

CHAPTER 2 - THE MALAYSIAN ARMY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The capitulation of communism in Malaysia in 1990 and followed by the end of the Cold War in 1991 marks the dawn of a new era for the Malaysian Armed Forces. The Malaysian Armed forces is now entering the era of transforming of being structured into a conventional fighting force, geared towards external threats. The philosophy is central to the Government's effort to transform the three components of Malaysian Armed Forces, the Army, the Air force and the Navy, to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The process of conventionalisation and modernisation of the Malaysian Armed Forces is nurtured by the post - Cold War peace dividend, political stability and economic prosperity in the country. The terms "conventionalisation" is synonymous with acquisition of technologically advanced weapon systems and equipment. The purchase of military hardware programme of conventionalisation and modernisation of the army are mutually complimenting.

Today, the Malaysian Army is going through the twin processes of modernisation and conventionalisation. The Army is being modernised with new weapons and equipment and conventionalised with organisational restructuring and doctrinal training on conventional warfare. The Malaysian Army is undergoing through a process of transition from a counter-insurgency warfare (CIW) organisation to a conventional warfare force structure. The force review is done concurrently with the modernisation of weapons and

equipment as well as doctrine and training to enhance its conventional warfare capabilities. Although the emphasis is on conventional warfare, the Malaysian Army will continue to maintain its counter - insurgency warfare (CIW) and other unconventional warfare capabilities. CIW and jungle warfare skills will remain as special trademarks of the Malaysian Army. The army training concept is based on the ratio of 60 percent on conventional warfare and 40 percent on unconventional warfare.

The two fundamental elements of combat power namely, firepower or manoeuvre elements have been addressed in the restructuring of the Malaysian Army. In terms of manpower, the emphasis is placed on achieving a credible and balanced force with the right combination of combat, combat support and service support elements. Regarding the fire power , changes have been instituted to meet the requirements for better fire power, readiness and mobility. Training and logistics framework are also being jointly developed and enhanced, consistent with the need to create the capability required of a modern conventional army. Concomitantly, the chain of command is also streamlined and simplified. In addition, extensive participation by the ' reserve force ' is being examined, thus providing a new focus for the Army Reserve Force. With the dual programme of modernisation and conventionalisation, the Malaysian Army is being prepared to deal with all forms of security threats from within and without. At the same time, deterrence would remain the cornerstone of Malaysia's defence policy.

2.2 THE ROLES OF THE MALAYSIAN ARMY

The roles of the Malaysian Army today are as follows:

2.2.1 Primary Roles

- a. To safeguard all national frontiers and boundaries from encroachment during peacetime.
- b. To repel all hostile forces during wartime and national emergencies.
- c. To deal with any forms of insurgency, whether assisted by internal or external forces.

2.2.2 Secondary Roles

- a. To assist the Police and Civil authority in the maintenance of public order and anti - terrorism.
- b. To assist the civil authority in national disaster and relief work.
- c. To assist the civil authority in national development.

