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BURMA'S ORDER OF BATTLE:

AN INTERIM ASSESSMENT

Andrew Selth

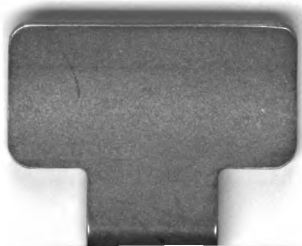*SDSC Working Papers*
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Canberra
September 2000

ABSTRACT

While the Burmese government has always been happy to trumpet the achievements of the country's armed forces (or *Tatmadaw*), it has been very reluctant to release any details of their structure, arms inventories or combat capabilities. Particularly since Ne Win's *coup d'état* in 1962, the rubric of 'national security' has been used by the Rangoon regime to deny both Burmese citizens and external observers any accurate or comprehensive information about such matters. Using a wide range of open sources, however, it is possible to glean sufficient material to form a reasonably reliable picture of the *Tatmadaw*'s order of battle. While it cannot be considered authoritative, this basic data can still be used to measure the extraordinary growth of the Burmese armed forces since 1988, and to analyse their arms procurement programmes. Similar methods can be used to guage the strength of the country's paramilitary Police Force, and to survey the weapons holdings of the country's numerous armed insurgent groups.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

After the creation of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in September 1988, Burma's name was officially changed from its post-1974 form, the 'Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma', back to the 'Union of Burma', which had been adopted when Burma regained its independence from the United Kingdom in January 1948. In July 1989 the military regime changed the country's name once again, this time to *Myanmar Naing-Ngan*, or the 'Union of Myanmar'. At the same time, a number of other place names were changed to conform to their original Burmese pronunciation. These new names were subsequently accepted by the United Nations and most other major international organisations. Some governments and opposition groups, however, have clung to the old forms as a protest against the military regime's human rights abuses and its refusal to hand over power to an elected civilian government. In this study the better known names, for example Burma instead of Myanmar, and Rangoon instead of Yangon, have been retained for ease of recognition.

This paper represents the author's views alone. It has been drawn entirely from open sources, and has no official status or endorsement. An earlier and much abbreviated version was provided to Jane's Information Systems in March 2000, for inclusion in *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment: Southeast Asia* (Jane's Information Systems, Coulsdon, 2000).

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BURMA'S ORDER OF BATTLE:
AN INTERIM ASSESSMENT

Andrew Selth[*]

Introduction

Ever since Burma regained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1948, it has been very reluctant to release any details about the size, structure or combat capabilities of its armed forces (or *Tatmadaw*). At first, this policy seemed to stem from a well-justified concern that the many armed groups which were then challenging the central government would discover its military weaknesses, and seek to exploit these shortcomings to overthrow the fledgling democratic administration in Rangoon. Since General Ne Win's *coup d'état* in 1962, however, and the imposition of military rule, the rubric of 'national security' has been extended to cover almost every aspect of government activity. The doctrinaire, isolationist political and economic policies of Ne Win's Burma Socialist Programme Party found their defence counterpart in an almost obsessive secrecy about anything to do with the armed forces or the country's security. Even fully accredited professional observers of the military scene in Burma, like foreign service and defence attachés, found it extremely difficult to discover the most basic facts about the *Tatmadaw*. While there was still some sensitivity about the poverty of the Burmese armed forces, compared with those of most other Asia-Pacific countries, this preoccupation with secrecy seemed to stem from a deep sense of insecurity on the part of Burma's leaders.

Since the creation of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in September 1988, this situation has become worse. The regime's deeply held fears of further internal unrest and foreign intervention in Burma's affairs have prompted even tighter restrictions. Among those activities considered most damaging to the regime, and thus warranting the severest punishment, is the public disclosure of any information deemed relevant to Burma's national security - a category which continues to be given the widest definition.[1] Paradoxically, Burma's new military leaders have been anxious to trumpet the virtues of the *Tatmadaw*, and have built a large

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museum in central Rangoon to advertise its achievements. Yet the regime has consistently sought to deny both Burmese citizens and foreigners alike any accurate information about the *Tatmadaw*'s dramatic increase in size since 1988, the regime's increased expenditure on defence and its massive arms procurement programme. Despite the regional trend towards greater transparency in military matters, Burma has shown no signs of altering its approach. There has never been a Burmese White Paper on Defence, for example, nor does the government (known since 1997 as the State Peace and Development Council, or SPDC) provide annual returns to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has been a little more open with regard to the structure and activities of the Police Force, but once again there are considerable obstacles in the way of assessing its strength and capabilities. [2] Such an assessment is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of Burma's overall military capabilities, as in many respects the Police Force is effectively an extension of the Burma Army. Many senior police officers are former army officers, or have been seconded from the armed forces. With regard to internal security matters, the Police Force acts in close collaboration with the *Tatmadaw*. Also, there are nine police battalions which are armed with military weapons and specially trained for combat operations. Nor is the police alone in assisting the armed forces in this way. There have been reports that members of the Auxiliary Fire Brigades, the Burma Red Cross Society and the War Veterans Association have all received basic military training, so that they too can contribute to national defence in the event of an emergency. On occasion, this basic training has even been extended to their family members. Similar training has been given to many members of the 14 million-strong Union Solidarity and Development Association, a country-wide political organisation created by the regime to mobilise support for the military government.

