

17th Indian Infantry Division (1)

46th Indian Infantry Brigade (2)

7th Bn. 10th Baluch Regiment
5th Bn. 17th Dogra Regiment
3rd Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles

16th Indian Infantry Brigade (3)

1st (Royal) Bn. 9th Jat Regiment
4th (Sikhs) Bn. 12th Frontier Force Regiment (4)
1st Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles

2nd Burma Infantry Brigade (5)

2nd Bn. The Burma Rifles (6)
3rd Bn. The Burma Rifles (7)
4th Bn. The Burma Rifles (8)
6th Bn. The Burma Rifles (9)
8th (Frontier Force) Bn. The Burma Rifles (10)
The Kokine Battalion, Burma Frontier Force (11)

Divisional Troops

5th (Bombay) Indian Mountain Battery, Indian Artillery
12th (Poonch) Indian Mountain Battery, Indian Artillery
3rd Indian Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Indian Artillery

60th Field Company, Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers & Miners

17th Indian Divisional Signals, Indian Signal Corps

NOTES:

1. This formation, later to become famous as the 'Black Cat' Division, was formed in Ahmednager on 1st July 1941 as a War Office reserve division. It moved to Dhond for training in November 1941, and officially mobilised on the 1st December 1941. At that time, it consisted of three brigades, the 44th, 45th and 46th Indian Infantry Brigades. It was intended to send the division to Iraq for training and equipping as a fully mechanised division for desert warfare. However, the 44th and 45th Brigades were dispatched to Singapore in early 1942 where they fought in lower Malaya and Singapore. Both brigades were destroyed during the fighting, with the survivors being captured with the fall of Singapore in February 1942. The divisional headquarters and 46th Brigade were sent to Burma in January 1942 and established its headquarters at Moulmein. It assumed command of the troops in southern Burma.
2. The brigade arrived in Burma in early January 1942 as part of the 17th Division. Deployed to the Bilin area. The 46th Brigade, commanded by Brigadier R. G. EKIN, comprised three war raised service battalions, the 7th Bn. 10th Baluch Regiment (Lieutenant Colonel DYER) 5th Bn. 17th Dogra Regiment (Lieutenant Colonel POWER) and 3rd Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles (Lieutenant Colonel STEVENSON).
3. This brigade was initially under the command of the 7th Indian Division in India. It was sent to Burma, arriving from India in November 1941. It came under command of 17th Indian Division when the division arrived in Burma and was deployed in the Dawna and Kawkariek areas. The brigade comprised three regular Indian battalions.
4. The battalion transferred to 2nd Burma Brigade in January 1942. It was replaced by: 4th Bn. The Burma Rifles
5. This brigade transferred from 1st Burma Division in January 1942 with the arrival of 17th Division, which assumed command of all the troops in Southern Burma. The formation was based in Moulmein.
6. The battalion was deployed in Mergui. It was evacuated by sea to Moulmein between the 20th and 22nd January 1942.
7. The battalion was deployed in Moulmein, with two companies detached to Tavoy. These two companies disintegrated when attacked, with the remnants retreating to Moulmein.
8. This battalion was located at Moulmein, then transferred to 16th Brigade and deployed to the Thai border. It was replaced in 2nd Brigade by: 4th (Sikhs) Bn. 12th Frontier Force Regiment
9. The battalion located at Tavoy. It disintegrated when attacked and ceased to exist as a fighting unit.
10. Based in Moulmein.
11. Based in Moulmein with detachments dispersed in the area.

SOURCES:

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17th Indian Infantry Division (1)

46th Indian Infantry Brigade (2)

7th Bn. 10th Baluch Regiment
4th (Sikhs) Bn. 12th Frontier Force Regiment (3)
3rd Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles
4th Bn. The Burma Rifles (4)

16th Indian Infantry Brigade (5)

2nd Bn. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (6)
1st (Royal) Bn. 9th Jat Regiment
5th Bn. 17th Dogra Regiment (7)
1st Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles
8th (Frontier Force) Bn. The Burma Rifles (8)

48th Indian Infantry Brigade (9)

1st Bn. 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles
1st Bn. 4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles
2nd Bn. 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force)

Divisional Troops

1st Bn. The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own) (10)
2nd Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding) (11)
2nd Bn. The Burma Rifles (12)

5th (Bombay) Mountain Battery, Indian Artillery
12th (Poonch) Mountain Battery, Indian Artillery
28th Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery (13)
(H.Q., 15th (Jhelum) & 28th Mountain Batteries, Indian Artillery)
2nd Indian Anti-Tank Regiment, Indian Artillery (13)

60th Field Company, Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers and Miners
24th Field Company, Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners (14)

17th Indian Divisional Signals, Indian Signal Corps

NOTES:

