

Imperial Japanese Army Air Order of Battle, Burma December 1941 – May 1942

Unit	Commander	25 Dec 1941	21-22 Jan 1942	Late Feb 1942
12th Sentai	Col Kitajima Kumao	27x Sally	-	-
31st Sentai	Lt Col Hayashi Junji	27x Ann	25x Ann	22x Ann
60th Sentai	Col Ogawa Kojiro	36x Sally	-	-
62nd Sentai	Lt Col Onishi Hiroshi	8x Sally	15x Sally	8x Sally
64th Sentai	Maj Kato Tateo	10x Oscar	-	-
77th Sentai	Maj Yoshioka Hiroshi	32x Nate	25x Nate	23x Nate
98th Sentai	Lt Col Shigeki Usui	12x Sally II	-	-
8th Sentai	Maj Honda Mitsuo	-	31x Lily & Ann	10x Lily 10x Ann
14th Sentai	Col Hironaka Magoroku	-	19x Sally	12x Sally
50th Sentai	Maj Makino Yasuo	-	31x Nate	20x Nate
47th Ind. Chutai	Capt Yasuhiko Kuroe	5x Tojo	-	-
70th Ind. Chutai	Capt Ohira Tateo	-	4x Babs	4x Babs 3x Dinah

Unit	Commander	2 Mar 1942	20 Mar 1942	Late Mar 1942
12th Sentai	Col Kitajima Kumao	35x Sally II	31x Sally II	35x Sally
31st Sentai	Lt Col Hayashi Junji	18x Ann (8x Ann u/s)	25x Ann	16x Ann
64th Sentai	Maj Kato Tateo	-	15x Oscar 2x Nate 1x Hurricane IIb	18x Oscar 2x Hurricane IIb 1x P-40E Warhawk
77th Sentai	Maj Yoshioka Hiroshi	24x Nate (10x Nate u/s)	35x Nate	15x Nate
8th Sentai	Maj Honda Mitsuo	22x Lily 6x Ann	32x Lily 12x Ann	22x Lily 6x Ann
14th Sentai	Col Hironaka Magoroku	11x Sally	-	-
50th Sentai	Maj Makino Yasuo	18x Nate (6x Nate u/s)	17x Nate	13x Nate
47th Ind. Chutai	Capt Yasuhiko Kuroe	4x Tojo	4x Tojo	4x Tojo
51st Ind. Chutai		-	5x Babs 5x Dinah	17x Recce Aircraft between 51st & 70th Independent Chutais
70th Ind. Chutai	Capt Ohira Tateo	5x Babs & Dinah	9x Babs & Dinah 2x Sonia	
1st Sentai	Maj Takeda Kinshiro	-	15x Nate	15x Nate
11th Sentai	Maj Okabe Tadashi	-	14x Nate	14x Nate
98th Sentai	Lt Col Osaka Junji	-	35x Sally II	37x Sally II
HQ 12th Flying Bn		-	3x Nate	3x Nate
Others	-	-	-	6x Sally†

† These Sallys were fitted as transports and not as bombers.

- During the Christmas 1941 raids on Rangoon, the Imperial Japanese Army Air Forces in Thailand came under the command of 3rd Flying Division (Hikoshidan), commanded by Lieutenant General Michio Sugawara. He flew to Bangkok on 23rd December, to take personal command of operations against Rangoon, following the heavy casualties suffered during that day. He realised that the fighter cover provided by the Ki-27 Nates of 77th Sentai was inadequate and immediately ordered the Oscars of 64th Sentai and the Tojos of 47th Independent Chutai to be withdrawn from Malaya in order to escort the second wave of raids on 25th December. However, upon arrival in Thailand, and having lost three aircraft en route, the Tojos of the 47th Chutai found the runway at Raheng to be too short to operate from and had to remain at Don Muang, which was too far from Rangoon for them to participate in the operation.
- The organisation of 3rd Hikoshidan for the Christmas Day raid was as follows:
 - 7th Flying Battalion (Hikodan), comprised the 12th Sentai, 60th Sentai & 64th Sentai.
 - 10th Hikodan comprised the 31st Sentai, 62nd Sentai & 77th Sentai.

