# The Korean war

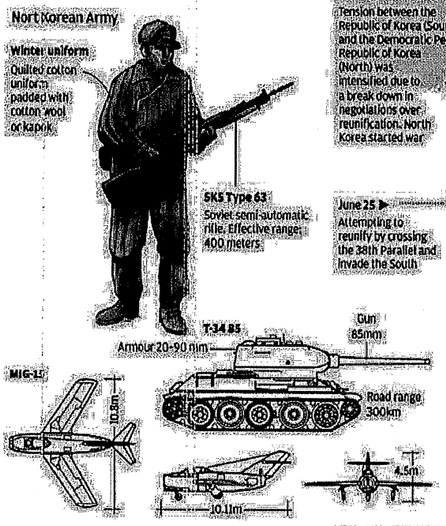
Today marks the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean war, which lasted on from June 25 1950 to July 27 1953. It was a conflict caused by a divided peninsula, in which both sides wanted reunification but with their respective political beliefs. Here we look at the timeline of the battles, the weapons used and the casualties that resulted from it.

## Background

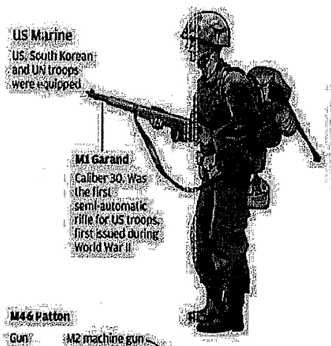
In 1945, shortly before the end of the war in the Pacific, the US and the USSR agree to the division of Korea at the 38th parallel. In 1948 they created the Republic of Korea in the South and the Democratic Republic in the north

## The military forces

### Nort Korean Army



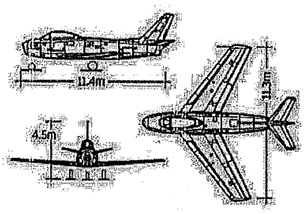

### US Marine




### M46 Patton

### F86 "Sabre"

Involved in the first dogfight in history between jet airplanes, a F86 and a MIG 15




### Chinese People's Liberation Army

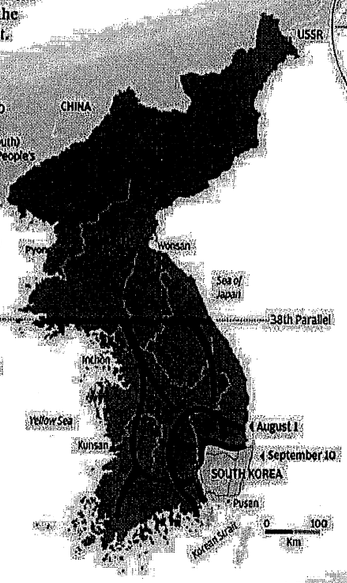
The PLA's uniform was based on that used by Russian soldiers

## The invasion

June-September 1950

Tension between the Republic of Korea (South) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North) was intensified due to a break down in negotiations over reunification. North Korea started war

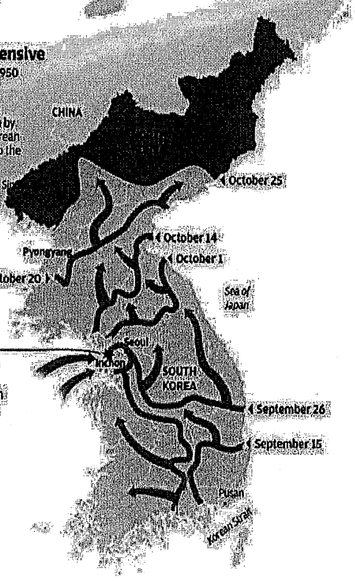
June 25 ▶ Attempting to reunify by crossing the 38th Parallel and invade the South




## US and UN offensive

September-October 1950

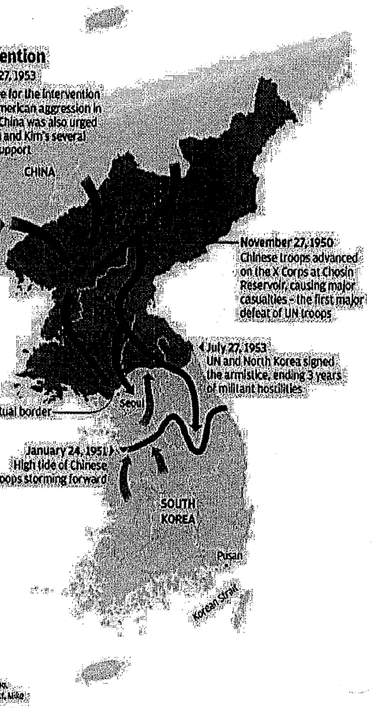
In less than a month, the US and UN troops reversed the situation by pushing the North Korean troops back, almost to the Chinese border




## China's intervention

November 1950-July 27, 1953

The reason China gave for the intervention was a response to "American aggression in the guise of the UN". China was also urged by Stalin via telegram and Kim's several appeals for military support




## Key players

**Douglas MacArthur** (1880 - 1964)
Served as the United Nations Commander during the Korean war, he also had command over the South Korean forces. He underestimated the Chinese troops, as he saw the potential intervention of the Soviets a greater threat. Removed from command by President Truman in 1951

**Syngman Rhee** (1875 - 1965)
First president of the Republic of Korea. He was a strongman who believed in political repression. Rhee fled Seoul with his government at the dawn of the Korean war, reestablishing in Pusan

**Kim Il-sung** (1912 - 1994)
Prime minister of North Korea at the time, he initiated the invasion South Korea in 1950 hoping for reunification. Prior to this, Kim sought help from the Soviet Union; however Stalin did not want to provoke the US

Louis St. Laurent
Prime Minister of Canada

Lester B. Pearson
Canada's Secretary of State

1. What led to the outbreak of the war?

2. What was Canada's role?

3. Should Canadians today be proud of the contributions of Canadian troops in Korea? Explain.

Sources: The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War - David Halberstam, The Encyclopedia of Wan F... ...nt Egypt to Iraq, History of War to Resist America and Aid Korea, The Military History Book, The Korean War 1950-1953-Nigel Thomas, Peter Abbott, Mike Chappell, US Marines in the Korean War-Charles R. Smith, necrometrics.com