Although the SLORC and the SPDC have taken a number of extraordinary measures since 1988 to increase the size and capabilities of both the *Tatmadaw* and the Police Force, the internal security threats they face have in fact greatly diminished. The pro-democracy movement, which is largely based in the urban centres, has been effectively broken by a series of Draconian measures designed to reduce its membership and restrict its political activities. Of the numerous insurgent groups and narcotics-based armies in the country, 17 have negotiated cease-fires with the regime, which have left them with their arms and control over their traditional territories. Eight splinter groups have also reached understandings with Rangoon. Some other armed groups, notably the Karen National Liberation Army, have

suffered a number of major reversals and are now struggling to maintain their campaigns against the central government. The military capabilities of all these groups are still important, however, as the ceasefire agreements are very fragile, and some have already broken down. It is likely, too, that as the Rangoon regime becomes even stronger and more confident, it will demand more from these groups and turn its increased military resources against those which refuse to accept its authority.

Sources

Despite all the difficulties outlined above, a serious researcher of armed organisations in Burma is not without some sources to turn to for information. Of particular value are interviews with current and former members of the *Tatmadaw* who, often at some risk to themselves, are prepared to share their first-hand knowledge.[3] The many groups (both inside Burma and abroad) opposed to Burma's military government are also fertile ground for research. For example, some insurgent groups have compiled their own detailed assessments of the *Tatmadaw*, drawing on information obtained from their own experiences, Burma Army deserters, prisoners of war, tactical radio intercepts and other sources. From time to time useful (if rather fragmentary) information appears in the Burmese news media, and the displays in the Defence Services Historical Museum give a number of important clues to the *Tatmadaw*'s past and present capabilities. There are also occasional reports of arms sales to Burma and other military developments in foreign newspapers, defence journals and current affairs magazines. For example, over the years there have been numerous stories about Burma's diverse security problems in journals such as the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (where Bertil Lintner is a regular and very well-informed contributor), and *Jane's Defence Weekly*. Thai newspapers like the *Bangkok Post* and the *Nation* (notably the reporting of Yindee Lertcharoenchok) also carry detailed reports of developments in and around Burma. Carefully collated and analysed, the information derived from these sources can be very useful.

Some published secondary sources are also helpful. A Burmese order of battle can be found in *The Military Balance*, published each year by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London. This is one of the better known and more accessible public guides but, as the IISS itself acknowledges, the details provided are often contradicted by other sources and cannot be considered definitive. The relevant chapter of *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment for Southeast Asia* draws on the expertise of a number of Burma specialists (including Bertil Lintner, John Haseman and the author), and provides a much more detailed description of Burma's armed forces. This information is also used in other Jane's publications, like *Jane's World Air*

Forces and *Jane's World Armies*. *Jane's Fighting Ships* remains the most authoritative source about the development of the Burmese navy. Basic data about Burma's armed forces can also been found in annual publications like the *World Defence Almanac, Military Powers Encyclopedia* and *SP's Military Yearbook*. These and other such publications are highly derivative, however, and none can claim to be either accurate or comprehensive.

The situation with regard to the many armed anti-government groups in Burma is both clearer and more confusing. It is clearer in that many of these groups have welcomed contact with the outside world, and have been the subject of some excellent studies over the past ten years. Those written by Bertil Lintner and Martin Smith stand out as examples of the best kind of research and analysis on this subject.[4] The situation is more confusing, however, in that the names, membership, political position and alliances of these anti-government groups are constantly changing, thus making it very difficult for a researcher at any time to pin down their orders of battle. Also, in order to survive, these groups have needed to remain flexible and adapt to changing circumstances, making precise definition difficult. There have been several recent attempts to list all these groups, and even to assess their size and capabilities, but none are completely accurate or up-to-date. It is easier to determine which weapons they employ, but this task too can be difficult. Like all guerrilla forces, they tend to use a diverse mix of weapons provided by their sponsors (as the Chinese provided weapons to the Communist Party of Burma for many years), captured from their enemies, purchased on the black market, scrounged from other sources or even manufactured themselves.

Caveats

Given the difficulty of obtaining reliable information about any aspect of the *Tatmadaw* or Burma's armed opposition groups, including their arms inventories, certain allowances must be made for the following tables.

While every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the *Tatmadaw* order of battle given below, some units, weapons platforms (or even whole weapon systems) may have been omitted. The secrecy invariably surrounding Burma's armed forces and arms procurement programmes has sometimes meant that news of certain developments and acquisitions has taken time to leak out. Also, the tables may include some arms which have been used in the past, but are no longer in the *Tatmadaw*'s current inventory. For example, while some of the Burma Army's older weapons have doubtless been replaced, the Burmese security forces have a long history of never discarding any arms which might fall into the wrong hands, or which could conceivably be of use in a future emergency.[5] It is likely that at least a proportion has been stored in its

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armouries. Alternatively, some of the more obsolete weapons may have been passed down to the Police Force or (before they were disbanded) to local units of the People's Militia. Such weapons are thus still considered available for use in certain circumstances, either by the Burma Army itself or by paramilitary forces acting in its support.

Under current circumstances, it is impossible to estimate with any confidence the numbers of any particular weapons or weapons platforms in use or in storage. Most figures given below are estimates, or are based on unconfirmed reports in the open literature. No attempt has been made to estimate the numbers of small arms held. Burma has been awash with infantry weapons since the Second World War and for many insurgency has become a way of life. It is unlikely that even the *Tatmadaw*, with its many intelligence sources, could provide accurate figures of all the weapons held by any particular group. Also, while particular arms deliveries may become known, it is very difficult to account for any losses of major equipments, whether on operations, through accidents, or simply because of a lack of spare parts. It is known, for example, that since 1988 a number of the Burma Air Force's new aircraft have crashed through pilot error or mechanical failure. Some have been lost to insurgent ground fire. Also, some aircraft (like the Yugoslav SOKO G-4 Super Galebs) have been permanently grounded through a lack of spare parts. Details of the types and numbers of aircraft in these categories, however, are very difficult to obtain.

