

## Foreign Investment Booms in Myanmar Telecoms

YUICHI NITTA, Nikkei staff writer  
April 20, 2017 3:00 am JST

BANGKOK -- Overseas companies spent big on building mobile phone infrastructure in Myanmar over the past year, while they took a break from exploring oil and gas.

Foreign investment in Myanmar's transportation and telecommunications sectors surged to \$3.08 billion for the year ended March, a 60% jump. In contrast, spending in the gas and oil industry -- which had accounted more than half of the total in the preceding year -- dropped to zero from a dearth of new exploration projects. Overall, foreign investment in the Southeast Asian nation decreased 30% to \$6.64 billion, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

The mobile phone industry was the hottest destination for foreign money. Such players in the field as Myanmar posts and telecom company MPT -- a partner of Japan's KDDI -- Qatar's Ooredoo and Telenor Norway are intensely competing for customers, and they are pouring money into equipment and services.

Manufacturing drew the next largest investment of \$1.17 billion, up 11%. Much of it was from textile companies, which are taking advantage of Myanmar's cheap labor. Japanese fashion manufacturer and retailer Honeys is shifting production from China to Myanmar, with plans to build its own warehouse in Yangon. Chinese and South Korean clothing contract manufacturers are setting up shop in Myanmar as well.

Singapore was the largest investor with \$3.82 billion, which includes investments by Japanese and other businesses made through their offices in the city-state. Vietnam placed second with \$1.38 billion. Chinese investment, much of it for natural resources, tumbled 85% to \$482 million.

Read more at: <http://asia.nikkei.com/Politics-Economy/Economy/Foreign-investment-booms-in-Myanmar-telecoms>