- The 98th Sentai was left out of the Christmas Day raid, due to the casualties it had suffered on the 23rd.
- There was a major re-organisation immediately following the Christmas raids, with the majority of the 3rd Hikoshidan (particularly the Sally heavy bombers and Oscar & Tojo fighters) being diverted to deal with Malaya, Singapore and Dutch East Indies. General Hiroda's 10th Hikodan remained on the Burma Front, comprising mainly of the 77th Sentai and 31st Sentai, with occasional contributions from the Sally bombers of the 62nd Sentai.
- The 5th Hikoshidan, under the command of Lieutenant General Obata Eiryō, was formed 21-22 Jan 1942, with its HQ at Don Muang in Thailand. Organisation was as follows:
 - 4th Hikodan comprised the 8th Sentai, 14th Sentai, 31st Sentai, 50th Sentai & 62nd Sentai.
 - 10th Hikodan comprised the 77th Sentai and 70th Independent Chutai. These were joined in late February/early March by the 12th Sentai and 47th Independent Chutai.
- With the fall of Singapore, the 12th Hikodan also moved to Thailand/Burma, with the 1st, 11th, 64th & 98th Sentais, plus the 51st Independent Chutai. The 14th Sentai was withdrawn to French Indochina at this time, to re-equip with Sally II.
- Some sources list the Ki-30 Ann light bombers of 8th Sentai as Ki-15 Babs recce aircraft or Ki-51 Sonia light bombers, though this seems unlikely, as the 8th Sentai is listed again as having Ann later in March 1942. This was probably a case of mistaken identity, as all three types look quite similar.
- The Imperial Japanese Naval Air Force also operated briefly in the Burma area of operations from late March 1942; primarily in support of the naval strike against Ceylon:
 - A unit of over a dozen H6K 'Mavis' flying boats moved into Port Blair in the Andaman Islands following the departure of British and Indian forces there and conducted maritime patrol operations from there, starting on 26th March.
 - G3M 'Nell' bombers of the Mihoro Kokutai, based at Sabang in Northern Sumatra, started conducting maritime patrol operations into the Indian Ocean, to prepare the ground for the forthcoming naval sortie.
 - Eighteen A6M 'Zero' fighters from the 22nd Air Flotilla moved to Mingaladon on 30th March.
 - Eighteen G3M 'Nell' bombers and a C5M 'Babs' recce aircraft from the Genzan Ku moved to Mingaladon on 4th April.
 - Aircraft from the newly-established IJN air group at Mingaladon attacked Calcutta and Akyab on 5th April. This attack coincided with the assault, by IJN carrier air groups, against Ceylon on the same day.

Allied Air Order of Battle, Burma December 1941 – May 1942

Squadron	Commander	10 Dec 1941	31 Dec 1941	26 Jan 1942
1st Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Robert Sandell	-	5x P-40B Warhawk	12x P-40B Warhawk
2nd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr John Newkirk	-	17x P-40B Warhawk	8x P-40B Warhawk
3rd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Arvid Olson	20x P-40B Warhawk 1x P-40B PR	3 Sqn withdrawn 30 Dec 41	-
17 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Cedric 'Bunny' Stone	-	-	7x Hurricane IIb 2x Hurricane II PR
28 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr P N Jennings	-	-	19x Lysander II
31 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr H P Jenkins	9x DC-2	8x DC-2	8x DC-2
60 Squadron, Royal Air Force		16x Blenheim IV	16x Blenheim IV	Aircraft transferred to 113 Sqn 7 Jan 42
67 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Robert Milward Sqn Ldr Jack Brandt	16x Buffalo (14x Spare Buffalo)	16x Buffalo (8x Spare Buffalo)	?x Buffalo (probably <10)
113 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr R N Stidolph	-	-	16x Blenheim IV
3 Coastal Defence Flt, Indian Air Force	Flt Lt Hem Choudhri	-	-	3x Blenheim I
4 Coastal Defence Flt, Indian Air Force	Flt Lt Eric Sprawson	-	4x Westland Wapiti 2x Hawker Audax	-

