



**CYBERPEDIA**

A Guide to Equatorial Cyberspace

## Brynanian

Brynanian is the name of a fictional country on the fictional continent of Equatorial Cyberspace located between here and there.

## Geography

Brynanian is a country 293,456 square km, located in Equatorial Cyberspace. The country is bisected by the St. Catherine River, which flows from Lake Icasia on the northern border into the Gulf of Cyberia in the south. The valley and flood plain of the river constitute the most fertile regions of the country. More rugged, hilly terrain is found immediately to the west of Hamrville, in the area around Eiku, and in the southeast of the country.

Dense tropical vegetation covers those areas of the country south of Biku.

The remainder of the country is semi-tropical, with more arid areas found in the northern plains and the mountainous regions near Eiku.

## Demography

The total population of Brynanian was estimated by the UN at 11.5 million in 2015. According to the most recent census in 1965, approximately 61% are ethnic Brn, speaking a common linguistic dialect; 23% are Zaharians, predominately located in rural regions in the southwest of the country; 11% are Icasian; and 5% other minorities. Among the Brn, traditional clan identities are particularly strong, especially in the north of the country.

Approximately 30% of the population is urban. The largest city is the capital, **Hamrville** (formerly Grenoble, c1,300,000), located in the north of the country, followed by the southwestern port city of **McGilldshu** (c600,000). An affluent suburb of McGilldshu, **Pont de Lanteigne** (c15,000), features pre-war



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## Brynanian

### Map of Equatorial Cyberspace



### Area

293,456 km<sup>2</sup>

### Population

11,500,000

### Capital City

- Hamrville (formerly Grenoble)

### Major Cities

- Hamrville
- McGilldshu
- Zahrville

### Languages

Brn, French widely spoken

### Flag of Brynanian



### GNP (2017)

\$6,555 million

housing for wealthy ship owners and exporters as well as now disused tourist facilities.

Other towns include the provincial capital of **Zahrville** (formerly Hamraton) in the south (c320,000), the mining centre of **Eiku** in the north (c160,000), and the smaller towns of **Aiku** (c85,000), **Biku** (c70,000), **Ciku** (c65,000) and **Diku** (c45,000). According to UNHCR estimates (2003), some 500,000 refugees could be found in neighbouring countries, about half of them residing in refugee camps. A further 1 million persons may have been internally displaced, of whom approximately one-quarter can be found in various government-controlled relocation camps.

## Economy

Before the outbreak of the civil war, the economy of Brynania was primarily based on the export of beef, cotton, and diamonds. Although much local agriculture remained subsistence in nature, large export-oriented cattle ranches were established in the northwest and centre of the country, and cotton plantations were established in the fertile south-central region. Cocoa was also grown in the St. Catherine Valley. Diamond production was centered in the north, in the rugged hills west and south of Eiku, while some small-scale manufacturing could be found in Hamrville, McGilldshu, and Biku. The World Bank estimated Brynania's GNP (2019) at US\$6,555 million, or \$570 GNP per capita (\$1,583 PPP adjusted) —in real terms, less than one-half the level before the outbreak of civil war.

For some years now, the government has derived little income from the country's diamond production exports. These, concentrated in the north of the country, are instead in the hands of local warlords of the self-styled "**Free People's Army**," and are believed to be smuggled across the border with Icasia where they are sold. Increasing pressure on Icasia to join the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme**, however, may limit the future ability of rebels to export gemstones in this way.

Biku is the site of the country's primary, gas turbine, power generating facility. This utilizes natural gas supplies piped from central Ruritania through the so-called RCB ("Ruritania-Ciku-Biku) pipeline, which was originally intended to continue south to a proposed LPG export facility in McGilldshu. These latter plans were never realized, however, and the pipeline itself was later rendered inoperable by the war. Consequently, the sole electrical supply for the country is now provided by small local generators.

There has been some speculation that offshore oil and natural gas deposits might be found in the Gulf of Cyberia. To date, however, the conflict has prevented investigation and deterred any foreign investment.

Because of high defence expenditures and reduced government revenues (especially due to the loss of the northern diamond mines, the closure of McGilldshu, and border closings), the Brynanian government is currently running a large deficit. It has been strongly advised by the IMF to undertake structural adjustment measures that would sharply reduce overall government expenditures.