2.2.3 Supporting Role. To undertake peacekeeping operations under the United Nation.

2.3 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

2.3.1 MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

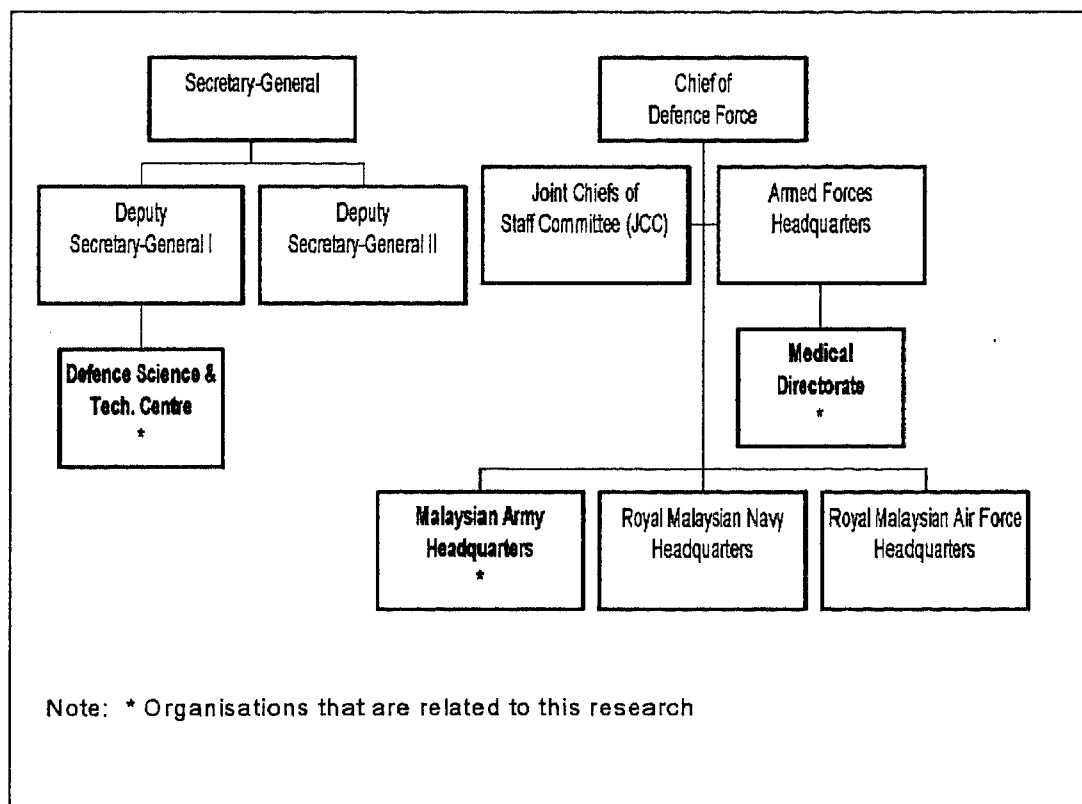
The Malaysian Armed Forces is structured around five components at the managerial apex of Ministry of Defence. They are Malaysian Armed

Forces Headquarter, Army Headquarter, Royal Malaysian Navy Headquarter, Royal Malaysian Air Force Headquarter and the civilian components of the Ministry. The Chief of Defence Force is the head of the three services in the Malaysian Armed Forces. He provides the military leadership to the entire Malaysian Armed Forces. For co-ordination and control on the matter of military and administration, the Chief of Defence Forces operates through a committee known as the Joint Chief Staff Committee, which meet regularly to make decision in consultation with the three services Chief on all military matters within its preview. The Secretary General is the head of civilian organisation of the ministry. He is appointed to provide administrative leadership to the Ministry. Figure 2.1 shows the organisation structure for the Ministry of Defence.

2.3.1.1 Medical Directorate

Medical Directorate comes under the command of the Armed Forces Headquarter. Primary tasks of Medical Directorate are to maintain the health of personnel and preserve the human fighting strength of the Malaysian Armed Forces. Secondary task is to provide health care services for the family and personnel. In operational areas, doctors of Medical Corps provide medical services to the remote communities as part of psychological warfare campaign. The corps carries out its role by undertaking the following activities.

- a. Health education to promote and maintain the health of military community.
- b. Institute measure to prevent diseases.
- c. Evacuation, treatment and rehabilitation of the sick and injured military personnel in peace and war.
- d. Plan, conduct and supervise the training of the servicemen, hygiene, sanitation and first aid.
- e. Conduct the medical examination of personnel as required.