1. This is the order of battle for the 17th Indian Division at the Bilin River and Sittang River battles. The 48th Brigade had arrived replacing 2nd Burma Brigade. In addition, two British battalions had arrived from India, both being thrown straight into the battles.
2. The brigade was deployed in the Kyaikto area, ie, behind 16th Brigade. This was to allow the Brigade to rest and reorganise following the initial contacts with the Japanese forces at Moulmien.
3. This battalion had been transferred to 2nd Burma Brigade, however, when that brigade was withdrawn into L.o.C. on 11th February 1942, this battalion was transferred to come under command 46th Brigade.
4. The battalion had been transferred to 16th Brigade and deployed on the Thai border. When the Japanese attacked, the battalion was brought back from the border to Moulmein, and following the withdrawal from there, came under command of 46th Brigade.
5. This brigade deployed to defend the Bilin River line.
6. This battalion transferred from 1st Burma Brigade to assist in defence of Bilin River.
7. This battalion transferred from 48th Brigade.
8. This battalion was under command of 2nd Burma Brigade, but remained in area when the brigade posted away on 11th February 1942. It then came under command of the 16th Brigade.
9. The brigade (formerly under command of 14th Division in India) arrived in Burma on 31st January 1942. It came under command of 17th Division as the reserve brigade.
10. This battalion arrived in Burma on 25th January 1942, being deployed to Sittang area under command of 17th Division.
11. This battalion arrived in Rangoon on 14th February 1942. It was immediately dispatched to the front line where it was caught up in the Sittang River battle under command of 17th Division.
12. This battalion was located in Papun.
13. These regiments landed in Rangoon on 14th February 1942. Both had difficulty in reaching front line due to lack of transport.
14. This company landed in Rangoon on 14th February 1942.

SOURCES:

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17th Indian Infantry Division (1)

46th Indian Infantry Brigade (2)

16th Indian Infantry Brigade (3)

'A' Battalion "The King's Own Dukes" (4)

'B' Battalion (5)

'C' Battalion (6)

48th Indian Infantry Brigade

1st Bn. 4th Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles

'5th Bn.' 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles (7)

'7th Gurkha Rifles' (8)

63rd Indian Infantry Brigade (9)

1st (King George's Own) Bn. 11th Sikh Regiment

2nd Bn. 13th Frontier Force Rifles

1st Bn. 10th Gurkha Rifles

Divisional Troops

1st Bn. The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) (10)

1st Bn. The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own)

2nd Bn. The Burma Rifles (11)

1st Field Regiment, Indian Artillery (12)

28th Mountain Artillery Regiment, Indian Artillery

2nd Anti-Tank Regiment, Indian Artillery

3rd Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Indian Artillery

24th Field Company, Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners

60th Field Company, Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers & Miners

70th Field Company, King George V's Own Bengal Sappers and Miners (12)

17th Indian Divisional Signals, Indian Signal Corps

NOTES:

1. This is the order of battle for the 17th Indian Division following its near destruction at the Sittang River. The division then went to Pegu to refit and reorganise. When the Japanese encircled the division, it had to break out to the north which it successfully achieved and then moved into central Burma.
2. 46th Brigade was broken up following the Sittang Bridge battle albeit the 2nd Bn. Duke of Wellington's Regiment is shown in official records as remaining under command of this brigade until June 1942.
3. The brigade comprised various composite battalions.
4. 'A' Battalion formed from elements of:
 - 2nd Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)
 - 2nd Bn. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
5. 'B' Battalion formed from:
 - 1st Bn. 9th Jat Regiment

According to the Regimental History, this battalion did not stop using its usual designation and was not referred to as 'B' Battalion.
6. 'C' Battalion formed from elements of:
 - 7th Bn. 10th Baluch Regiment
 - 4th Bn. 12th Frontier Force Regiment
 - 5th Bn. 17th Dogra Regiment
 - 3rd Bn. The Burma Rifles
 - 4th Bn. The Burma Rifles
 - 8th (Frontier Force) Bn. The Burma Rifles
7. This was a composite battalion formed from:
 - 1st Bn. 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles
 - 2nd Bn. 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (Frontier Force)
8. This was a composite battalion formed from:
 - 1st Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles
 - 3rd Bn. 7th Gurkha Rifles
9. The brigade (formerly under command of 23rd Division) arrived in Rangoon on 3rd March 1942. It came under command of 17th Division.
10. This battalion arrived in Burma on 21st February 1942. It then came under command of 17th Division.
11. This battalion was attached for a period of time from 2nd Burma Brigade.
12. These units arrived in Burma on 3rd March 1942.

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¹ Copy obtained from the British Library through my local library in 2002. It appears to be no longer available. Very rare now.