The list of anti-government groups given below reflects the situation in early 2000. It includes both ethnic insurgent groups and narcotics-based armies, bearing in mind that a number of armed ethnic organisations have become involved in the narcotics trade (often in order to survive), and have sometimes given this a higher priority than any real political or military activity. These lists do not, however, include a number of small self-proclaimed armed groups which have no real operational capabilities, or which are not currently active. It should be borne in mind too that several armed groups are quite small, and work only in alliances with other groups. While described as 'anti-government' groups, more than 20 of those listed below have negotiated ceasefires with the Rangoon regime. Indeed, some actively campaign on the regime's behalf (like the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army). Ceasefire negotiations are continuing with a number of other groups.

In the following tables, question marks against particular entries indicate uncertainty about certain aspects of the entry, or even the entry itself. The notation 'NA' means that no estimates are available. Where local names have been given to certain weapons, usually deriving from their production in

Burma, or the weapons used are produced by more than one country, they have either been listed separately (where different versions of these weapons are believed to be held), or the alternative names are given in brackets. This practice has also been followed where particular weapons have been given different designations by the manufacturer or are commonly known by different names. Specific designators or mark numbers have been given when known, but some may be incorrect. For consistency, the alphabetical and numerical designations of the various arms listed have all been given hyphens, for example M-16 (automatic rifle) or F-7 (fighter-interceptor). The name of the country which originally designed and/or manufactured these arms has been given in brackets at the end of each entry. Unless otherwise specified, 'USSR' or 'Russia' has been used to represent all Eastern-bloc countries.

The final table is of all those weapons known to have been used, or suspected of having been used, by the various insurgent groups and narcotics-based private armies which have operated in Burma since independence in 1948. They are all infantry weapons. Some groups, like the Mon and Karen, have used small boats to move men and supplies, both by sea and river. Also, the *Kuomintang* remnants based in northeastern Burma in the 1950s depended heavily on covert US air support. All opposition groups in Burma, however, have fought exclusively infantry campaigns. Some of the weapons listed may no longer be used although, based on photographic and written reports published since 1988, very few seem to have been discarded over the past 50 years. There may be some which have not been listed. It is important to remember too that a number of insurgent groups have manufactured their own arms and ammunition, either by using parts from other weapons or from basic raw materials. Some groups, like Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army, are known to have developed quite sophisticated arsenals equipped with metal-working equipment and furnaces, capable of producing a wide range of mortars (up to 120mm in calibre), small arms, grenades and landmines. While these arms are often copies of commercially produced weapons, they have no formal or recognised designations and accordingly have been marked 'LP', (meaning 'local production').

Conclusion

For all these reasons, the order of battle given below can only be considered an interim assessment, pending the availability of more complete and more accurate data. As long as the armed forces cling to power in Rangoon, and attempt to dominate every aspect of life in Burma, then a move towards greater transparency in, and a more open debate about, the country's security is highly unlikely. It is to be hoped, however, that until that day

dawns, the information compiled here will assist researchers and others with an interest in this important, but still largely neglected, subject.

PART I: THE *TATMADAW*

TOTAL PERSONNEL:

Formal war establishment: 500,000
Tatmadaw personnel in uniform: c.400,000
Total armed forces (including Police): 472,000

COMMAND STRUCTURE

Commander-in-Chief, Defence Services
Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Defence Services

ARMY

Commander-in-Chief, Army

General Staff

Chief of Staff
     Military Training General
     Directorate of Signals
     Directorate of Defence Industries
     Directorate of Security Printing
     Directorate of People's Militias and Psychological
          Warfare
     Directorate of Military Engineers (Field)
     Directorate of Armour and Artillery
     Colonel, General Staff
     Defence Services Historical Museum and Research
          Institute
     Directorate of Public Relations and Border Troops
     Department of Defence Services Computers
Chief of the Office of Strategic Studies
     Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence
Chief of the Bureau of Special Operations
     Regional Military Commands
     Light Infantry Divisions

           Regional Operation Commands
           Military Operation Commands

Adjutant-General's Office

Adjutant-General
        Vice Adjutant-General
        Directorate of Medical Services
        Directorate of Resettlement
        Provost-Marshal Office

Quartermaster-General's Office

Quartermaster-General
        Vice Quartermaster-General
        Directorate of Military Engineers (Garrison)
        Directorate of Supply and Transport
        Directorate of Ordnance Services
        Directorate of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

NAVY

Commander-in-Chief, Navy
        Vice Chief
        Naval Bases
        Colonel, General Staff

AIR FORCE

Commander-in-Chief, Air Force
        Vice Chief
        Air Bases
        Colonel, General Staff

INDEPENDENT DEPARTMENT

Judge Advocate General
Inspector General
Military Appointment-General
Directorate of Procurement
Records Office

Central Military Accounts
Camp Commandants

THE BURMA ARMY

PERSONNEL: c.370,000 all ranks

REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDS: 12

Northern Command (covering Kachin State, HQ at
Myitkyina, 33 battalions under command)
North Eastern Command (northern Shan State, HQ Lashio,
30 battalions under command)
Eastern Command (southern Shan State, HQ Taunggyi, 42
battalions under command, including 16 battalions
under a Regional Command HQ at Loikaw)
Triangle Region Command (eastern Shan State, HQ
Kengtung, 28 battalions under command)
Central Command (Mandalay Division, HQ Mandalay, 17
battalions under command)
South Eastern Command (Mon and Karen States, HQ
Moulmein, 36 battalions under command)
Coastal Region Command (Tenasserim Division, HQ Mergui,
43 battalions under command, including 8
battalions under a Regional Command HQ at Myeik)
Southern Command (Pegu and Magwe Divisions, HQ Toungoo,
27 battalions under command)
South Western Command (Irrawaddy Division, HQ Bassein,
11 battalions under command)
Western Command (Arakan and Chin States, HQ Akyab, 33
battalions under command)
North Western Command (Sagaing Division, HQ Monywa, 25
battalions under command)
Rangoon Command (Rangoon Division, HQ Mingaladon, 12
battalions under command)

These RMC control 337 infantry and light infantry battalions, as shown
above. There are five Regional Operations Commands (ROC) and 11 Military

Operations Commands (MOC). An increasing number of battalions are mechanised.