## Transportation

The country's primary transportation network consists of permanent, paved roads extending from southern Icasia to Ruriatia via McGilldshu and Zahrville; from McGilldshu to Hamrville; from Hamrville to the Ruritanian border via Biku and Ciku (along the route of the RCB pipeline), and from Hamrville to Eiku. Secondary (unpaved and seasonal) roads connect Icasia to Aiku and thereafter (partially improved) to the McGilldshu-Hamrville road; from Zahrville to Biku, and from Biku to Diku; from Eiku to Icasia; and from the border near Diku to central Ruritania.

The country's only port is at McGilldshu. The St. Catherine River is navigable by small boat for approximately 300 km inland. Brynania's primary international airport, at Hamrville, is capable of accommodating all sizes of aircraft. Substantial paved airfields also exist at McGilldshu and Eiku, and smaller unpaved strips (suitable for STOL aircraft only) are found in all provincial towns.

## History

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Historically, the region that today comprises Brynania came under the control of the various Ruritanian empires that intermittently controlled much of this part of Cyberia for centuries. By the 19th century, however, the area had fractured into a number of small principalities. Increasing European commercial encroachment led to disputes over taxation and trade rights with local elites, and attacks on European shipping. In 1865, France sent a fleet into the Gulf of Cyberia to suppress local piracy and enforce trade access. Five years later, spurred on by the recent colonization of Ruritania by rival Britain, French troops occupied the country and incorporated it into their colonial empire.

Brynania was decolonized in 1961. The country's first post-colonial president was **Dr. Naul Poble**, an intellectual and nationalist leader of Zaharian ethnic origin who won election (with tacit French support) in 1960. Within ten years, however, Poble gradually marginalized the Brynanian legislature and increasingly ruled the country as his personal fiefdom. In 1969, a mutiny by army units in the capital was put down with the assistance of French troops. Poble subsequently announced the cancellation of the planned 1970 presidential elections.

In February 1973, Poble was overthrown in a bloody military coup, led by **General Rudolph Arvanitidis** and supported primarily by officers from the north of the country.

The military regime, although initially popular in many quarters, soon lost support. In 1984, growing civil unrest resulted in a slide to full-scale civil war, pitting the central government against a variety of insurgent groups. The most important of these has been the **Popular Front for the Liberation of Zaharia (PFLZ)**, based primarily among the Zaharian minority in the south of the country. The cofounders of the PFLZ--former nun **Joelle Zahar** and one-time night-club dancer **Cori Sommerfeldt**--were killed in a 1998 government bombing raid of guerilla headquarters in Zahrville. Since then, leadership of the PFLZ has been in the hands of the shadowy council of senior guerilla leaders.

In November 1995, another coup occurred from within regime, with **General Jose "Gabe" Hamra** deposing General Arvanitidis. A "colonels" group headed by the half-nephew of the executed Rudolph Arvanitidis and the former head of the Brynanian secret police attempted a counter-coup two months later. This was unsuccessful in seizing the capital or deposing the regime. However, with the support of some military units, the Arvanitidis clan and its self-styled "Free People's Army" did retain control of substantial territory around the mining town of Eiku, as well exerting substantial influence among some ranking military field commanders elsewhere in the country.

This past summer saw two weeks of urban protests sweep the capital. Organized by the small trade union movement, these focused on poor economic conditions and demands for the release of political prisoners, including the jailed human rights leader (and renowned poetess) **Zahra al-Zahra**. In response to these demonstrations, General Hamra resigned his position. His reformist deputy, **General Bill Weininger**, briefly assumed power thereafter, only to be presumed dead in a helicopter crash while visiting troops in McGilldishu. The government blamed Zaharian rebels for the incident, although some pointed to the possible involvement of hardline Brn nationalists within the security services.

With Wieninger's death, **General Nadine Pelaez** emerged as the new President. Born in McGilldishu to a modest merchant family, Swart had risen through the ranks of the police to become Minister of the Interior in 2019.

Recently, the UN Secretary General appointed a special representative to attempt to mediate a peaceful settlement of the war. Efforts by previous UN envoys have failed to secure a lasting cease-fire among the parties.

