



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION FROM THE KOREAN WAR IS IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Cpl. Pastor Balanon, Jr., U.S. Army, of San Francisco, Calif. He will be buried May 3 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

Representatives from the Army met with Balanon's next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

In late October 1950, Balanon was assigned to L Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Calvary Regiment, then engaging enemy forces south of Unsan, North Korea, near a bend in the Kuryong River known as the Camel's Head. Chinese communist forces attacked the 8th Regiment's positions on Nov. 1, 1950, forcing a withdrawal to the south where they were surrounded by the enemy. The remaining survivors in the 3rd Battalion attempted to escape a few days later, but Balanon was declared missing in action on Nov. 2, 1950 in the vicinity of Unsan County.

In 2001, a joint U.S.-North Korean team, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), excavated a burial site in Kujang County, south of Unsan County. A North Korean citizen living near the site told the team that the remains were relocated to Kujang after they were discovered elsewhere during a construction project. The battle area was about one kilometer north of the secondary burial site.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons in Balanon's identification.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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