There are also 14 Tactical Operation Commands (TOC). These are at Kyaukmai, Loilin, Mogaung, Hmawbi, Kyauktaw, Pyinmana, Phaign, Tavoy (2), Kalay, Kyaukpadaung, Kawkareik, Bokepyin and Theinni. Two more TOC are currently under consideration.

LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISIONS: 10

77	LID (created in 1966, HQ at Pegu)
88	LID (1967, Magwe)
99	LID (1968, Meiktila)
66	LID (mid 1970s, Prome)
55	LID (late 1970s, Aungban)
44	LID (late 1970s, Thaton)
33	LID (mid 1980s, Sagaing)
22	LID (1987, Pa-an)
11	LID (1988, Htaukyant)
101	LID (1991, Pakokku)

Each LID consists of 10 battalions, based at and around the Division HQ. These are usually light infantry battalions, but a number of LID also command infantry battalions. For example, 33 LID and 44 LID each have three infantry battalions, 88 LID has five infantry battalions, and 101 LID consists entirely of infantry battalions.

SUMMARY OF COMBAT UNITS:

437	infantry battalions, consisting of 171 infantry battalions and 266 light infantry battalions. (This reportedly includes one airborne battalion, plus five commando units)
10	armoured battalions (5 tank, 5 APC)
43	artillery battalions (plus 37 independent artillery companies attached to regional commands)
7	anti-aircraft artillery battalions

Other units:

33	military intelligence units

16	signals battalions
11	electrical and mechanical engineer battalions

ARMOURED VEHICLES:

Tanks:

100	Type 69II main battle tanks (MBT) (PRC)
8	Type 59D MBT (PRC)
22	Comet medium tanks (UK)
105	Type 63 light tanks (PRC)

Other Tracked Armoured Vehicles:

250	Type 85 armoured personnel carriers (APC) (PRC)
80	Universal T-16 Bren gun carriers (UK/US)

Wheeled Armoured Vehicles:

54	Type 90 APC (PRC)
40	Humber APC (UK)
6	Ferret Scout Cars (SC) (UK)
50	Daimler SC (UK)
44	locally-built armoured vehicles, using mainly Mazda and Hino parts, as follows:
	BAAC-83 APC (Burma)
	BAAC-84 SC (Burma)
	BAAC-85 SC (Burma)
	BAAC-86 SC (Burma)
	BAAC-87 APC (Burma)
	BAAC-87 Command and Control Carrier (Burma)

ARTILLERY:

Towed Artillery:

57mm:	NA	6-pounder (UK)
76.2mm:	NA	17-pounder (UK)
76.2mm:	100	M-1948 B1 mountain guns (Yugoslavia)
88mm:	50	25-pounder field guns (UK)

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105mm:	96	M-101 howitzers (USA)
105mm:	NA	M-56 howitzers (Yugoslavia)
122mm:	NA	Type 54 howitzers (PRC)
130mm:	16	Type 59 field guns (DPRK)
140mm:	NA	5.5-inch medium guns (UK)
155mm:	16	Soltam (Israel)

Multiple Rocket Launchers:

81mm:	NA	BA-84 (Burma)
107mm:	30	Type 63 (PRC)
122mm:	NA	BM-21 (USSR/Vietnam) ?
130mm:	NA	Type 63 (PRC)

Air Defence Systems:

20mm:	NA	M-38 (Yugoslavia)
37mm:	24	Type 74 (PRC)
40mm:	10	Bofors L/60 Mk.1 (UK/US?)
57mm:	12	Type 80 Twin (PRC)
94mm:	NA	3.7-inch Mk.3A (UK)
SAMs:	NA	BAe Dynamics Bloodhound Mk.II surface-to-air missile (SAM) (UK/Singapore)

Man-Portable Air Defence Weapons:

	NA	SA-7 SAM (Russia)
	NA	Hongying HN-5A SAM (PRC)
	NA	SA-16 SAM (Russia) on order?

OTHER CREWED WEAPONS:

Light and Medium Mortars:

2 inch:	NA	Ordnance ML (UK, Burma)
3 inch:	NA	Ordnance ML (UK, Burma)
60mm:	NA	*Ka Pa Sa* BA-100 (Burma)
	NA	Type 63 (PRC)
	NA	M-19 (US)
81mm:	NA	M-29 (US)
	NA	*Ka Pa Sa* BA-90 (Burma)

82mm: NA   M-43 (Russia)
              NA   Type 53 (PRC)
              NA   Type 67 (PRC)
              NA   Type 76 (PRC)

Heavy Mortars:

120mm: NA   *Ka Pa Sa* BA-97 (Burma)
            NA   Hotchkiss-Brandt MO-120-60 (France)
            NA   MA-6 (?)
            80   Soltam M-65 (Tampella M-65) (Israel, Finland)
            NA   Soltam K-6 (Israel)
            NA   Tampella Mk.2 (Israel, Finland)
            NA   Type 53 (PRC)
            NA   UBM-52 (Yugoslavia)
122mm: NA   Type 55 (PRC)
            NA   Type 56 (PRC)

Rocket Launchers and Recoilless Rifles:

