The WORLD DEFENCE ALMANAC is the most up-to-date study of defence forces in the world. As a reference, it provides a comprehensive review of force structures, organisations and inventories. The editorial closing date for this issue was 22 June 2015, approximately six months prior. Any new data received after this date will be included in a subsequent issue.

Important Note on Financial and Defence Expenditures Data

- First, some of the above agencies and organizations follow their own peculiar criteria, whereby they conflate into a broader “defense spending” category not only the regular budget of the Ministry of Defence and other allocations for the defence forces, but also many other forms of state expenditures, that they chose to regard as being of military significance (e.g., militarized police, coast guard, border security, SAR, pensions and medical care for military and security personnel, etc.). For this reason, the figures for the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are expressed in terms as Purchasing Power Parity (so-called Parkinson formula). While this approach is useful for our purposes, readers must be aware that the results in values, that can be markedly different than presented by official bodies, or calculated by independent agencies, and then transformed into US$ at the official exchange rate. Our Purchasing Power Parity GDP figures tend to be lower than the official exchange rate ones in 29 of the 47 countries, with advanced economies and high standards of living, and higher in the case of developing countries.

- Second, and even within the above limits, it is self-evident that the real measure of a country’s investment in defence would be provided not by the budget estimates (plus any extra-budgetary allocations) as approved in advance for the next financial year, rather by the balance sheet on actual expenditures during that year – whereby the latter might be either higher than the former, due to their very nature, savings and spending cuts becoming necessary. Due to their very nature, however, such statistical data only become available with a considerable delay. For this reason, the figures for the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are expressed in terms as Purchasing Power Parity (so-called Parkinson formula). While this approach is useful for our purposes, readers must be aware that the results in values, that can be markedly different than presented by official bodies, or calculated by independent agencies, and then transformed into US$ at the official exchange rate. Our Purchasing Power Parity GDP figures tend to be lower than the official exchange rate ones in 29 of the 47 countries, with advanced economies and high standards of living, and higher in the case of developing countries.

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