

DVB Debate is produced by DVB Multimedia Group Ltd. Co. The debate is recorded every Saturday morning in Yangon with a live audience, which is invited to join the discussion as well.

DVB TV timetable

Sun	19:15	21:00	night repeat
Mon	10:15	15:15	21:00
Wed	10:15	15:15	21:00
Fri	10:15	15:15	21:00

DVB Debate aims to contribute to a new culture of open debate, in which anyone can participate and agree to disagree, in order to exchange ideas, create better mutual understanding and find solutions for societal issues to improve the future of Myanmar.

The team invites fellow media and debating clubs to join this initiative for open debate. A weekly press release, press picture and cartoon are available shortly after the recording. DVB Debate also has a modest budget to support local debating initiatives.

For any inquiries, remarks or questions, please call 01292743 (office hours), leave a comment on facebook.com/dvb.debate or email debate@dvb.no.

DVB DEBATE



Welcome to DVB Debate, Myanmar's 1st open debate program. This week's debate question is: ***'How to cure Burma's Healthcare system?'***

If you have any remarks, suggestions or questions, please ask a team member, call 01292743 (office hours) or email debate@dvb.no.

This week's topic is Healthcare

Historical context:

Lack of government investment in healthcare, coupled with foreign sanctions that barred NGO provision of health services, has left Myanmar's public health system in shambles. Throughout their rule, the former military government spent only between 0.5% to 3% of the country's GDP on health care. Burma's healthcare system was ranked the second worst in the world by the WHO in 2000, and in 2009 the government spent the least of any country worldwide on health as a percentage of GDP. Following decades of low spending, Burma has been especially hard hit by certain life threatening diseases that are now prevalent. Diseases of concern are noted as TB, HIV and malaria, all of which result in high death tolls. Although health care is nominally free, in reality, patients have to pay for medicine and treatment, even in public clinics and hospitals. Public hospitals lack many of the basic facilities and equipment. Facilities to test for disease are primitive or non-existent and for many years healthcare professionals have complained of shortages of vital medicines to treat diseases like HIV. Many patients rely on traditional medicines or treat themselves using medicines available over the counter without advice from a medical professional.

Facts & figures:

In Myanmar are 17 major diseases under surveillance, including pneumonia, dengue fever, malaria, measles, diarrhea, smallpox, bubonic plague, SARS, tuberculosis and HIV.

Myanmar's national TB budget for 2013 was 36 million US dollars. Only 2% of that budget is funded domestically.

Myanmar accounts for nearly 80% of malaria cases and 75% of malaria deaths in the Mekong region, according to a 2012 assessment.

Of all the communicable diseases in Myanmar, malaria has the highest mortality rate, and an estimated 40 million of Myanmar's people live in malaria-endemic areas, according to the World Health Organisation

In 2013 WHO ranked Myanmar as a Leprosy free country, but as many as 3000 new cases are still being reported each year.

The Myanmar Government and UNAIDS, estimate the number cases of HIV in Myanmar is over 240,000

Points of view:

"Owing to poor government-provided healthcare services, I've seen patients themselves are buying syringes, medicine, bandages and even food." Doctor Visuwanbanikichik, Public health researcher working on Myanmar border

"The neglect has been so long-lasting that if we want to catch up we need much more than a slight improvement.... Unfortunately, we need a major frightening epidemic in a highly developed country to make world leaders understand that they cannot keep on neglecting these infectious diseases," Jean-Herve Bradol, former president of Medecins Sans Frontieres are

"[drug resistant malaria] is not about a Myanmar problem; this is a global concern... From our region, we're now trying to scale up our activities – all our activities," Dr Thaung Hlaing, deputy director of the Health Ministry's National Malaria Control Programme.

"Non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer and asthma have become a threat to the nation. Our focus changed to those who are suffering from non-communicable diseases," Dr Jalin Sama, Better Burmese Healthcare NGO