57mm: NA   M-18 (US)
             NA   Type 36 (PRC)
75mm: 200   M-20 recoilless rifle (RCL) (US)
             NA   Type 52 RCL (PRC)
             NA   Type 56 RCL (PRC)
82mm: NA   Type 65 (PRC)
             NA   Type 78 (PRC)
84mm: 1200 FFV Carl Gustaf M-2 (Sweden, Singapore)
3.5 inch: NA   M-20 rocket launcher (US)
106mm: NA   M-40A1 (US)
            NA   M-40A2 (US, Pakistan)

Light and General Purpose Machine Guns:

0.30 inch: Browning M-1919A4 medium machine gun (MMG) (US)
0.303 inch: Bren light machine gun (LMG) (UK)
7.62mm: Bren L-4A4 LMG (UK)
             Ka Pa Sa BA-64 LMG (Heckler and Koch G4) (Burma, FRG)
             Ka Pa Sa MA-3 LMG (Burma)
             M-G3 general purpose machine gun (GPMG) (MG-42/59) (FRG, Burma, Pakistan)

FN MAG GPMG (Belgium)

Heavy Machine Guns and Cannon:

0.50 inch: Browning M-2HB HMG (US, Belgium)
20mm: Hispano Mk.5 automatic cannon (UK)

INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS:

Pistols:

9mm: Browning HP (FN-35) semi-automatic (US, Belgium)
0.38 inch: Smith and Wesson revolver (US, UK)
0.455 inch: Webley revolver (UK)

Repeating Rifles:

0.303 inch: SMLE Mk.V (UK)
             Lee Enfield No.4 (UK)

Self-Loading and Assault Rifles:

5.56mm: Colt M-16A1 (US, Singapore)
            Ka Pa Sa MA-1 (Burma)
            Ka Pa Sa MA-2 assault rifle (AR) (Burma)
0.30 inch: Winchester M-1 carbine (US)
            Winchester M-2 carbine (US)
7.62mm: Armalite AR-10 (US)
            FN FAL (G1) (Belgium, FRG)
            Ka Pa Sa BA-63 (Heckler and Koch G-3A2) (Burma, FRG)
            Ka Pa Sa BA-100 (Heckler and Koch G-3A3ZF)(Burma, FRG)
            Ka Pa Sa BA-72 AR (Heckler and Koch G-3K) (G2)(Burma, FRG)
            Kalashnikov AK-47 AR (Russia)
            Type 56 AR (PRC)
12 Guage: Remington shotgun (US)
            other ?

Submachine Guns:

9mm: IMI Uzi (Israel)

> IMI Mini-Uzi (Israel)
> Sterling L2-A3 (UK)
> *Ka Pa Sa* BA-52 (TZ-45) (Burma, Italy)

Grenade Launchers:

40mm: RPG-2 (Type 56 anti-tank grenade launcher (ATGL)(Russia, PRC)
RPG-7 (Type 69 ATGL) (Russia, PRC)
M-79 (US)
M-203 (US)

Rifle and Hand Grenades:

41mm: BA-92 rifle grenade (RG) (Burma)
51mm: BA-80 RG (Burma)

Type 36 hand grenade (HG) (UK)
BA-77 anti-personnel HG (Burma)
BA-88 offensive HG (Burma)
BA-91 defensive HG (Burma)
BA-101 general purpose HG (Burma)
BA-109 HG (Burma)

Anti-Personnel Land Mines:

MM-1 stake fragmentation mine (SFM)(Burma)
POMZ-2 SFM (Burma)
POMZ-2M SFM (Burma)
Type 58 SFM (PRC)
Type 59 SFM (PRC)
LTM-76 SFM (?)
LTM-73 SFM (?)

M-18 directional fragmentation mine (DFM)(US)
Type 69 DFM (PRC)
? DFM (Burma)

M-16 A1 bounding fragmentation mine (BFM)(US)
Type 69 BFM (PRC)
V-69 BFM (Singapore) ?

MM-2 blast mine (BM)(Burma)
Type 58 BM (PRC)
PMN BM (USSR)
Type 72 BM (PRC)
M-14 BM (US)
? BM (Singapore)
VS-50 BM (Italy) ?

Type 59 box blast mine (PRC)
PMD box blast mine (Russia) ?

Anti-Vehicle Mines:

M-7 A2 (US)
Type 59 (PRC) ?
AT-26 (Israel) ?
VS-1.6 (Singapore) ?

THE BURMA AIR FORCE

PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT:

15,000 all ranks
135 combat aircraft, and about 50 armed
   helicopters

PRINCIPAL BASES AND UNITS:

Headquarters: Ministry of Defence, Rangoon
Mingaladon (Administrative HQ)
Meiktila (Ground Training Base)
Shante (Air Training Base)
Myitkyina
Hmawbi
Toungoo
Namsan

The Air Force also uses Burma's civilian airfields and numerous smaller airstrips around the country. Radar units are based at Hmawbi, Namsan, Loimwe and Kutkhai.

