



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on Remains Recovery Activities in India

The Department of Defense announces that the United States and India have agreed to resume remains recovery activities in parts of Northeastern India.

The Department assesses that there are approximately 400 unaccounted-for service members from some 90 aircraft crashes in India during World War II.

During his June 2012 visit to India, Secretary Panetta said, "This is a critical step toward bringing home our service members lost during World War II. The United States and India, working together, can help provide comfort to the families of Americans who were lost during the war."

The Department deeply appreciates the close cooperation of the Government of India in helping our teams resume their critical work. Returning our fallen heroes is a top priority of the Department of Defense.

Background:

- The U.S. and India began joint operations to recover the remains of servicemen in late 2008. In 2009, operations were suspended. The Government of India determined it needed to establish internal procedures to aid in the success of future recovery efforts, before resuming further operations.
- There are about 400 unaccounted-for servicemen in India as a result of approximately 90 aircraft crashes. Virtually all of those sites are located in Northeast India.
- The United States possesses information on eighteen known crash sites and continues to develop information on others.
- Some of the information was reported to the Department of Defense by private parties or through Indian press.
- In June 2012, the U.S. and India agreed to resume remains recovery operation in Fall 2012.