Source: Ministry of Defence, 1987

Figure 2-1 – Organisational Structure of the Ministry of Defence

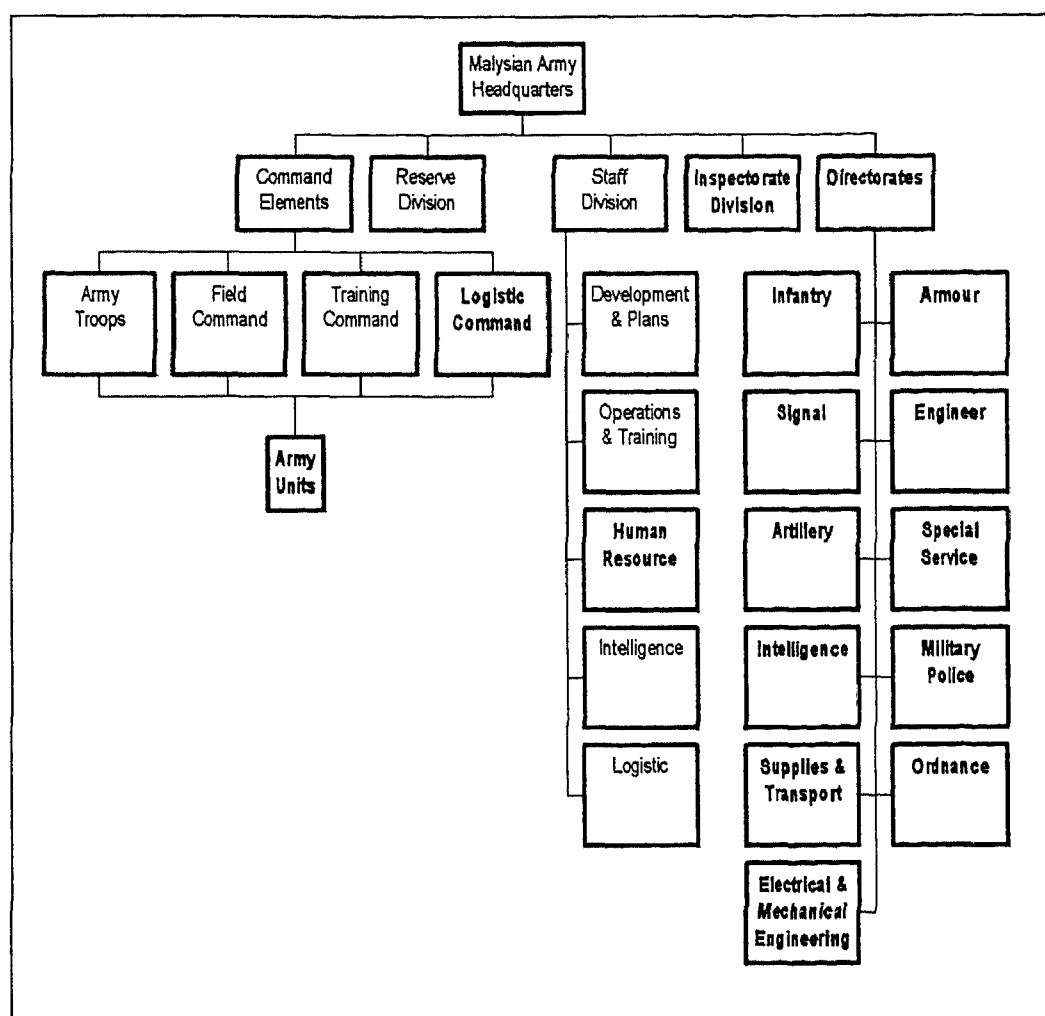
2.3.1.2 Pusat Sains dan Teknologi Pertahanan (PSTP)

The establishment of PSTP within the Ministry of Defence could be traced back to 1968. It was initially known as the Defence Technology Centre (DTC) to provide defence scientific and technological support to the Malaysian Armed Forces. The DTC was renamed the Defence Research Centre (DRC) in 1972 as it assumed a greater responsibility in defence research. The present name PSTP was adapted in early 1985 to reflect its additional role as a centre for recipient and transfer of defence technology. PSTP is of the civilian component of the Ministry of Defence.