FIGHTERS:

Interceptors:

52	Chengdu F-7E/K/M (PRC)
10	MiG-29 (Russia) on order?

Fighter/Ground Attack:

48	NAMC A-5C/M (PRC)

COUNTERINSURGENCY AIRCRAFT:

12	SOKO G-4 *Super Galeb* (Yugoslavia)
9	Pilatus PC-9 (Switzerland)
15	Pilatus PC-7 (Switzerland)

TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT:

6	SAC Y-8D2 (PRC)
1	Fokker F-27-600 (Netherlands)
3	Fairchild-Hiller FH-227B (US)
3	Beechcraft D-18S (US)

MARITIME RECONNAISSANCE

3	Fokker F-27M (Netherlands) ?

TRAINING AIRCRAFT:

5	Pilatus PC-7 (Switzerland)
10	GAIC FT-7 (PRC)
4	Shenyang FT-6 (PRC)
16	NAMC/Karakorum K-8 (PRC/Pakistan)

LIAISON AIRCRAFT:

6	Cessna 180 (US)
1	Cessna 550 (US)
5	Pilatus PC-6A/B (Switzerland)

HELICOPTERS:

12	Bell 205 (US)
6	Bell 206 (US)
6	SA-316B Alouette III (France)
12	PZL W-3 *Sokol* (Poland)
18	Mil Mi-2 (Poland)
18	Mil Mi-17 (Russia)

OTHER AIRCRAFT:

4	Ayres S-2R Turbo-Thrush (US)
2	Beechcraft 16 Queenair (US)
3	Beechcraft D-18S (US)

THE BURMA NAVY

PERSONNEL: 16,000

This includes 1 battalion of naval infantry, based mainly in the Arakan and Tenasserim coastal regions, and the Irrawaddy delta.

PRINCIPAL BASES AND UNITS:

Headquarters: Ministry of Defence, Rangoon
Central Naval Hydrographic Depot (Rangoon)
Central Naval Diving and Salvage Depot (Rangoon)
Central Naval Engineering Depot (Rangoon)
Central Naval Stores Depot (Rangoon)
Central Naval Communications Depot (Rangoon)
Central Naval Armaments Depot (Seikkyi)
Central Naval Training Depot (Syriam/Seikkyi)
Central Naval Dockyard (Sinmalaik)

Regional Naval Commands, Bases and 'Frontline Camps':

Major War Vessels Command (HQ Rangoon)
Ayeyarwaddy Regional Command (HQ Rangoon)
    Thanhlyet Soon (Rangoon)
    Bassein
    Coco Island (Naval Radar Unit)
Danyawaddy Regional Command (HQ Akyab)
    Kyaukpyu
    Sandoway
Panmawaddy Regional Command (HQ Hainggyi Island)
Mawyawaddy Regional Command (HQ Moulmein)
Tanintharyi Regional Command (HQ Mergui)
    Zadetkyi (St Matthew's) Island
    Mali (Tavoy or Dawei) Island
    Palai Island
    Kadan (King) Island
    Sakanthit (Sellore) Island
    Lambi (Sullivan) Island
    Pearl (Sir J.Malcolm) Island

MAJOR SURFACE COMBATANTS: 4 (plus 3 under construction)

Corvettes (FS): 4

    1   *Admirable* class (US) (decommissioned in 1994 but still on
        fleet list)
    1   PCE 827 class (US) (decommissioned in 1994 but still on
        fleet list)
    2   *Nawarat* class (Burma) (being phased out)
    3   reportedly under construction in Rangoon

There have been repeated rumours over the past 10 years that the navy has
wanted to obtain two or three frigates from China or elsewhere. It is possible
that this requirement will be met by three corvettes of 1200 tons currently
being built in Rangoon. They are reported to have Chinese hulls, 76mm
Italian guns and Israeli electronics.

PATROL FORCES: 124

Guided Missile Patrol Boats (PGG): 6

    6   *Houxin* class (PRC) (probably armed with 4 C-801
              SSM each)

Coastal Patrol Boats (PC): 36

    16   *Hainan* class (PRC)
    2   *Myanmar* class (Burma)
    3   PB 90 class (Yugoslavia)
    6   PGM type (US)
    6   Burma PGM type (Burma)
    3   *Swift* class (US/Singapore)

River Gunboats (PGR): 18

    2   improved Y 301 class (Burma)
    10   Y 301 class (Yugoslavia)
    4   river gunboats (Burma)

River Gunboats (PCR): 18

    2   CGC type (US/Burma)

River Patrol Craft (PBR): 46

    9   river patrol craft (Burma)
    6   river patrol craft (US)
    6   *Carpentaria* class (Australia)
    25   *Michao* class (Yugoslavia)

MINE WARFARE FORCES: 2?

    2   T-43 class ocean minesweepers (PRC) on order?

AMPHIBIOUS FORCES: 18

    4   *Abamin* class LCU (Japan)
    1   LCU (Burma)

10	LCM 3 type (US)
3	LCU (Burma?) (operated by the Burma Army)

SURVEY VESSELS: 3

1	ocean survey ship (Yugoslavia)
1	survey vessel (Singapore)
1	river survey vessel (Netherlands)

AUXILIARIES: 17

1	coastal transport (AK) (Norway)
1	tanker (AOT) (Thailand)
1	diving support vessel (YDT) (Japan)
1	ocean transport vessel (AKL) (Burma?)
4	river transport vessels (AKL) (Burma?)
1	buoy tender (ABU) (Thailand)
7	MFV (Burma?)
1	Presidential Yacht

MERCANTILE MARINE:

Lloyds registers 127 vessels of 540,232 tons gross. As all are owned and operated by the state, they are considered available for service in times of emergency.

PART II: PARAMILITARY FORCES

THE BURMA POLICE FORCE

The People's Police Force (formally established in 1964) was reorganised as the Myanmar (Burma) Police Force on 1 October 1995, under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

TOTAL PERSONNEL: 72,000

Including 4500 Combat Police.

HEADQUARTERS: (Rangoon)

> Director-General of Police
> Deputy Director General
> General Staff Department
> > Security and Crime Division
> > Drugs Elimination Division
> > Planning and Training Division
> > Chemical Examination Department
> Personnel Department
> Logistics Department

STATE AND DIVISION POLICE FORCES: 17

The MPF command structure is based on established civil jurisdictions. Each of Burma's 7 States and 7 Divisions has a MPF Commanding officer, based at headquarters in the respective capital city.

