

On August 6, 1945, during World War II, the first atomic bomb was dropped on the city. The Supreme Allied Headquarters reported that 129,558 people were killed, injured, or missing and a further 176,987 made homeless by the bombing. (In 1940 the population of Hiroshima had been 343,698.) The blast flattened more than 10 sq km (4 sq mi), about 60 per cent of the city. Every August 6 since 1947, thousands participate in multidenominational services in the Peace Memorial Park built on the site where the bomb exploded. In 1949 the Japanese dedicated Hiroshima as an international shrine of peace.

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