## Foreign Relations

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A former French colony, Brynania enjoyed close relations with its former metropole under the Poble regime until the early 1970s. The 1973 coup, however, led to a reorientation of Brynanian foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. The USSR provided arms and other forms of assistance following the eruption of the civil war in 1984; in response, the United States encouraged Brynania's powerful southern neighbour, Ruritania, to back the PFLZ. Despite this, diamonds mines in the north (owned by local businesspersons but operated under contract by the US multinational, **DiaCo**), have continued to operate unmolested by the government.

The decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet Union severely weakened the government of Brynania. This--coupled with the 1995 coup, the willingness of the new Hamra government to sign a treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation with

Ruritania, and Ruritanian concerns about nationalism among its own Zaharian minority--led to a marked shift in regional alignments. Ruritania reversed its support for the PFLZ, and has provided an estimated 5,000 military "advisors" to assist the Armed Forces of Brynania (AFB). Ruritanian forces have not been involved in combat operations, however.

## Armed Forces and Paramilitaries

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**The Armed Forces of Brynanaia (AFB)** has a nominal strength of 21,300, consisting of the army (18,000), air force (1,500) and navy (1,800). With the exception of the **Republican Guard** units, which are believed to be under direct presidential control, most units are poorly paid and undermanned. The army consists of three "divisional" headquarters (300), 15 regular infantry battalions (600 each), four special forces "regiments" (250), two Republican Guard "divisions" (1,000), four artillery battalions (250), and an air defence battalion (200), plus support troops. The army is equipped with 36 T-62 MBTs (assigned to Republican Guard units), plus 60 BTR-60 and *Panhard* M-3 APCs, 30 BRDM-2 and AML-90 armoured cars, 32 D-30 122mm towed artillery, Bofors L/70 AAA, and lighter equipment. The air force consists of a helicopter wing (with 12 MI-8 transports) and two fighter-bomber wings (each with 9 MiG-27), plus some lighter aircraft. The navy consists of six *Osa-I* class missile patrol boats, plus a marine "regiment" (150) and three landing ships (1x Ropucha class, 2 ex-WWII LSM). The serviceability of the AFB's aging military equipment is unknown.

The AFB is currently believed to be deployed in four field commands:

- Hamrville military district: two Republican Guard "divisions", artillery battalion, two infantry battalions, air defence battalion; two air force fighter-bomber wings
- Alpha province command: one divisional headquarters (McGilldishu); seven infantry battalions, three special forces "regiments"; one helicopter wing; one marine "regiment"
- Beta province command: one divisional headquarters (Diku), two infantry battalions, one artillery battalion, one special forces "regiment"
- Gamma province command: one divisional headquarters (Biku), four infantry battalions, one artillery battalion; unknown number of Ruritanian "advisors" (along RCB highway).

Pro-government militias also operate in the major cities and government -controlled rural areas. These are generally known as the **"OPHUG,"** the Brn acronym of a frequent government slogan ("Order, Peace, Harmony, Unity, God"). The OPHUG radio station, **Radio Unity**, is well known for its strident Brn nationalist broadcasts.

## Insurgent Forces

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Among insurgent groups, the largest is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Zaharia (PFLZ), with an estimated 10,000 full- and part-time fighters (about half of them organized into eight semi-regular battalion-sized units). Most PFLZ forces are deployed in Beta province, the western and southern portions of which are under full PFLZ control. The PFLZ headquarters is in Zahrville. Substantial PFLZ forces are also active in central Alpha province near the Icasian border, mounting ambushes throughout southern half of the province except for the government-controlled area immediately around McGilldishu. Some refugee camps in Icasia and Ruritania have reportedly been used for training purposes.

The Free People's Army has a strength of approximately 3,000 fighters, comprising three ex-AFB infantry and artillery battalions, plus approximately 2,000 armed members of the Arvanitidis clan and its allies. All are deployed in the area around Eiku.

A number of smaller insurgent groups exist, with a total armed strength of less than 1,000. These include the **Zaharian People's Front** (a radical offshoot of the PFLZ, active the eastern areas of Beta province); the **Eastern Icasia Freedom Movement**, an Icasian irredentist movement, which seeks the "reunification" of western Alpha province with neighbouring Icasia, the Brynanian Workers' Liberation Army (formerly the Brynanian Communist Party), the BWLA-General Command, and others.

*Disclaimer: Brynania is not a real country and exists as part of a fictional conflict simulation.*