The basic thrust of PSTP is to selectively apply science and technology for the force development and enhancement of the Malaysian Armed Forces in line with the National Defence Policy. The PSTP primary functions cover technical support services, consultancy, advising services, standardisation, research, development and transfer of technology. The role of PSTP does not mention specifically the need to do research and development on OSHH issue.

2.3.2 MALAYSIAN ARMY

The Malaysian Army is restructuring and improving its training system through the establishment of the army Training Command. Logistic support is also being streamlined and improved under the current army Logistic Command consistent with the requirement of a credible conventional force. Figure 2.2 show the organisation structure of the Malaysian Army.



Source: Ministry of Defence

Figure 2-2 – Organisation Structure of the Malaysian Army

The Army Headquarter is located at the Ministry of Defence, the apex of the Malaysian Armed Forces organisational superstructure. It has a unique combination of being a policy-making organisation as well as a command Headquarter. The army Headquarter is made up of the following sub - systems, the Command elements, Staff Division, Reserve Force, Inspectorate Division and the Directorates.

The command function is vested upon the chief of Army who is assisted by the Deputy Chief of Army. The Staff Division is headed by the Chief of staff who is responsible for the day - to - day functions of the Army Headquarters. It deals with matters such as development and plans, operations and training, intelligence, manpower and logistic. The Reserve Division is responsible for all aspects of the Reserve Force comprising both “volunteers “ and “ reservist “. The Reserve Force is organised into a framework force capable of being expanded at short notice. In this context, the capability of the Reserve Force must not only to form a source of manpower for the regular force, but more importantly to augment the regular force in pursuing the common mission of ensuring the defence and security of the nation. The Inspectorate Division is responsible for carrying out checks on the operational readiness of all army units.

2.3.2.1 Logistic Command

One of the responsibilities of Logistic Command is to manage the Malaysian Army ammunition and explosive inventory. Its headquarter is base in Ministry of Defence with four field units located in the northern, southern, centre and eastern region command. The tasks of these field units are to conduct inspection on all army units especially on safety, technicality, bomb disposal and provide technical advice on all aspects of ammunition and explosives management.

2.3.2.2 Human Resource Organisation

Appendix A shows the Human Resource organisation of the Malaysian Army. Generally in today corporate world, the human resource organisation has the following activities (Dessler 1997):

- a. Recruitment and Selection.
- b. Training and Development.
- c. Compensation.
- d. Labour Relation.
- e. Employment Security and Safety.

From Figure 2-2, shows that there are altogether 11 Directorates of specialised Arms and Services or Corp. of the Army. These Directorates act as specialist advisers to the Chief of Army on technical matters pertaining to their respective Arms and Services. Below are the respective Corp. or Arms and Services.

2.3.2.3 Infantry

Infantry comprises of two corps, the Royal Malay Regiment and the Royal Ranger Regiment. Infantry is essentially an arm of close combat. Its role is to seek out and locate the enemy, to kill or capture him, to seize and hold ground and to repel attack, by day or night regardless of season, weather or terrain. Fit, well-armed men are the backbone of the infantry battalion. It is by determinations and by skilful use of weapons and ground

conditions that the battalion will succeed in battle. These tough infantrymen face a lot of hazards such as stress, noise, dust, smoke, injuries, vibrations, radiation and chemicals.

2.3.2.4 Signal

Signal is a corp., which provide communications. No military organisation can function smoothly in peace or war without reliable and adequate signal communication. Signal communication is that single most essential elements of command management. It is the means whereby at all levels the commander exercise command, control and ensures the administration of his forces, keep him in constant touch with his superiors and links him to other commanders and agencies with whom he is co-operating. Their tasks are more on the technical equipment, repairing and maintenance, involve in most of the operations and exercise conducted by the formations. In carrying the job, the signalmen face the hazards of stress, dust, smoke, radiation, chemical, noise and injuries.