> Karen State (HQ at Pa-an)
> Kachin State (Myitkyina)
> Chin State (Hakha)
> Mon State (Moulmein)
> Arakan State (Akyab)
> Shan State (Taunggyi)
> Kayah State (Loikaw)
> Rangoon Division (Rangoon)

Sagaing Division (Sagaing)
Mandalay Division (Mandalay)
Magwe Division (Magwe)
Pegu Division (Pegu)
Tenasserim Division (Tavoy)
Irrawaddy Division (Bassein)

There are also three additional State Police Forces, with headquarters at Lashio (Shan North) and Kengtung (Shan East) in the Shan State, and Prome (Pegu West) in Pegu Division.

These Police are also assigned to positions at the District or Township level, or to individual Police Stations.

SPECIAL DEPARTMENTS: 4

Special Intelligence Department (Special Branch)
Criminal Investigation Department
Railways Police Department
City Development Police Department

TRAINING CENTRES: 3

Central Institute of Police Training: Maymyo
No.1 Police Training Depot
No.2 Police Training Depot

RESERVED UNITS: 2

Highway Patrol
Oil Field Security

These units have absorbed some personnel formerly in the People's Militia.

COMBAT BATTALIONS: 9

Bn.1: (HQ at Hlawga)
Bn.2: Maungtaw
Bn.3: Shwemyayar
Bn.4: Patheingyi

Bn.5: Hmawbi
Bn.6: Shwepyitha
Bn.7: Kyauktan
Bn.8: Mingaladon/Padamyo Myo Thit
Bn.9: Hlaingthaya

These specially trained combat battalions (of about 500 men each) have reportedly absorbed the former *lon htein* security control police. They are reportedly assisted by two support battalions (including signals units).

ANTI-NARCOTICS TASK FORCES:

In addition to the formal structure outlined above, 19 special Anti-Narcotic Task Forces have been established under the direction of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control. Their headquarters are at the following regional centres:

Myitkyina
Homalin
Katha
Muse
Kalay
Monywa
Mandalay
Lashio
Taunggyi
Kyaington
Tachilek
Bassein
Moulmein
Mingaladon
Rangoon
Mergui
Akyab
Bhamo
Tamu

THE PEOPLE'S PEARL AND FISHERY BOARD

The People's Pearl and Fishery Board (formerly the People's Pearl and Fishery Department, and now possibly renamed again) currently has three fishery protection vessels under its jurisdiction. They are all operated by the Burma Navy, however, and to all intents and purposes function as naval vessels.

OFFSHORE PATROL BOATS (OPV):

3   *Osprey* class (Denmark)

In some sources, Burma's six *Carpentaria* Class river patrol craft, and three *Swift* type coastal patrol boats, are also listed as fishery protection vessels. The strength of the People's Pearl and Fishery Department (when operating all 12 patrol boats) was given as 250 men. While this may have been the case some years ago, it appears that these nine other vessels have now been completely absorbed by the navy, and only the *Osprey* class vessels remain under the formal control of the PPFB (or its successor).

THE PEOPLE'S MILITIA

Although some references still list the People's Militia as another of Burma's paramilitary organisations, and give it a strength of about 35,000, the militia has in fact been disbanded.

However, certain insurgent groups which have negotiated cease-fire agreements with Rangoon sometimes act as surrogates for the *Tatmadaw*, and perform certain functions on its behalf, even at times conducting operations against other insurgent groups which still oppose the military government. It is not known, however, if these former groups make up the 'Frontier Force' created by the regime in 1996.

OTHER PARAMILITARY FORCES

Basic military training has also been given to members of a number of other official organisations, including:

The Auxiliary Fire Brigades
The Myanmar Red Cross Society
The War Veterans Organisation
The Union Solidarity and Development Association

PART III: NON-GOVERNMENT ARMED FORCES

POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS AND ARMED WINGS

Armed anti-government groups in Burma have been listed below by political organisation. If different, the name of their armed wing follows, with their estimated armed strength given last. Any additional information is given in brackets. If there is no separate political organisation, the name of the armed group only has been listed.

GROUPS UNDER CEASE-FIRE ARRANGEMENTS:

United Wa State Party (or Myanmar National Solidarity Party): United Wa State Army: 12,000

Kachin Independence Organisation: Kachin Independence Army (KIA): 8,000

Restoration Council of Shan State: Shan United Revolutionary Army (former Mong Tai Army): 8,000

Shan State Progress Party: Shan State Army: 3,000

Myanmar National Democratic Alliance: Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (Kokang): 2,000

New Mon State Party (NMSP): Mon National Liberation Army: 1,000

Communist Party of Burma (CPB) (Arakan Province): NA

(former CPB 815 Brigade): National Democratic Alliance Army: 1,000

(former CPB 101 Brigade): New Democratic Army: 300

Palaung State Liberation Party: Palaung State Liberation Army: 700

(former KIA 4 Brigade): Kachin Defence Army: NA

Pao National Organisation: NA

Karenni State Nationalities Liberation Front: Karenni State National Liberation Army: 300

Kayan New Land Party (KNLP): NA

(breakaway group from KNLP): Kayan National Guard: NA

Shan State Nationalities People's Liberation Organisation: NA

Democratic Karen Buddhist Organisation: Democratic Karen Buddhist Army: 1500

(splinter group from Kokang): Mongko Region Defence Army: NA

Shan State National Army: NA

(splinter faction from KNPP): Karenni National Defence Army: 100

(ex-KNLA 6 Brigade, 16 Battalion): Karen Peace Force: 250
(splinter faction from NMSP): Mon Mergui Army: 150
KNU Special Regional Force (Toungoo): NA

