to the cause-of-death contact Police Surgeon Dr. U Win Kyi or his assistant Dr. Khin Maung Htwe at (95-1) 379 868/256 112 Ext. 874.

(2) Embalming

In order to export remains, embalming is required. Embalming is not a practice typically performed in Burma, however. Burma has no Western-style funeral homes.

Yangon General Hospital Mortuary [Contact: Mortuary Duty Staff, Tel: 256 112 Ext. 875] can provide embalming services; the estimated cost is 150,000 kyat.

(3) Cremation

For religious and practical reasons, cremation is the most common means of disposing of remains in Burma, and would be the most suitable method of preparing a U.S. citizen's remains for export. All cemeteries offer this service. Yayway Mortuary charges standard government prices (2,000 kyat for adult cremation, 1,000 kyat for child cremation and 6,000 kyat to collect bones/ashes). Foreigners will likely have to pay a higher price.

Most foreigners prefer the services of the Yangon General Mortuary [Contact: Ko Than Sein, Tel: 097 327 1273]. YGM provides hearse services from anywhere in Yangon to any cemetery (25,000 kyat) or the airport (50,000 kyat). The cremation/ash collection/cemetery charges are 2,000 kyat for an adult and 1,000 kyat for a child. Most people also buy a casket to transport the remains from the hospital or home to the crematorium (cemetery) for either 250,000 kyat/30,000 kyat (plain wood) or 450,000 kyat (teak). If the ashes are going to be exported the fee to put them in a container and to have the container crated is 50,000 kyat.

(4) Caskets and Containers

The following are estimated prices for locally manufactured caskets suitable for export. As of May 2012, USD 1 = 810 Kyat (local currency).

A. Teak Casket	450,000 kyat	USD 556
With a zinc interior	120,000 kyat	USD 148
Crated for export	120,000 kyat	USD 148
B. Plain Wood Casket	250,000 kyat	USD 309

C. Urn and crate (teak) for export	50,000 kyat	USD 62
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Most locally manufactured caskets are suitable for local burial only. The standard size is 6’x18” (adjustable with no additional fees). Costs of typical “Christian” type caskets with covering are as follows:

A. Plain wood casket with plastic interior	30,000 kyat	USD 37
B. Teak casket with two layers (plastic and cloth) interior	450,000 kyat	USD 556

Locally manufactured wooden and clay containers for cremated ashes are available. The price of a typical clay container with a lid is around 28,000 kyat, but this would not be suitable for international shipment. International airlines will accept wooden boxes containing cremated remains in an urn. (See the Transportation and Cremation section for more details.)

The Embassy sometimes has caskets on hand suitable for international shipment. If available, a wooden casket would cost approximately \$1,130 for an adult and \$942 for a child. Body bags are \$22.17. If more caskets are needed, they must be flown from Bangkok with Embassy Bangkok’s assistance. In any death involving traumatic injury, it would almost certainly be necessary to weld the casket shut after the remains are embalmed.

(5) Exportation of Human Remains

The Police Surgeon, the Controller of Foreign Exchange, Customs, Immigration and MOFA must cooperate to approve the export of remains. Delays must be expected while these offices process the needed paperwork. The following documents are required to export remains:

1. A death certificate from the Police Surgeon’s Office.*
2. A receipt from the crematorium, if the remains are cremated.*
3. An export permit from the Customs Service.*
4. Police Surgeon’s affidavit that the casket contains only the deceased plus necessary clothing and packing (or, in the case of cremation, that the box includes only the ashes of the deceased); that the remains have been embalmed; that the casket or container has been properly sealed, and is free from communicable diseases. This affidavit should be executed before a consular officer.*
5. Consular mortuary certificate.*
6. Certificate from a Customs Preventative Officer attesting to the sealing of the casket or container.
7. Approval of airport immigration officials.

* = these documents need to accompany the remains during travel

(6) Costs

Charges are based on the exchange rate as of May 2012: USD 1 = 810 Kyat (local currency).

Item or Service	Kyat	Total in USD
Yayway Mortuary refrigeration units daily charge	1500	2
Medical investigation of cause-of-death	(\$ equivalent)	250
Embalming	150,000	185
Hearse from a Yangon vicinity to airport	50,000	62
Hearse from a Yangon vicinity to cemetery	25,000	31
Cremation/ash collection/cemetery charges	6,000	7
Urn + teak crate for export	50,000	62
Cement tomb + plot 3'x 7'x 3' + grave digging (Christian)	250,000	309
Terrazzo tomb + plot 3'x 7'x 3' + grave digging (Christian)	400,000	494
Locally manufactured plain wood casket (export)	250,000	309
Locally manufactured teak casket (export)	450,000	556
With a Zinc interior	120,000	148
Crated for export	120,000	148
Plain wood casket with plastic interior (non-export)	30,000	37
Teak casket with two layers (plastic and cloth) interior (non-export)	450,000	556

Airfreight for uncremated remains:

The average weight of a casket and its container required for the export of remains is 220 kilos. Listed below are prices for airfreight shipment of remains from Rangoon to various places in the continental United States.

	Rate per kilo in USD	Total in USD
Los Angeles	\$ 11.00	\$2,420.00*
Chicago	\$ 13.35	\$2,937.00*
New York	\$ 13.00	\$2,860.00*

Airfreight for cremated remains:

The average weight of cremated ashes plus a clay container is 10 kilos.

	Total in USD
Los Angeles	\$100.00*
Chicago	\$100.00*
New York	\$100.00*

*plus a \$5.00 fee for an airway bill, \$0.90 per kilo for Fuel Surcharge and War Risk surcharge

(7) Exhumation and Shipment

The police, local government, and health authorities must authorize exhumation. In the case of foreigners, the Burmese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) would also have to consent. MOFA grants such authorization only if there is reasonable suspicion of foul play after burial. Even then there likely would be delays of many months before all concerned authorities gave their approval for an exhumation.

(8) Final Remarks

Cost estimates in Sections A, B, D, and F are applicable to Rangoon. In other areas of Burma the cost of disposition of remains would be comparable, but refrigeration and embalming services would not be available.

Human remains can be exported only from Rangoon. If an American dies elsewhere in Burma, the next-of-kin will also have to pay to transport the remains to Rangoon, the cost depending on the mode of transportation and the distance from Rangoon. Burma's hot and humid climate, the chronic lack of cargo space on available domestic flights, and sanctions-related impediments to conducting financial transactions with Burmese businesses make it hard to avoid disposing of remains locally.

Embalming in Burma is of a much lower quality than in the United States. If the casket has not been sealed before export, the funeral director in the U.S. must view the remains to decide whether or not family members should see them.