2.3.2.5 Engineer

They were said to be the first to go in and the last to come out during operations. The role of the combat engineers is to assist in the maintenance of the mobility of troops, while denying freedom of movement to the enemy. They also provide a number of essential services and may assist in military civic action programmes. Their tasks also involve in the use of plants, heavy machines, and explosives, together with the infantrymen conducting

operations and exercises by the formations. The hazards they face are stress, smoke, dust, radiation, noise, vibrations, and injury.

2.3.2.6 Artillery

The gunners with their big calibre of guns are always available when the infantrymen need additional firepower in battle. The roles of the artillery is to support other arms and services by establishing such fire supremacy in the battle area that the enemy can neither interfere with Malaysian Army's operations nor develop their own effectively. The nature of the artillery tasks varies greatly be it in the support of field artillery or air defence artillery. The equipment used by the gunners is the gun itself, and most of the time they fire the rounds continuously in all weather condition. Most of the gunners' face the hazards of stress, noise, dust, vibration, radiation, smoke, chemical and injury.

2.3.2.7 Special Service

Commonly known as "Commando", basically they are elite infantrymen who are highly trained for clandestine operations. They operate in small number and deep in enemy territory. Commandos' face a lot of hazards such as stress, noise, dust, vibration, radiation, smoke, chemical and injuries.

2.3.2.8 Intelligence

The intelligence corp. provide personnel whose tasks are gathering and reporting of information on the enemy and area of operations, converting information into intelligence and disseminating intelligence to higher, lower

and adjacent units. Good intelligence is a war-winning factor. The combat intelligence personnel operate most in isolation, be it in the urban, rural areas or in the jungle environment. They face the hazards of stress, noise, chemical and injuries.

2.3.2.9 Military Police

Military police corp. assumes the task of looking after the discipline of the personnel in the army as a whole. Their role is to assist the Armed Forces in training for war. Their main functions are to enforce the military law, policy, rules and procedure on all personnel in the Armed forces and to protect and investigate any cases involving the army personnel. They are also involve in all army operations and exercises especially in traffic controls and guarding over important locations. Based on their tasks, they face the hazards of stress, noise, dust, smoke, chemical and injuries.

2.3.2.10 Supplies and Transport

Supplies and Transport corp. is the backbone of the Army in term of logistic matters. Their main function is the management in providing transport, in preparation of ration, petrol, oil and lubrication, providing air - despatch and lastly in preparing the Armed Forces logistic movement. They are the logisticians of the Army. Their personnel deal with the vehicles, petroleum, and movement of personnel and material. Stress, noise, smoke, dust, vibration, chemical and injuries are their main hazards that they are facing.

2.3.2.11 Ordnance

The corp. with their motto “ to assist and to serve “ and the primary role is to advise on the management of stores and equipment of the army. They are responsible for the managing of the ordnance stores, vehicles, ammunition and explosives and they are also involve in the managing the budgeting system of the army. Their tasks are very broad, it ranges from managing of clothing to the disposal of explosives. They face the hazard of stress, chemical, dusk and injuries.

2.3.2.12 Electrical and mechanical Engineering

The role of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (EME) Corp is to provide engineering support to the Malaysian Army. They are responsible for corrective and preventative maintenance of the Army's' vehicles, machines, heavy plants, gun systems and electrical and electronic equipment or systems. The hazards they face are of stress, noise, dust, vibration, radiation, smoke, chemical and injuries.

Table 2-1 below summaries the various hazard faces by the soldiers of various corps.