ARMED GROUPS STILL IN OPPOSITION:

Karen National Union (KNU): Karen National Liberation Army
    (KNLA): 4,000
Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP): Karenni Army: 900 (truce
    broken)
Arakan Liberation Party: Arakan Liberation Army: NA
Chin National Front: Chin National Army: NA
Lahu National Organisation: NA
(former CPB): Mergui-Tavoy United Front: NA
National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN):
    NSCN (East): NA
    NSCN (Main faction): NA
National Unity Party of Arakan (formerly National Unity Front of
    Arakan): Arakan Army: NA
Rohingya National Alliance: 700
    Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front: NA
    Rohingya Solidarity Organisation: Rohingya Army: NA
Wa National Organisation: NA
Zomi National Front: Zomi National Army: NA
Kuki National Front: Kuki National Army: NA
All Burma Students Democratic Front: 2,000
All Burma Muslim Union: NA
People's Defence Forces: NA
People's Liberation Front: NA
(KNLA breakaway): God's Army: 200
(KNLA breakaway): Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors: NA

INSURGENT ARMS INVENTORY

INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS:

Pistols:

7.62mm   Type 51 (Type 54, Tokarev TT-33) (China, Russia)

9mm:	Browning HP semi-automatic (FN-35) (US, Belgium)
	PA-63 (Hungary) ?
0.38 inch:	Smith and Wesson revolver (US, UK)

Repeating Rifles:

0.22 inch:	?
0.303 inch:	SMLE Mk.V (UK)
	Lee Enfield No.4 (UK)

Self-Loading and Assault Rifles:

5.56mm:	Colt M-16A1 (US)
0.30 inch:	Winchester M-1 carbine (US)
	Winchester M-2 carbine (US)
	Garand M-1 (US)
7.62mm:	Springfield M-14 (US)
	Simonov SKS (Type 56) (M-21) (Russia, China)
	Ka Pa Sa BA-63 (Heckler and Koch G-3A2) (FRG, Burma)
	Ka Pa Sa BA-72 (Heckler and Koch G-3K) (G-2) (FRG, Burma)
	Kalashnikov AK-47 (AK-56) (Russia)
	Type 56 (M-22) (China)
	Type 56-1 (China)
	VZ-58 (Czechoslovakia)
12 Guage:	shotguns (various)

Submachine Guns:

9mm:	Sten Mk.2, Mk.5 (UK)
	Ka Pa Sa BA-52 (TZ-45) (Burma, Italy)

Grenade Launchers:

40mm:	RPG-2 (Type 56, B-40) (Russia, China, Vietnam)
	RPG-7 (Type 69) (Russia, China, LP)
	M-79 (US)
	M-203 (US)

Man-Portable Air Defence Systems:

SA-7 SAM (Russia)

Hand Grenades:

> M-60 (US?)
> ? (LP)

Land Mines:

> ? (LP)

CREWED WEAPONS:

Light, Medium and General Purpose Machine Guns:

0.30 inch:	Browning M-1919A4 MMG (US)
.303 inch:	Bren LMG (UK)
7.62mm:	Bren L-4A4 LMG (UK)
	Ka Pa Sa BA-64 (Heckler and Koch G-4) (FRG, Burma)
	MG-3 GPMG (MG-42/59) (FRG, Burma, Pakistan)
	RPD LMG (Type 56) (M-23) (Russia, China)
	Saco M-60 GPMG (US)

Heavy machine guns:

0.5 inch:	Browning M-2HB HMG (US, Belgium)
12.7mm:	DShK38/46 HMG (Type 54) (Russia, China)

Mortars:

3 inch:	ML (UK, Burma)
60mm:	? (LP)
	? (China)
62.5mm:	? (LP)
81mm:	Type 53 (China)
	? (LP)
82mm:	? (China)
	? (LP)
99mm:	? (LP)
120mm:	? (China)
	? (LP)
122mm:	?

Rocket Launchers and Recoilless Rifles:

57mm:	? (US)
75mm:	M-20 (US)
	DK-75 (?)
	Type 52 RCL (China)
	Type 56 RCL (China)
81mm:	?
84mm:	FFV Carl Gustaf M-2 (Sweden, Singapore)
3.5 inch:	M-20 rocket launcher (US)
106mm:	M-40 (US)
	? (China)
107mm:	single tube rocket launcher (LP)

Notes

1 Sometimes this obsession with secrecy defies logic. The Rangoon City Development Committee's official guide to the capital, for example, does not include the Ministry of Defence in its list of government offices, nor does the Ministry of Defence compound appear on the relevant city maps. Yet the defence compound occupies a large part of central Rangoon, is entered through huge ceremonial gates from a busy street, and is well known to everyone in the city.

2 See, for example, *The Myanmar Police Force* (Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of the Union of Myanmar, Rangoon, 2000).

3 The *Tatmadaw* has granted one or two foreign researchers special access to its official records, but this has been a rare privilege. Only Burmese approved by the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence have been permitted to see and publish any contemporary material.

4 For a comprehensive list of rebel armies and other anti-government groups in Burma since independence, see Bertil Lintner, *Burma in Revolt: Opium and Insurgency since 1948* (Silkworm, Chiang Mai, 1999), pp.480-95. See also Martin Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Zed Books, London, 1999), pp.xvi-xvii; and Bertil Lintner's contribution to *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism* (Jane's Information Systems, Coulsdon, 2000), pp.138-47.

5 This was well illustrated during the 1988 pro-democracy uprising when old T-16 Bren gun carriers appeared on the streets of Rangoon. These Second World War-vintage vehicles were probably supplied to Burma in the early 1950s.

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