Squadron	Commander	1 Feb 1942	20 Feb 1942	4 Mar 1942
1st Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Robert Sandell	25x P-40 Warhawk Between the two squadrons	?x P-40 Warhawk	1 Sqn withdrawn 4 Mar 42
2nd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr John Newkirk		2 Sqn withdrawn 8 Feb 42	-
3rd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Arvid Olson	-	-	6x P-40 Warhawk
1 Squadron, Indian Air Force	Wg Cdr Karun Majumdar	6x Lysander II	9x Lysander II	?x Lysander II
17 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Cedric 'Bunny' Stone	8x Hurricane IIb 2x Hurricane II PR Between the three squadrons	25x Hurricane IIb 1x Hurricane II PR Between the three squadrons	?x Hurricane IIb
135 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Frank Carey Sqn Ldr Barry Sutton			?x Hurricane IIb
136 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr T A F 'Jimmy' Elsdon			?x Hurricane IIb
28 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr P N Jennings	19x Lysander II	13x Lysander II	?x Lysander II
31 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr H P Jenkins	8x DC-2 ?x Valentia	8x DC-2 ?x Valentia	8x DC-2 ?x Valentia
45 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr C B B Wallis	-	15x Blenheim IV	9x Blenheim
67 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Jack Brandt	6x Buffalo	5x Buffalo	5x Buffalo 5x Hurricane IIb
113 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr R N Stidolph	12x Blenheim IV	12x Blenheim IV	?x Blenheim IV
3 Coastal Defence Flt, Indian Air Force	Flt Lt Hem Choudhri	3x Blenheim I	3x Blenheim I	3x Blenheim I

Squadron	Commander	18 Mar 1942	13 Apr 1942	8 May 1942
1st Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Robert Sandell	-	?x P-40B/C Warhawk ?x P-40E Warhawk	All three squadrons in Burma, now operating P-40E as fighter-bombers and P-40B/C as escorts
2nd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr John Newkirk	-	-	
3rd Sqn, American Volunteer Group	Sqn Ldr Arvid Olson	?x P-40 Warhawk First P-40E delivered	?x P-40B/C Warhawk ?x P-40E Warhawk	
1 Squadron, Indian Air Force	Wg Cdr Karun Majumdar	1 Sqn IAF withdrawn 10 Mar 42	-	-
5 Squadron, Royal Air Force		-	-	16x Mohawk IV
17 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Cedric 'Bunny' Stone	16x Hurricane IIb (Sent to Burwing)	17 Sqn withdrawn 13 Apr 42	-
135 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Barry Sutton	135 Sqn withdrawn 18 Mar 42	-	-
136 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr T A F 'Jimmy' Elsdon	9x Hurricane I 1x Hurricane IIa (Sent to Akwing)	136 Sqn withdrawn 1 Apr 42	-
28 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr P N Jennings	3x Lysander II Rest withdrawn	3x Lysander II	3x Lysander II
31 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr H P Jenkins	8x DC-2 ?x Valentia	8x DC-2 ?x DC-3s delivered	?x DC-2 ?x DC-3
45 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr C B B Wallis	9x Blenheim IV (Sent to Burwing)	9x Blenheim IV	?x Blenheim IV
62 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr D Halliday	-	-	?x Hudson
67 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Sqn Ldr Jack Brandt	67 Sqn withdrawn 18 Mar 42	-	-
113 Squadron, Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr R N Stidolph	5x Blenheim IV	5x Blenheim IV	?x Blenheim IV
139 Squadron, Royal Air Force		6x Hudson	6x Hudson	Absorbed into 62 Sqn RAF
146 Squadron, Royal Air Force		-	-	16x Mohawk IV
215 Squadron, Royal Air Force		-	?x Wellington	?x Wellington
3 Coastal Defence Flt, Indian Air Force	Flt Lt Hem Choudhri	2x Blenheim I	2x Blenheim I	Absorbed into 62 Sqn RAF

