

Bataan Death March

The **Bataan Death March** was a [war crime](#) involving the forcible transfer of [prisoners of war](#), with wide-ranging abuse and high fatalities, by [Japanese](#) forces in the [Philippines](#), in [1942](#), during [World War II](#). In [Japanese](#), it is known as *Batān Shi no Kōshin* (), meaning the same.

The battle

In late [1941](#), Japan simultaneously invaded several [southeast Asian](#) countries, including the [Philippines](#). The Philippine portion was known as the [Battle of the Philippines](#). Most of the Filipino and [United States](#) forces defending the country were rapidly overrun or forced to retreat. A significant proportion of the Allied forces made a stand for four months on the [Bataan Peninsula](#) in the [Battle of Bataan](#). (The pronunciation of the place name used in its vicinity is *bah-tah-'ahn*, but in [English](#) discussions of this subject it is almost invariably *buh-TAHN*.)



 Prisoners on a burial detail at Camp O'Donnell .

The march

Approximately 75,000 Filipino and US soldiers, commanded by Major General [Edward P. King, Jr.](#) formally surrendered to the Japanese, under General [Masaharu Homma](#), on [April 9, 1942](#), which forced Japan to accept emaciated captives outnumbering them. Captives were forced to march, beginning the next day, about 100 kilometers north to [Nueva Ecija](#) to Camp O'Donnell, a [prison camp](#).

Prisoners of war were beaten randomly and denied food and water for several days. Those who fell behind were executed through various means: shot, beheaded or bayoneted. The commonly-used Japanese "sun treatment" forced a captive to sit silently in the humid April sun without water or even the shade of his helmet.

Meanwhile, Allied forces elsewhere in the Philippines fought on, and the column of prisoners marching from Bataan was accidentally shelled by US guns defending [Corregidor](#) to screen the Japanese artillery movements. Packed into boxcars to travel from [San Fernando](#) to [Capas](#), the number of prisoners was further diminished by [malaria](#), heat, [dehydration](#) and [dysentery](#).

Camps O'Donnell and Cabanatuan

These problems persisted at Camp O'Donnell. About ten thousand perished while others were able to escape; approximately 54,000 reached the camp. On [June 6, 1942](#) the Filipino soldiers were granted [amnesty](#) and released, while the American prisoners were moved to another camp at [Cabanatuan](#). Many of the survivors were later sent to prison camps in Japan, Korea, and Manchuria in prisoner transports known as "[Hell Ships](#)."

War crimes trial



News of this atrocity sparked outrage in the US, as shown by this propaganda poster. The newspaper clipping shown refers to the Bataan Death March.

After the surrender of Japan in 1945, Homma was convicted by an Allied commission of war crimes, including the atrocities of the death march out of Bataan, and the atrocities at Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan that followed, and executed on [April 3, 1946](#) outside [Manila](#).

Casualty listing

-Casualty listings (ABMC)-----1941-1945 1946{Examples For Reference only}

- 2nd Philippine Coast Artillery.....5.....1
- 3rd Philippine Inf. Regiment.....3
- 4th Chemical Co (Aviation).....35
- 21st Philippine Division:.....1

- 21st Engineer Battalion.....2
- 21st Field Artillery Regiment.....3
- 21st Infantry Regiment.....3
- 22nd Infantry Regiment.....3
- 23rd Infantry Regiment.....3
- [26th Cavalry Regiment \(PS\)](#).....264.....37.
- 28th Bomber Squadron.....124.....8.
- [43rd Infantry Regiment \(PS\)](#).....28.....3.
- 192nd Tank Battalion.....188.....1.
- 200th Coastal Artillery.....1.....0.
- 515th Coastal Artillery.....206.....1.

Commemorations

The Philippines

Every year, the captured soldiers are honored on **Bataan Day** ([9 April](#)), also known as the "Day of Valor" (*Araw ng Kagitingan*), which is a [Philippine national holiday](#). There is a [shrine](#) in [Bataan](#) commemorating this event.

New Mexico

The Bataan Death March is commemorated every year at White Sands Missile Range just outside of [Las Cruces, New Mexico](#). The march which covers 26.2 miles via paved road and sandy trails allows 4000 entrants from many military units both International and the United States armed services. Several of the few remaining Bataan prisoners await the competitors to congratulate them on their success of the grueling march, however the real thanks comes from the participants to those who actually endured the actual march and encampment at Cabanatuan.

[\[edit\]](#)

See also

- [Manila Massacre](#)
- [Battle of the Philippines \(1941-42\)](#)
- [USS Bataan \(LHD-5\)](#)
- [USS Bataan \(CVL-29\)](#)
- [San Fernando City, Pampanga](#)
- [List of Japanese war atrocities](#)
- [Category:Bataan Death March prisoners](#)
- [The March \(1945\)](#)
- [The Great Raid](#) (2005 movie)

External links

- [American Battlefield Monument Commission website Those lost in Philippines are memorialized on Tablets of the missing on Manila American Cemetery, Manila Philippines.](#)
- [Battling Bastards of Bataan survivors org.](#)
- [Bataan Memorial Death March](#) - A 26 mile march commemorating the Bataan Death March (held yearly in New Mexico, USA)
- ["Back to Bataan, A Survivor's Story"](#) - A narrative recounting one soldier's journey through Bataan, the march, prison camp, Japan, and back home to the United States. Includes a map of the march.
- [The Bataan Death March](#) - Information and pictures on the march itself and in-depth information on Japanese POW camps.
- [PBS American Experience: Bataan Rescue](#) The story of the 1945 rescue of Bataan Death March survivors
- ["Technical Sergeant Jim Brown U.S. Army Air Corps \(ret\) Bataan Death March Survivor Presentation to EAA Chapter 108 May 16 2000"](#)
- [Proviso East High School Bataan Commemorative Research Project](#) - Comprehensive history of the Battle for Bataan, the Death March and the role of the 192nd Tank Battalion
- [Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Foundation of New Mexico 200th & 515th Coastal Artillery units](#)
- [4th Marine Regiment. 1st Battalion/4th Marines and 3rd Battalion/4th Marines were at Corregidor](#)

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