Corp.	Task	Hazards							
		Stress	Noise	Dust	Smoke	Vibration	Injuries	Radiation	Chemical
Infantry	Fighting Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Armour	Combat Support Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Signal	Combat Support Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engineer	Combat Support Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Artillery	Combat Support Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special Service	Fighting Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intelligence	Combat Support Arm	✓	✓				✓		✓
Military Police	Service Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Supplies & Transport	Service Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ordnance	Service Arm	✓		✓			✓		✓
EME	Service Arm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: Literature Research

Table 2-1 - The Various Hazard Faces by the Various Corps

2.4 CONVENTIONAL WARFARE CAPABILITIES

The conventional warfare capability of the Malaysian Army are focused in the development of the following aspects:

- a. Mobile capability through the formation of the elite forces.
- b. Generate greater combat power through the formation of a mechanised force.

- c. Organic aerial mobility through the development of the Army Aviation Corps.
- d. Fire power through the acquisition of more sophisticated weapons.
- e. Establishment of the Army Training

An elite force capable of being deployed rapidly within Malaysia and its territories was formed. The force is intended to be highly mobile in nature, capable of conducting pre-emptive strikes or counter-offensive action as the need arises. It is made up of elements from the Army's parachute battalion, support and mechanised infantry, spearheaded by light tanks. Most of the armies in the world are equipped with their own air wing to facilitate organic reconnaissance capability, combat mobility and immediate logistics and medical support. In line with this capability, the Malaysian Army is forming its own Army Aviation Corps - an organisation to provide organic aerial mobility. This will ease the combat and tactical transportation needs of the army currently provided by the Royal Malaysian Airforce.

Assault weapons and rifles have now become the standard weapons of the infantrymen as the basic source of firepower. In addition, the firepower of the Malaysian Army has been greatly enhanced with the acquisition of the bigger calibre of gun, the medium gun, surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns.

2.5 TRAINING

Like other armies, military training in the Malaysian Army remains a command function. The formation of Army Training Command signifies the importance of training to ensure the army is capable of undertaking a broad range of conventional and internal security operations. Generally, the Malaysian Army conducts its training programme at three levels: local, regional and international. The three levels of exercise are implemented in the form of single service exercise, joint exercise (with other service) or combined exercise (with other countries). As regard to combined exercise with friendly countries, it takes the forms of bilateral or multilateral exercises. Annually, the Malaysian Army conducts about 30 exercises, which include single service and joint exercises from the battalion to brigade - sized force level. The army also participates in combined exercises with regional armies of ASEAN countries and international exercises with countries like Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America. The conduct of such exercises will continue to remain the main training feature of the Malaysian army during peacetime in preparation for any contingencies.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The Malaysian Army of the 90's is going through a tremendous process of modernisation and conventionalisation, which include the development of the organisation and the introduction of modern sophisticated weapons and equipment. The specific roles of the Malaysian Army, denotes the type of enemy the country is facing and the type of training the soldiers is

undergoing. After the laid down of arms by the Communist of Malaya, the army still remain the backbone in defending the country. Although the country is currently free from any threats, training is still carry out at all level whether internally or externally. Training for war is one of the Army's main tasks during peacetime. In carrying out their duties and tasks of administrative and training, they are actually facing the "*unseen enemy*" that is the hazards of working environments. The problems of safe - guarding soldiers from this "*unseen enemy*" hazard must be faced. The soldiers constitute the important viable and economically active segment of our population and therefore valuable people. Sick soldiers obviously cannot achieve as much as the soldiers who is fit. In addition to the usual hazard affecting the health of the soldiers from the general environment, the soldiers are expose to other hazard from all types of working environment. Often unknown to them, some of these exposure hazards is serious. The environmental hazard in the working environment can be divided into four main components namely the physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial hazards. All the hazards faced by the soldiers will be highlighted in chapter 3.

The occupational hazards faces by the soldiers are countless. From the simple exercises on the field, training in the jungle, handling the weapons, crossing the deep river and the drill on the parade square, they are constantly expose to occupational hazards. Although all the safety precautions have been taken care of, the only weakness is the low awareness of the soldiers about the occupational hazards. Even in the

regular unit, which has operated in so many operations and exercises are facing the same problems. They keep on losing soldiers through the occupational hazards, the *unseen enemy*.