- 221 Group RAF, initially commanded by Gp Capt E R Manning, was the formation responsible for all RAF and IAF forces in Burma. Air Vice Marshall D F Stevenson was appointed to command 221 Gp on 15th December 1941, though he didn't arrive in Rangoon until 30th December. He also became the de facto Air Officer Commanding Burma at the same time. Stevenson had earned the epithet 'Butcher' during his controversial command of 2 (Bomber) Group, where he had ordered his Blenheim squadrons to conduct a campaign of low-level daylight bombing that cost them dearly. Note that 221 Group changed its title to BURGROUP during the latter part of the retreat from Burma, before being reformed as 221 Group once again in India.
- Sqn Ldr Frank Carey, OC 135 Sqn, was promoted to Wing Commander almost immediately upon arrival in Burma and took over 267 Wing (17, 135 & 136 Sqns - Hurricanes) from Wg Cdr A W Pennington-Legh, with Sqn Ldr Barry Sutton taking over 135 Squadron.
- Although only 17 Sqn was officially operating in Burma during the early days of 267 Wing's involvement, the Wg Cdr and all three Sqn Ldrs were there from the outset and all flew missions as ordinary fighter pilots.
- Sqn Ldr Robert Milward was replaced as OC 67 Sqn by Sqn Ldr Jack Brandt (who had been 67 Sqn 'B' Flt Cdr) on 11th January 1942.
- It would appear from the Sqn history of 139 Squadron that it, along with 3 CD Flt, was absorbed into 62 Sqn (the remnants of which had returned from Java) in May 1942.
- I have not included the Burma Volunteer Air Force, who performed sterling service during the campaign, operating a variety of light aircraft.

Japanese Aircraft Types over Burma Dec 1941 - May 1942

Name	Type
Mitsubishi Ki-15 'Babs'*	Army Type 97 Command & Reconnaissance
Mitsubishi Ki-21 'Sally'	Army Type 97 Heavy Bomber
Mitsubishi Ki-21-IIb 'Sally II'	Army Type 97 Heavy Bomber Model 2b†
Nakajima Ki-27 'Nate'	Army Type 97 Fighter
Mitsubishi Ki-30 'Ann'	Army Type 97 Light Bomber
Nakajima Ki-43 Hayabusa ('Oscar')	Army Type 01 Fighter
Nakajima Ki-44 Shoki ('Tojo')‡	Army Type 02 Fighter
Mitsubishi Ki-46 'Dinah'	Army Type 00 Command & Reconnaissance
Kawasaki Ki-48 'Lily'	Army Type 99 Twin Light Bomber
Mitsubishi Ki-51 'Sonia'	Army Type 99 Assault Aircraft
Mitsubishi A6M 'Zero'/'Zeke'	Navy Type 00 Fighter
Mitsubishi C5M 'Babs'*	Navy Type 98 Command & Reconnaissance
Mitsubishi G3M Rikko ('Nell')	Navy Type 99 Land-Based Bomber
Kawanishi H6K 'Mavis'	Navy Type 97 Large Flying Boat

* The Ki-15 and the C5M were Army and Navy versions of the same aircraft (Allied code-name: 'Babs').

† The Ki-21-IIb had a fully-rotating dorsal turret, fitted with an HMG.

‡ The Ki-44s operated by 47th Independent Chutai were pre-production models on field trails.

Royal Air Force & Indian Air Force Aircraft Types over Burma Dec 1941 - May 1942

Name	Type
Brewster Buffalo Mk I*	Fighter
Curtiss Mohawk Mk IV†	Fighter
Hawker Hurricane Mk I	Fighter
Hawker Hurricane Mk IIa	Fighter
Hawker Hurricane Mk IIa PR	Photo Reconnaissance
Hawker Hurricane Mk IIb	Fighter
Hawker Audax	Maritime Patrol
Westland Wapiti	Maritime Patrol
Westland Lysander Mk II	Recce & Army Co-Operation
Bristol Blenheim Mk I	Light Bomber/Maritime Patrol
Bristol Blenheim Mk IV	Light Bomber
Vickers Wellington	Medium Bomber
Vickers Valentia	Transport
Douglas DC-2	Transport
Douglas DC-3	Transport
North American Mitchell Mk I PR	Photo Reconnaissance

* A locally-modified photo-recce variant of the Buffalo was also operated.

† The Mohawk Mk IV was the RAF designation for the Curtiss Hawk 75A-4.

Chinese (American Volunteer Group) Aircraft Types over Burma Dec 1941 - May 1942

Curtiss P-40B Warhawk/Tomahawk*	Fighter
Curtiss P-40C Warhawk/Tomahawk	Fighter
Curtiss P-40E Warhawk/Kittyhawk	Fighter/Fighter-Bomber

* A locally-modified photo-recce variant of the P-40 B was also operated.

USAAF Aircraft Types over Burma Dec 1941 - May 1942

B-17E Flying Fortress	Heavy Bomber
LB-30/B-24 Liberator	Heavy Bomber
Douglas C-47	Transport